

2021 Progress Report for the City of Gainesville's Residential Food Waste Pilot Project Funded by the USDA's Community Compost & Food Waste Reduction Grant

SUMMARY OF PROJECT OBJECTIVES, INDICATORS, AND DELIVERABLES

OBJECTIVE 1: Evaluate the viability of using community composters to provide residential food waste collection to midsize communities by studying program participation by analyzing subscription numbers, set-out rates, food waste amounts, and contamination levels.

Critical indicators associated with the objective, through the end of October 2021, are as follows:

- **Subscription Numbers:** The current subscription rate is at 200 households which matches the project goal. The average monthly subscription rate was 189.6 from April 2021 to September 2021.
- **Set-out Rate:** The average weekly set-out rate is currently at 75.4%.
- **Participation Rate:** The participation rate is currently estimated at 98%. The project goal is 95%. For this pilot project, the participation rate is measured as the total number of households actively participating in the pilot program as determined by a household setting out a food waste collection container at least once during a given month.
- **Contamination Level:** The contamination level is 0.07%, which is well below the goal of less than 2% contamination.
- **Food Waste Amount:** From data gathered through random sampling three times since the start of the program. The average set out weight was measured at 6.8 lbs/set-out in April 2021, 10.0 lbs./set-out in June 2021, and 7.3 lbs/set-out in September 2021.
- **GHG reduction:** The estimated reduction in greenhouse gas emissions to date is 10.92 MTCO₂E. This value was calculated by using the total tons of material diverted from landfilling and the EPA's Waste Reduction Model (WARM) application with an average transportation distance of 10 miles. This reduction in Greenhouse Gases is equivalent to Removing annual emissions from 2 Passenger Vehicles, Conserving 1228 Gallons of Gasoline, or Conserving 455 Cylinders of Propane Used for Home Barbeques.
- **Cost Savings:** A cost savings evaluation was not available at the time this report was submitted. The full set of data is needed to calculate the cost savings for the community composter at the end of the service collection period in September 2022. The goal is a 33% reduction in costs to the customer based on a reduction of trash in the trash cart.

A full evaluation and a compiled recommendation to determine the practicality of expanding residential food waste collection services using community composters in similar-sized communities will require a completed set of data over the entire service collection period. When the food waste pilot collection ends in September 2022, we will analyze the data and produce a deliverable report.

OBJECTIVE 2: Build on the existing composting infrastructure in Gainesville to produce a high quantity final compost product while maintaining the same high level of quality.

To date, this food waste pilot project has already added to the composting infrastructure in Gainesville by increasing employment and the quantity of a high-quality compost product.

- **Infrastructure:** The composting contractor for this pilot project, Beaten Path Compost, has increased from one employee to three employees to provide the collection and composting management services necessary for this pilot program.
- **Quantity & Quality:** Since the start of this pilot program, Beaten Path Compost has increased the quantity of food waste they collect by approximately one-third. Most of the material collected from the pilot program is vegetative scraps mixed with coffee grounds which makes a great compost mix as it works its way through the piles relatively quickly. With virtually zero contaminating rate of incoming materials, the quality of the final product has as maintained a high level of quality.
- **The baseline for sale price per volume of Beath Path Compost’s standard cured final product was recorded at \$40 per cubic yard.** A full inventory of compost products sold and at what prices were not available at the time this report was submitted.

OBJECTIVE 3: Assist the City of Gainesville in better educating its residents on the importance and benefits of food waste composting.

To date, several educational indicators and deliverable have been achieved.

- **Pilot Outreach Materials:** SWD staff produced program educational materials, including a sign-up mailer, service container decal, service guide, and food waste webpage. All these outreach materials help to better educate residents on food waste composting.
- **Reducing Waste Food Outreach Materials:** In cooperation with project partners, SWD staff produced a “Love Food, Hate Waste” outreach piece that provided residents with information on the benefits of reducing food waste and tips on how to reduce wasting food.
- **Outreach Totals:** The total number of residents reached through education and outreach efforts is estimated at 7,000. This total was calculated from the number of webpage views, social media impressions, number of mailings, Gainesville Sun readership (article on 5/9/21), and the number of program participants using viewer analytics.

