



Food Waste & Food Recovery in NJ: Recent State and Local Progress

New Jersey League of Municipalities
Annual Conference
November 17, 2022



Andrew Nowick

Mayor of Lambertville





Lambertville Facts

- Population: 3900
- Households: 1800
- City-wide Garbage and recycling collected by DPW crew of seven people

City Run “Third Can” Compost Program

Timeline:

- 2015: Program starts with Sustainable Jersey grant funding
- 2016: Program grew to 180 households (at its height)
- 2017: Required restaurants to participate
- 2019-2020: Program runs into problems and is discontinued

Challenges:

- **Equipment:** City garbage trucks not designed for food waste
- **Staffing:** Insufficient DWP staff to run the program; restaurants require 3X a week pickup; demand outpaced our capacity to run the program.
- **Compliance:** Contamination issues resulting in a high percentage of food waste being dumped into general waste
- **Cost:** At its height, the program cost the City over \$100K to run



Restarting “Third Can” program with an external vendor

Next Steps:

- Surveyed residents to gauge interest (complete)
- Reengage the restaurant community
- Evaluating multiple program options including home pick and resident delivery to central collection point
- REFI’s out, responses due in December
- Continued education

Potential challenges:

- **Participation:** Unlikely to be widespread
- **Cost:** Participants – restaurants and residents – will assume the direct costs of the program



