

Union composting pilot program
September 20, 2022

Attendees: Scott Tess, Kevin Sanderson, Dave Guth, Meredith Moore, Jennifer Fraterrigo, Stacy Gloss, Daphne Hulse, Dan Hiser, Pete Varney
Urbana, Union, iSEE, F&S

Scott provided background on current LRC operations:

- Pre-consumer commercially generated compost to Landscape Recycling Center
- A private licensed hauler (Dave Levitt Disposal) with pre-consumer commercial facilities collects compost in 13 gallon totes
- Scrap is hauled on trailer, bring to LRC on E. University M – S 8 – 3:30
- LRC is both retail and disposal facility – sells mulch and compost
- Food scrap gets tipped into concrete bin, covered with leaf matter, and blends back into leaf windrows, a tiny fraction of screened garden compost product
- Start small – strict on contamination (garbage, not compostable materials) to eventually grow over time
- LRC charges a tipping fee (disposal) and product sales – so food-scrap brought to LRC charges the hauler. LRC wants to charge to cover their fees but not so much to price out new commercial businesses from participating
- Food-scrap needs to be covered as soon as food scrap is tipped – so staff need to be on-hand to accept the foodscrap and cover it with leaf litter material immediately. Currently scheduled 2x per week to keep control over when compost is tipped.
- Limiting spacing at dumpsite, big trucks can't come and go
- Urbana has a permit on how much food scrap can be accepted (currently at 10%)

Current participants:

- Café Paradiso coffee grounds
- Common Ground Food COOP
- Eastern IL Food Bank (fraction of their waste volume)

What services does hauler provide?

LRC is a disposal and retail facility. It's between hauler and waste generator to figure out how many totes are needed depending on compost waste stream.

University note:

Scott requests the University to come with idea for small scale, tightly controlled and expand in future.

Who is the hauler?

Josh Parr at Dale Levitt Disposal are the company that provides the hauling service.

At LRC what can go in compost pile?

Starting with “no” and “strict” – food scrap only. Piles aren’t super hot, uses end loader. They turn over compost in about 1 year from leaf to sold-screen garden compost. If material is compostable but needs 2 years in hot pile, it won’t compost at LRC. Tess can provide list of materials that are acceptable.

Only vegetable and plant based – grain, eggshells, vegetables are ok, paper lawn bags.
Meat/Dairy is not allowed.

Meredith asks, “How would this work at the Union, Dave?” For example, residents bring foodscraps to a tumbler on campus; but bags are left in. How would this work in Union?

David would start with food vendors. Already internal mechanism for cooking grease. Vendor collects cooking grease from centralize tank for transfer. Adding some Thai fusion in food court and a Mexican vendor is going into Qdoba space, Tropical Smoothie, ACAI berry thing, Starbucks etc. He would bring in managers from those areas. Would like to start small and do a pilot; not have food-scrap drop off from students.

Meredith: is student drop-off possible? She gets email every week asking for compost drop offs. Can there be a public bin to control? Coffee & Vegetable ONLY. Not in public eye. There is high demand for this.

Dave answer: Food-waste coming from outside to a food vendor would be a health issue. Battery recycling programs are a challenge to manage – can’t take batteries anymore but people kept dropping off batteries. Concern is that people might bring scraps that contain meat. No time or staff to separate compostable from non-compostable product. Prefers to start small with vendors, make it convenient.

Kevin: An EPA rule is odor containment – meat affects odor control

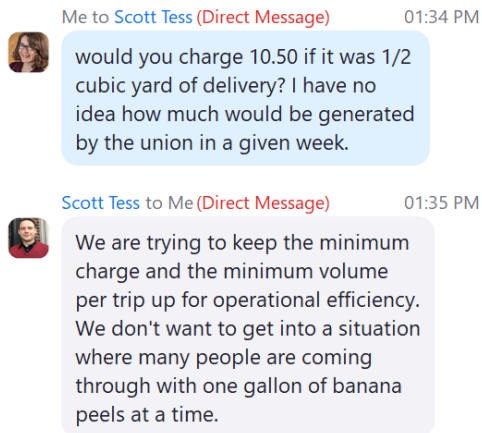
Dave: waste, power and utilities is already covered by the vendors. Looking for creative way to eliminate or finding a funding source to make the program work financially. Tight margins in food service. He’s interested in / not yet sure of the cost structure for participating in this program. 2x a week pick-up / drop-off might be able to scheduled with existing drivers without external waste hauler. F&S does waste collection right now and picking up recycling. The hauler of landfill waste is F&S.

LRC won’t franchise hauling services right now. Any hauler can bring pre-consumer commercially generated foodscrap. Taking care of it in-house is ok in the long-term-timeline. Keven wants a timeframe / staff operators available and someone present at first time tipping to check on contamination.

At Union, could start with food vendors in back-of-house program.

David: is there a cost per pound or cost per tote?

Scott: charging \$21 per cubic yard, this is approximately 6 x 13-gallon totes. Then there are hauler fees on top of that.



The more work for F&S staff, the more difficult/expensive the job becomes.

Logistics conversation ensues. Discussion between pros/cons of Dale Levitt vs. FS. Additional considerations – location for receptacles, truck access, business interest. **Meredith will call Dale Levitt as next step and set up meeting with Meredith, Josh, Daphne, Dave. Dave will work on generating anticipating volume.**