ABBREVIATIONS

City of Gainesville (COG), Solid Waste Division (SWD), Beaten Path Compost (BPC)

PROJECT TIMELINE

Project Phase	Approximate Time Period	Project Tasks
Phase I - Preparation	Oct. 2020 – Mar. 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Execute a final grant agreement between the USDA & COG ✓ Obtain quotes from vendors for supplies (buckets, kitchen pails, printings) ✓ Secure proposals from contractors

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Acquire address lists and maps of neighborhoods, and select pilot zones ✓ Began drafting text and design work on educational materials (sign-up postcard, decal, service guide, website text & FAQ's, etc.)
Phase II – Ordering Supplies/Equipment	Dec. 2020 – Mar. 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Initiate purchase orders for supplies (buckets & lids, and kitchen pails) and printing (sign-up postcards, decals, service guide) ✓ Initiate purchase orders for contractual services with Beaten Path Compost, Working Food, and Grow Hub ✓ Complete the design work for printed materials and sent to print ✓ Complete neighborhood maps and sort address lists of homes in pilot zones in preparation for mailings ✓ Establish a baseline price per volume of BPC's final compost product
Phase III – Launch Food Waste Collection Program	Feb. 2021 – Apr. 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Create Food Waste Pilot webpage and online sign-up form ✓ Receive supplies from vendors (buckets & lids, kitchen pails, decals, sign-up postcards, and service guides) ✓ Prepare supplies for delivery (decal buckets and kitchen pails) ✓ Collaborate with Working Food and graphic designer to complete the text and design for “Reducing Wasted Food” educational piece ✓ Mail out sign-up postcards and track registrations ✓ Complete route maps for collections ✓ Deliver supplies to pilot participants ✓ Begin service on the first Tuesday in April 2021
Phase IV – Maintain Services and Measure	Apr. 2021 – Sep. 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to provide weekly collection of food waste collection and track service data • Deliver supplies to new sign-ups, redeliver supplies to participants, and resolve customer service issues as needed • Sample curbside sets outs weights, fullness, and contamination levels at least once per quarter ✓ Distribute “Reducing Wasted Food” education piece to participants and general public • Host composting and food waste workshops (Working Food) • Update route maps and address lists as needed • Continue to send out monthly emails to participants • Complete summary reports on project and send to USDA as required
Phase V – Reporting	Oct. 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calculate the reduction in cost to the customer

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate financial data to determine the practicality of expanding residential food waste collection services in the area • Complete report on compiled recommendations gathered from this pilot project
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EQUIPMENT & CONTRACTS

The COG issued purchase orders and received equipment and supplies as follows:

- **480 yellow 5-gallon buckets with handles and 480 yellow “easy-peel” lids from Uline.** Two 5-gallon buckets with lids were needed per participant for the full/empty curbside bucket exchange collection method, plus extra were ordered to replace lost or damaged buckets. SWD staff placed the square decals on the sides of each of the yellow buckets prior to delivery to participants. The color yellow was selected so the buckets would be easily visible for collection, and yellow was not one of the colors of other SWD service containers.



Yellow Buckets Ready for Delivery

- **240 beige kitchen compost pails with lids from Toter.** One 2-gallon kitchen compost pail was needed per participant, plus extras were ordered to replace lost or damaged pails. SWD staff placed the square decals on the front of each of the kitchen pails prior to delivery to participants. Beige color containers were the only color option available.



Kitchen Compost Pail

- **250 custom printed Bucket Mini Flyers (Service Guides) from Magnetic Attractions.** These service guides were delivered with each new sign-up along with the bucket, bucket lid, and kitchen compost pail.
- **900 custom printed Food Waste Decals from Kewanna Screen Printing.** 480 were placed on the yellow buckets, and 240 were placed on the front of the kitchen compost pails. Extras were ordered for spares in case of sticker placement errors and for use later on if needed.
- **500 custom printed sticky pads (12,500) Contamination Labels from Print4Less.com.** The minimum order for sticky notes was 500 pads of 25 sheets (labels) per pad.
- **3,000 custom printed sign-up mailers (postcards) from Alta, Inc.** to promote the program and increase program participation. The initial mailing included 1,192 custom postcards with the addresses (“variable data processing”) printed on the postage side of the mailer.