Gary Sondermeyer

Vice President of
Operations Bayshore
Recycling





SUSTAINABLE JERSEY SESSION

**Food Waste & Food
Recovery in New Jersey:
Recent State and Local
Progress**

REGULATORY UPDATE

GARY SONDERMEYER

BAYSHORE RECYCLING

NOVEMBER 17, 2022

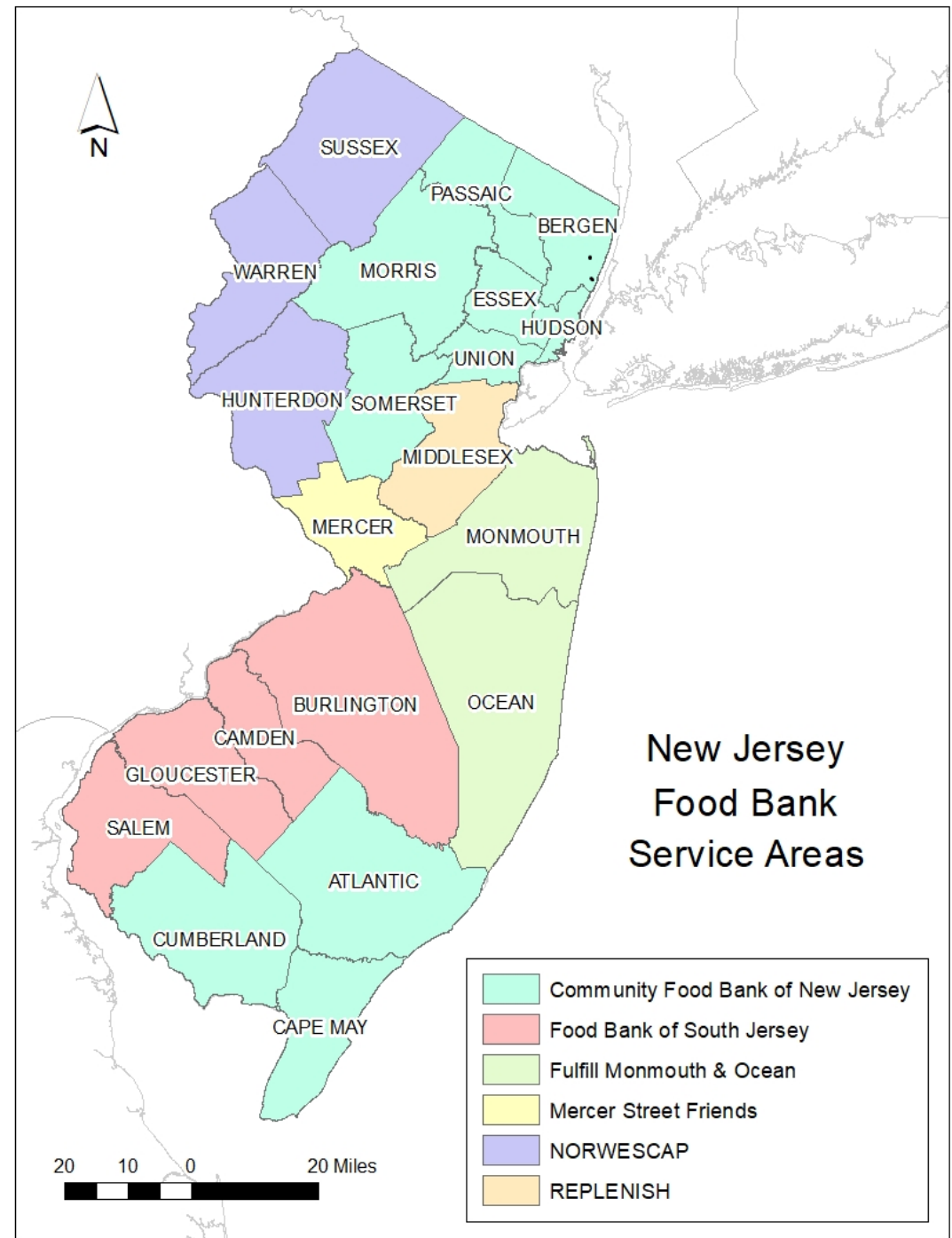
FOOD PROBLEM STATEMENT

- The NRDC estimates that 40% of all food grown in the USA is wasted;
- New Jersey is the 2nd most affluent State in the US which is the most affluent industrialized nation on earth;
- Four New Jersey Counties are in the “Top 20” most affluent in the United States:
 - #10 Morris
 - #11 Hunterdon
 - #15 Somerset
 - #20 Bergen
- Despite our relative affluence, 11% of New Jersey’s population and 15% of kids 18 years of age and younger are food insecure;
- Wasted food is landfilled. Landfills are the 3rd largest source of human-related methane emissions in the US - some 15.1% of these emissions;
- Our goals are to dramatically advance food recovery systems while driving food waste away from landfills and to small and large-scale composting facilities.

