Charleston County’s
Farm to Table to Compost Program

SWANA SC 2014 Spring Conference

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Demographics

Largest County in South Carolina
Land area (square miles): 1,358
Population: 350,209
Single Family Households: 115,000
Recycling Programs

- Completing Residential Single Stream Recycling program
- Converting dual stream Multi-Family program to single stream
- Greening Schools program
- Special Events program

Recycling Programs (continued)

- Improving our convenience centers
- New mascot
- Public Space Recycling program
- Restaurant Food Waste Recycling Pilot

“Phil D. Bin”
Compost Facility Overview

- **Site:** Bees Ferry Landfill
- **Size:** 22 Acres
- **Daily Capacity:** 400 tons
- **Feedstocks:** Source separated pre and post consumer food waste and yard waste
- **Sources:** Institutions, restaurants/groceries, municipal yard waste, commercial yard waste

CRA 2011 Award for Outstanding Composting Program

How did food waste program get started?

- 2009 – 2010 Waste Composition Study finds 21.7% waste is organics; food waste is 19.4%
- County proposed a 12 month food waste composting demonstration pilot
Pilot to a Permanent Program

- **Sept 2010:** DHEC approved first Food Waste Composting Pilot Demonstration in SC

- **June 2012:** DHEC approved food waste program to become a permanent program and process up to 1,000 tons per week.

- At the time, we were processing only 120 tons per month.

How to Increase Incoming Food Waste Tons

- **Marketing**
- **Partners**
- **Education**
- **Outreach**
Partnerships

- Parks & Recreation
- School District
- Publix Grocery Stores
- Food Waste Haulers

Marketing

- Press Releases
- Updated Dept Website
- Program Flyer
- Direct Mail to all Charleston restaurants
- Print & Radio Advertisements
- Promoted the sale of finished compost at Bees Ferry
  - $2./bag (1.5 cubic ft)
  - $10./ton
Education

- Acceptable vs. Not Acceptable Items Flyer
- Website Page includes links to additional resources
- FAQs
- Signage

Outreach

- Special Events
- Hauler training workshops
- On-site technical support for generators
  - Container sizing education
  - Employee training
  - Acceptable materials
Additional Measures

- Personal selling
- Cold calling/visiting
- Email correspondence
- Letters of introduction to corporate offices
- Follow up phone calls/visits
- Video with testimonial from a General Manager at a participating restaurant
Metrics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>% Change</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inbound Food Waste (Tons)</td>
<td>828</td>
<td>2,850</td>
<td>244 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inbound Yard Waste (Tons)</td>
<td>51,679</td>
<td>58,561</td>
<td>13 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outbound Finished Compost (Tons)</td>
<td>4,389</td>
<td>8,364</td>
<td>91 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compost Sales - Bulk</td>
<td>$ 43,879</td>
<td>$ 81,191</td>
<td>85 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compost Sales - Bagged</td>
<td>$ 15,172</td>
<td>$ 26,718</td>
<td>76 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Compost Sales</td>
<td>$ 57,569</td>
<td>$ 107,909</td>
<td>87 %</td>
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Next Steps

- Continue to raise awareness & promote the program
- Pursue participation from large generators, such as more grocery store chains and Air Force Base
- Restaurant Food Waste Recycling Pilot with a reduced tipping fee for haulers
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