The COG issued contracts and purchase orders for services as follows:

- **Beaten Path Compost for the collection and compost processing contract at a rate of \$15 per participating home per month.** BPC is a community composter responsible for the weekly collection of food waste materials from residential homes participating in this pilot program. Also, BPC is responsible for processing the food waste material and managing the compost pile to produce the final compost product.

- **Grow Hub for compost operational space and equipment usage contract in the amount of \$3,275.** Grow Hub is the landlord to BPC and has composting equipment available for usage by BPC as needed.
- **Working Food for educational services contract in the amount of \$2,000.** Working Food provided their expertise in the development of the “Love Food, Hate Waste – Reducing Your Food Waste” information piece and provides online educational workshops.

PILOT AREA SELECTION

Working closely with the BPC, SWD staff selected four zones for the food waste pilot program. The selection of these pilot zones was based on various factors, including but not limited to: 1) The level of public interest received from residents within the city to increase the likelihood of participation; 2) Neighborhoods will well-defined borders and not separated by significant roadways to minimize route service times; 3) The density of the homes within a neighborhood to maximize collection efficiencies; 4) Trash service day on and off the Tuesday food waste collection day to test out differences; 5) The proximity to other pilot zones to minimize transit times between pilot zones; and, 5) Zones with better than average recycling participation rates to increase the likelihood of participation.

With support from the City’s GIS team, SWD staff mapped each of the four selected pilot areas marking each home’s address on the maps. The City’s GIS team also generated a list of all the addresses within the given zones. Non-residential addresses within each pilot zones were removed from the address lists by SWD staff in preparation of mailings. Some corrections to the list of addresses were made later on as a small number of mailings were returned undeliverable (i.e., turn out to be vacant lots).

A total of 1,588 homes were identified within the four pilot zones selected. The pilot zones, neighborhood names, and the total number of single-family homes within the zones are as follows:

Zone	Neighborhood Name(s)	Total No. of Homes
1	Sugarfoot	353
2	Libby Heights, Skyline, Pine Glen, Crest View & Littlewood Estates	195
3	Westmoreland, Palm View, Westwood, Fernwood, Sunnybrook & Cheswood Park	604
4	Forest Ridge, Maple Ridge, Henderson Heights & Hermitage	436

PROGRAM RECRUITMENT

In partnership with the City's Communications team, SWD staff developed, designed, and printed recruitment mailers. The oversized "sign-up" postcards were 10 inches by 6 inches, double-sided, self-mailers. In addition, SWD staff created a vanity URL "CityofGainesville.org/FoodWaste" and an online food waste pilot signup form on the City's website. This URL was used to direct residents to sign-up online and provide additional information on the pilot program.

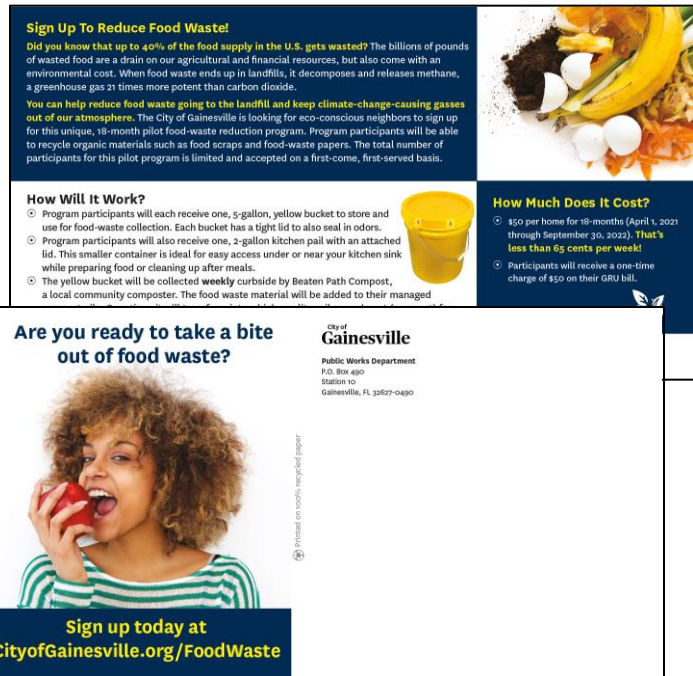
Program recruitment was initiated in series of graduated steps to avoid exceeding the maximum number of homes (200) that the grant funding would support. Sign-up postcards were first mailed to all the homes within Zone 1 and Zone 2. SWD staff closely monitor the sign-up rate and comments from residents. With less than 50 sign-ups after the third week after the first set of sign-up postcards were dropped in the mail, it became abundantly clear to SWD staff that the \$50 pilot participation fee was limiting the number of sign-ups. Therefore, SWD staff decided to drop the \$50 participation fee to achieve the desired number of program participants. Participants that signed up before the fee was dropped were notified by email or phone call that the participation requirement were being waived. No participation fee funds were ever collected or charged to pilot program participants.