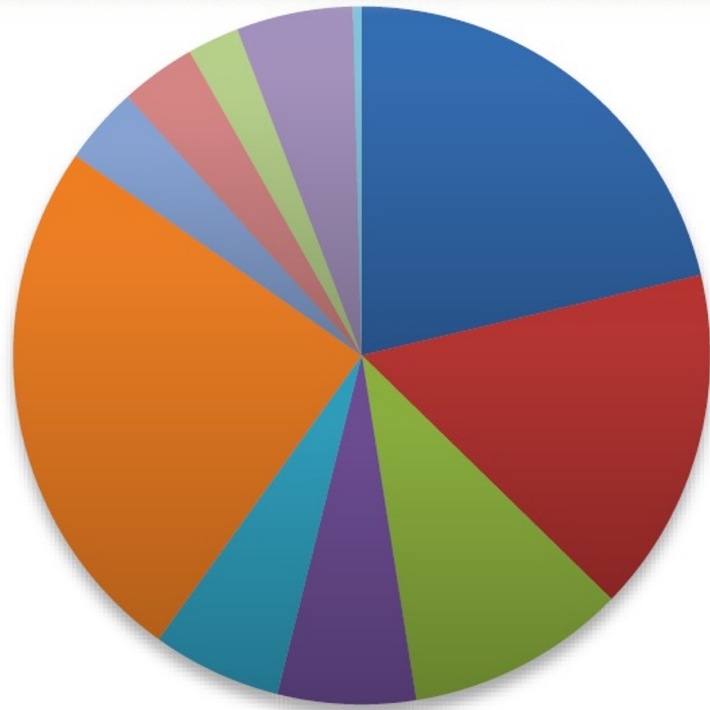


NEW JERSEY FOOD ASSET RECOVERY SYSTEM

- National Oversight Organization – “Feeding America”
- Recognized “Food Banks” in New Jersey:
 - Community Food Bank of New Jersey
 - Food Bank of South Jersey
 - Fulfill Monmouth & Ocean
 - Mercer Street Friends
 - NORWESCAP
 - REPLENISH
- 1,400 Food Pantries Statewide (rough estimate)
- 150 Soup Kitchens Statewide (rough estimate)



What's Left in the Can After 35 Years of Mandatory Recycling?



- Paper - 21.3%
- Plastics - 16.0%
- Textiles, Rubber, Leather - 10.2%
- Wood - 6.4%
- Yard Waste - 6.0%
- Food Waste - 24.8%
- Other Organics - 3.6%
- Metals - 3.5%
- Glass - 2.4%
- Inorganics - 5.4%
- Hazard Materials/Other - 0.4%

Who Generates the Food?

- **Composition Estimate From NRDC:**
 - 43% Residential
 - 26% Restaurants
 - 14% Retail Supermarkets
 - 9% Institutions (Hospitals, Prisons, Schools)
 - 8% Food Manufacturers & Processors



<i>FWG Sector</i>	<i>Inventory Total</i>
Food and Beverage Manufacturers	1,872
Wholesalers and Distributors	977
Supermarkets and Supercenters	6,047 (Supermarkets) 67 (Supercenters)
Hospitality	1,596 (Hotels) 110 (Casinos)
Restaurants and Food Service	18,321 (Full Service) 2,449 (Limited Service)
Colleges and Universities	165
Elementary and Secondary Schools	2,558 (Public Schools) 716 (Private Schools)
Correctional Facilities	13
Healthcare Facilities	110 (Hospitals) 858 (Long-term Care Facilities)
Major Private Employers (>500 employees)	743
Event Venues	1,005
Farms	688
Farmers Markets	131
Food Banks	9

KEY SHORT TERM ISSUES

- **Office of Food Security Advocate** (A5884/S3945) – Mark Dinglasan
- DEP publication of the final **“Food Waste Reduction Plan”** for the State
- Implementing the **Food Recycling Act A2371/S865**, effective 10/14/21
- County Food Waste Reduction Planning Act: (pending as **A1439**)
- Advancing a **“Community Food Recovery & Composting”** campaign
- Coordinating climate education – **Organics Education Committee**



LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

- Community Gardens Exemption Bill: A4547
- Community Garden “Buy-A-Lot” Bill: Under Development
- Regional School Composting Bill: A4548
- Backyard Composting Exemption Bill: Being Written
- Share Table Liability Limitation Bill: Under Development
- Food Bank/Pantry/Kitchen Small Grants Assistance Bill
- Tiered Compost Facility Regulation Bill



OTHER IMPORTANT WORK UNDERWAY

- **\$172,000** Stockton/Rutgers REA Grant: *“Food Asset Recovery Statewide GIS Mapping Project”*
- **\$335,261** Rutgers REA Grant: Food waste/climate change curriculum development: *“New Jersey Leaves No Bite Behind”*
- **\$18,000** NJ State Policy Lab Grant : *“Comparative analysis of State Food Recovery/Reduction Policies”*
- **\$25,000** Center For EcoTechnology: US EPA *“Municipal, Business, Institution Education Grant”*
- **\$235,000** REA Grant to Sustainable Jersey: *In-vessel compost units in George Catrambone in Long Branch, Delran and Newton Elementary Schools and Sustainable Food Management Tool Kit Development*
- **Sustainable Jersey Actions:** *Community Food Pantry/Bank and Soup Kitchen under “Food” Action Area*
- **Bergen White Paper:** *County Template for Food System Assessments & Outreach Coordination*
- Rutgers Cooperative Extension: *1-Hour **Health Inspector Training Module***

QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

GSONDERMEYER@BAYSHORERECYCLING.COM





Peter Barcellona

Director

“We Feed -
Woodbridge”

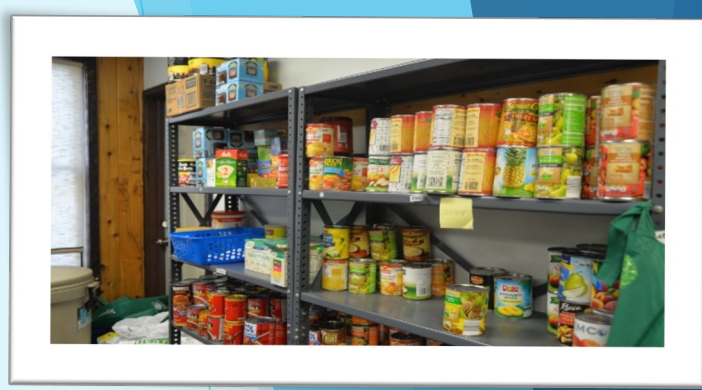




WE FEED • WOODBRIDGE
Feeding our Community



We Feed Woodbridge



- “We Feed - Woodbridge” is a network of eleven independently run, volunteer driven food pantries founded in 1992.
- “We Feed” works in conjunction with the Woodbridge Township Department of Health and Human Services and sponsors several major food drives throughout the year, collecting over 100,000 lbs. of food each year.
- Our network of food pantries assists over fourteen hundred families per month.



Canvas Bags

- 5000 bags purchased by private donor
- All eleven pantries currently using reusable bags



Food Recovery Partnerships:

- Pomptonian - township schools food service provider
 - Milk
 - Produce
 - Prepackaged items (cereal)
- Local supermarkets and convenient stores (Shop-Rite, Wegmans, WaWa)
 - Prepackaged meals
 - Produce
 - Bakery items
- Local Restaurants
 - Pamphlet being distributed to all township restaurants
 - Goal is to partner with local restaurants recovering food for pantry distribution
 - Health Inspectors training

DONATING FOOD IS SAFE
New Jersey and federal Good Samaritan laws protect businesses from liability when they donate food in good faith that the business believes to be safe and edible.

EASY
Many food rescue organizations can provide businesses with containers, pick up the food on a regular schedule, and provide the business with documentation for their records.

GOOD FOR BUSINESS
Not only can the business save on hauling costs, but the donation may also qualify for an enhanced tax deduction.

FOOD THAT CAN BE DONATED

- Hot Food that was not served and kept at temperature and/or cooled properly
- Cold Food that was not served and kept at temperature
- Produce
- Beverages
- Packaged Items
- Dairy Products
- Raw Meat
- Foods past "best by"/"sell by" dates but that are fit for consumption

FOOD THAT CANNOT BE DONATED

- Previously served food such as from a buffet or returned to the business
- Distressed foods that have been in a flood, fire, smoke, etc.
- Food in sharply dented or rusty cans
- Food in opened or torn containers

REMEMBER FOOD SAFETY

Potentially Hazardous Foods

- Cut Produce such as cut tomatoes, melons, lettuce
- Dairy
- Meat
- Seafood

Hot foods must be kept at 135°F or above
Cold foods must be kept at 41°F or below
Bacteria grows between these temperatures
Reach out to your health inspector to learn how you can get started!

In the US, **30%-40%** of the food we grow is wasted

Each person wastes more than **20 pounds** of food per month

There are **49 million** people, including more than **16 million** children, who are food insecure or at risk of going hungry

Food donation is **critical** for channeling appropriate food to people in need

We hope you will do your part to support our municipality to reduce food waste and support food security.