A second set of modified sign-up postcards was quickly mailed out to all the homes in Zones 1 & 2. SWD staff also went door-to-door within Zone 1 to increase the number of program sign-ups. By the fifth week of recruitment, the number of program signups was still under 100, so sign-up postcards (without the \$50 fee information) were mailed out to homes in Zone 3 and Zone 4. SWD staff also contacted neighborhood representatives to promote the pilot program to residents on neighborhoods' private & public Facebook pages.

Registrations (sign-ups) were tracked from the initial mailing and continued to be tracked today by SWD staff. The name, address, email, phone number, and pilot zone area of each sign-up gets recorded by SWD staff, and a return email is sent to each new sign-up acknowledging the receipt of their sign-up request within one business day. Cancellations, new delivery of equipment, and redelivery of equipment are recorded as well by SWD staff.

DISTRIBUTION & COLLECTION

SWD staff produced route maps of each Zone for BPC to improve distribution and collection efficiencies. Each participating home was marked on the map for each pilot zone. Then SWD staff generated routing



directions within each zone to minimize route time and overlapping collection paths. Maps were modified as new sign-ups were received, and maps were periodically updated as the program continued. Additionally, a list of each address and the collection order with a zone was created. The address list is updated as needed and shared with BPC.



Map of Sugarfoot Neighborhood (Zone 1)

On March 30, 2021 (one week before the first scheduled collection date), **155** participating homes were delivered supplies for the pilot program by BPC. Each participant was delivered to their front doorstep: one 5-gallon yellow bucket; one matching bucket lid; one kitchen compost pail; and one service guide. SWD staff delivered equipment to new sign-ups following the initial delivery period (21 in April, 13 in May, 2 in June, and 1 in July). Only two cancellations were recorded, and the supplies were returned from these residents.



Beaten Path Crew Delivery Yellow Buckets on 3/30/2021



Yellow Buckets Delivered to Front Doorstep of Homes

Participants set out their food scraps in their yellow bucket with the lid on curbside by 7:00 AM every Tuesday. Each Tuesday, BPC removes the buckets & lids with food scraps inside and leaves behind an empty, clean bucket with the lid on. The first collection was on April 6, 2021, and collection have continued every Tuesday by BPC since. The total number of set outs are recorded each week by BPC and relayed to SWD staff for program tracking (see Data Tracking section of this report). BPC has a supply of

“Oops” tags to use to mark any containers with contamination. However, to date, the use of the “Oops” tags has been necessary as participants rarely if ever put any contaminants in with their food scraps.

BPC transports the buckets with food scraps inside to their facility, where the material is added to the main compost pile. Each “dirty” bucket gets sprayed down and cleaned by hand. Most of the water used to clean the buckets gets consolidated and then added to the main compost pile. Excess or over-splash water during the cleaning process is used to water fruit trees or the grass on site.

COMPOSTING OPERATIONS

Since the start of this pilot program, Beaten Path Compost has increased the volume of food waste they collect by approximately one-third. Most of the material collected from the pilot program is vegetative scraps mixed with coffee grounds. This makes a great compost mix as it works its way through the piles relatively quickly.

The food waste reaches 130 degrees Fahrenheit within a day of being set into the compost piles. It then takes about two months to work it through the primary pile at temperatures of 140 to 150 degrees before the food waste and mulch break down enough to start curing. Since rain is used as the primary watering method for this compost operation, the exact processing time can vary.

The compost piles are left to cure for 8 to 10 months for the worms, fungi, and macroinvertebrates to work the pile. This longer curing time results in a final product with a balanced pH that can be directly land applied and put into use by growers. Beaten Path Compost expects a good volume of material will be available for sale later this fall and winter.