FOOD DONATION IN NEW JERSEY

The Rutgers Cooperative Extension, Center for EcoTechnology (CET) and Sustainable Jersey worked together to develop this document which provides guidance for New Jersey food waste generators on opportunities to donate food. The document consolidates federal and state regulations, including information on liability protection, health codes and more.

RUTGERS New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station
CENTER FOR ECOTECHNOLOGY

SUSTAINABLE JERSEY

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY

MAYOR JOHN E. MCCORMAC
Township of Woodbridge

Peter Barcellona
Director of We Feed Woodbridge
Peter.Barcellona@twp.woodbridge.nj.us

732-855-0600 x5034

Our New Food Recovery Distribution Site

- Food storage capacity
- Process and distribution from this site to food pantries





Catherine Hirschman Choudhry

Westfield Green Team



Westfield's Food Waste Recycling Program

Fueling our Journey to Sustainability

Catherine Choudhry, Zero Waste Lead, Westfield Green Team Member



What I Will Cover Today

- Our approach to creating a food waste recycling program in Westfield
- How we engaged our 30,000 residents
- Our elementary school pilot program
- Program economics
- Next steps toward sustainable food management



How the program got started...



Experience in NYC with DSNY's
organics recycling program
2013-2016

Identified a need in Westfield

Visited RVSA and CORE facilities
Fall 2018

Engaged potential key stakeholders
January 2019

Official program kick-off
November 2019

Engaging Key Stakeholders and Building the Case

January 2019



Jim Van Woert,
Area Director of Diversion
Strategies Waste Management



Dr. Serpil Guran
Director of Rutgers' EcoComplex



Jim Meehan,
Executive Director Rahway Valley
Sewerage Authority



We invited: Town Engineer, Town Administrator, Head of Public Works,
Council Members, Local Businesses

From Concept to Town Approval

Key Player/Champion: David Contract, Westfield Town Council Member, Liaison to the Green Team, Chair of the Department of Public Works, Finance Committee Member

1) Assessed Community Interest
Spring 2019

2) Secured Committee
Approval
Summer 2019

3) Secured Town Council
Approval
Fall 2019

4) Launched and Promoted
November 2019

5) Quickly Expanded
December 2019



Processing the Collected Food Waste

Key Player: Arielle Bernard: Waste Management's CORE Sales Support Manager



Location
847 Flora St
Elizabeth, NJ

500 tons per day
permitted capacity

Long-term
partnership with
Rahway Valley
Sewerage Authority
(RVSA)

Food waste transported to CORE

CORE[®] in Operation

From food waste organics to EBS[®]



CORE[®] SSO Receipt Hopper & Bioseparator

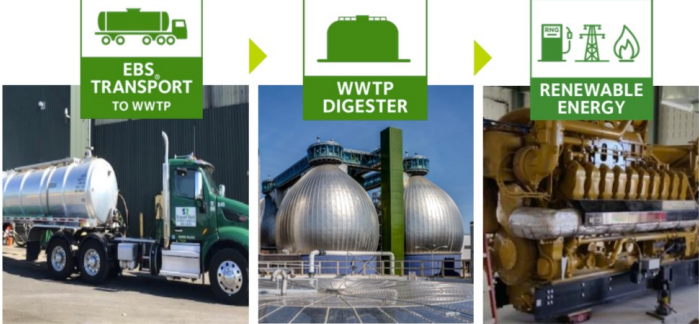
EBS[®] Mixing and Storage Tank

EBS[®] Product

Food transformed into an engineered bio-slurry (EBS)

EBS[®] Transported to WWTP


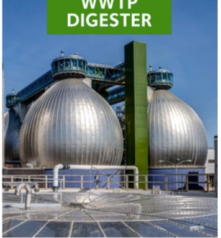

Brought to WWTP for co-digestion/energy production




EBS[®] TRANSPORT TO WWTP

WWTP DIGESTER

RENEWABLE ENERGY



10

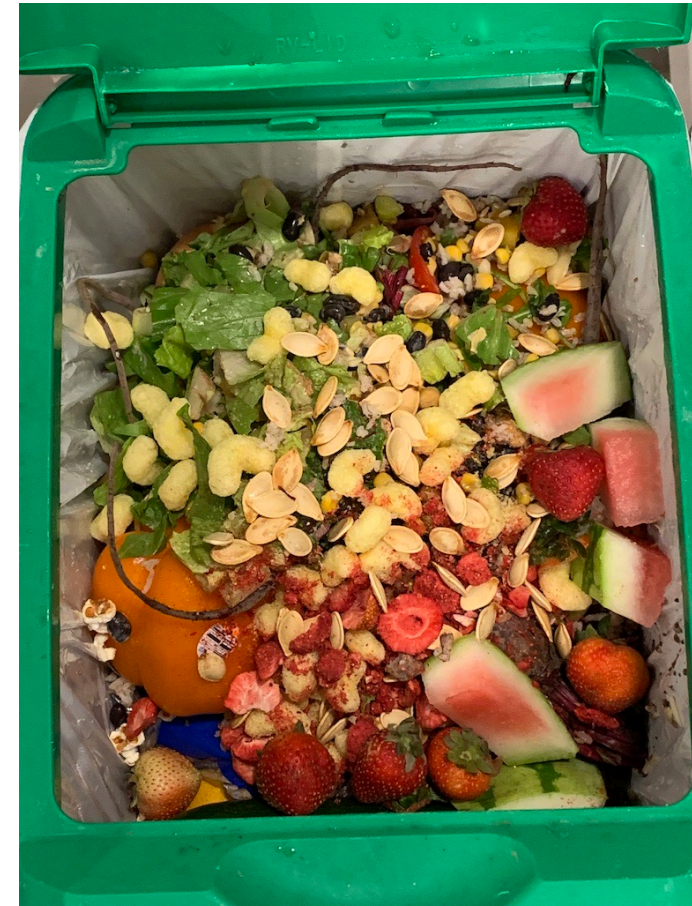


EBS transported to a wastewater treatment digester where it is converted to energy



Overview of How Residents Participate

- ▶ I keep my bin in the kitchen
- ▶ It has a lid to help with any smells- just like regular kitchen garbage
- ▶ I take it weekly to our Conservation Center
- ▶ For this program, food waste can be collected in a container or a non-black plastic bag
- ▶ Low barrier to entry



Food Waste Collection at the Conservation Center

Key Player: Richard Eubanks: Westfield Department of Public Works, Supervisor Parks & Fields Division, Westfield's Recycling Coordinator

- ▶ Working with Waste Management to get started
- ▶ Initial concerns
- ▶ Demands on staff
- ▶ Troubleshooting contamination



Spreading the Word

Jackie Lieberman & Matt Kadosh

TAPintoWestfield
Your Neighborhood News Online

LOGIN SUBMIT CONTENT

NEWSLETTER SIGNUP

Thu, Oct 13, 2022

Choose your town Search

Advertise Franchise TAPinto

Green

Westfield First in Union County to Feed Into New Food Waste Process

The Westfield Southsider · Join
Kirti Malik · Dec 12, 2019 · 📍

Hey Westfield- You hit the ground running and filled up the organic recycling bin faster than Waste Management could empty it! So, due to popular demand, there will now be THREE bins available for drop offs.

Just a reminder that while it is okay to... See more



1:02

www.tapinto.net

TAPinto Westfield

KEAN UNIVERSITY
Cougars Climb HIGHER

Westfield > Green

Green

Westfield Food Waste Recycling Program Returns



f t 🗑️ +



Food Waste Recycling Only

Fruits, Vegetables, Poultry, Meat, Seafood, Dairy, Bakery & Dry Goods, Liquids & Beverages, Teabags & Coffee Grounds



YES:
Food waste is being recycled at WM's CORE Facility. Plastic liners are acceptable (except black bags) or dispose of food waste directly into toter.

- NO**
- Glass
 - Wood
 - Chemicals, paints, & other hazardous material
 - Aluminum foil & trays
 - Clothing & linens
 - Corks
 - Polystyrene foam
 - Yard waste
 - Dirt, rocks, stones



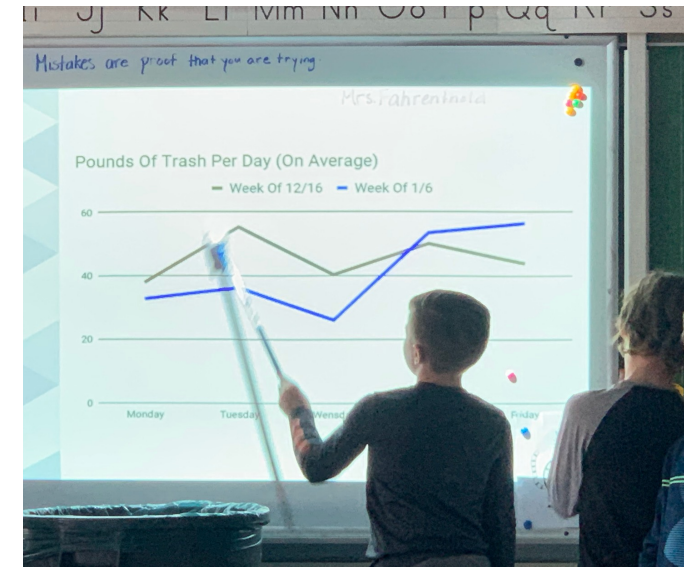
Small amounts of soiled paper goods, fats, oils, greases, and florals are acceptable. These items can contaminate recyclables if found in large quantities.

To learn more, visit www.westfieldnj.gov/green.



Food Waste Recycling in an Elementary School

- ▶ Westfield Board of Education approved pilot in one of its ten schools
- ▶ Green Team worked with the principal, head custodian and a science teacher
- ▶ Students performed an assessment of the school's waste
- ▶ Most importantly we supported a very engaged group of 5th graders who educated the community and facilitated the waste sorting at lunch



Economic Considerations of Food Waste Recycling

- ▶ We need to switch from seeing food waste as heavy garbage to a valuable resource that we want to keep in our community
- ▶ Food waste is often heavier than other items found in household trash
- ▶ Currently it is \$355/month for three 64 gallon toters to be picked up weekly.
- ▶ Sustainable Jersey did give a grant to Cranford to start their own waste recycling program - there is some money out there
- ▶ If residents are source separating and food waste is being recycled, there is less garbage generated and waste removal fees can be renegotiated



Looking Ahead



Embarking on a Sustainable Organics Material Management Plan

Catherine Choudhry, Westfield Green Team Member

With direction and support from Gary Sondermeyer

17 Core Opportunities for Action

THE NEW JERSEY
CLIMATE CHANGE
ALLIANCE ORGANICS
WORKGROUP

Westfield as a Pilot Community

Engaging Broader Community



Next Steps and Concluding Thoughts

- ▶ Lunch and Learn with Important Community Leaders: clergy, BOE, Girl Scouts, library, volunteer organizations
- ▶ This is a piece of the puzzle for Westfield
 - ▶ We also have backyard composting
 - ▶ We would love to have an in-vessel composter
 - ▶ We have school gardens and are looking at a possible community garden
 - ▶ We would also be interested in diverting food waste to a composting facility
 - ▶ We have an active food pantry that wants to expand
 - ▶ We would like more food waste recycling drop off locations in town
- ▶ We are looking to think bigger in an effort to have a more comprehensive way to recover more food as well as divert food waste from our landfills
- ▶ Identify champions



Sustainable Jersey Underwriters and Sponsors

Program Underwriters



Grant Program Underwriters



Corporate Sponsors