We’d be remiss not to mention the contribution of the flock of chickens (and one very vocal goose) that pick through the food waste for daily nourishment and help support the ecosystem at Beaten Path’s facility. The natural fertilizer that the chickens return to the surrounding soil supports lush grasses, many flowering plants, and nearby trees. All this added vegetative growth helps sequester more carbon from our atmosphere and provides a habitat for other animals. Additionally, eggs from the chickens are used in meals of the humans and canine guardians that protect the chickens.

The route collection time for all four pilot areas combined takes less than two hours to complete. Removing the food waste from the yellow buckets and cleaning the buckets can be time-consuming. However, Beaten Path Compost staff has become more efficient over time at this process. Beaten Path Compost hired two employees to provide the collection and composting management services necessary for this pilot program.



Food waste from yellow buckets gets added to compost pile



Turning of compost pile

EDUCATION

- Webpage.** Before announcing the project to the public, SWD staff created a vanity URL [“CityofGainesville.org/FoodWaste”](http://CityofGainesville.org/FoodWaste) and an online food waste pilot sign-up form on the City’s web portal. The “Food Waste Pilot Program” webpage contained details about the program, including a list of the accepted and not accepted materials in the program, pilot zones, a downloadable copy of the program service guide, helpful food waste links, and an extensive list of frequently asked questions and answers written by SWD staff. An online food waste sign-up form was linked to the main Food Waste Pilot Program page, with the goal of having potential participants read through the program details before signing up for the program. Over 95% of the food waste sign-ups were received by residents that completed the online sign-up form. The remaining sign-ups called into the SWD to provide their information to register for the program.

Food Waste Pilot Program

As of 5/12/2021: We have room for ~~40~~ 9 more homes within one of the pilot areas to join this program.

Contact Us
(352) 334-2330
waste@cityofgainesville.org

Follow Us
Facebook, Twitter

Sign Up To Reduce Food Waste!
Did you know that up to 40% of the food supply in the U.S. gets wasted? The billions of pounds of wasted food annually are not only a drain on our agricultural and financial resources but also come with an environmental cost. When food waste ends up in landfills, it decomposes and releases methane, a greenhouse gas 21 times more potent than carbon dioxide.

You can help reduce food waste going to the landfill and keep climate-change-causing gasses out of our atmosphere. The City of Gainesville is looking for eco-conscious residents to sign up for a unique 18-month pilot food waste reduction program. Program participants will be able to recycle organic materials such as food scraps and food waste papers.

The total number of participants for this pilot program is limited, and participants in your neighborhood will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. For operational purposes, food waste collection services for this pilot program will be limited to selected pilot program neighborhoods only. If the opportunity exists to expand the program at a later date to more homes in other neighborhoods, the Solid Waste division will notify those newly eligible homes by mail.

Below are the current pilot program areas:

Neighborhood	Approximate Range	Map
Sugarfoot	W. University Ave. to SW 7th Ave., and SW 37th St. to SW Clear Lake Dr.	Download
Libby and Skyline Heights, Pine Glen, Crest View & Littlewood Estates	NW 13th Pl. to NW 8th Ave., and NW 34th St. to NW 38th St.	Download
Westmoreland, Palm View, Westwood, Fernwood, Sunnybrook & Cheswood Park	NW 16th Blvd. to NW 8th Ave., and NW 38th St. to NW 43rd St.	Download
Forest Ridge, Henderson Heights, Hermitage, Maple	~NW 27th Ave. to NW 16th Ave., and NW 20th	Download

Helpful Food Waste Related Links
How to Reduce Wasted Food & Save Monday
General Food Waste FAQs
The Problem of Food Waste
Reducing Wasted Food At Home
Tips to Reduce Food Waste
Stop Food Waste

Service Instructions
[Thumbnail of Service Instructions]

Food Waste Program FAQs
What is ACCEPTED in my yellow bucket?

Screen Print of Food Waste Pilot Program Webpage

- Decals.** SWD staff worked with the City’s Communications graphic designer to create the 6” by 6” full-color decals for the yellow buckets and kitchen pails. SWD staff meticulously sorted through available online stock photos of food and food waste to select images that were the best fit for this program. SWD staff also consulted with BPC to develop a condensed list of accepted and not accepted materials. 900 custom printed vinyl decals were ordered and received, and then one each placed on each yellow bucket and each kitchen compost pail by SWD staff.

Food Waste Only

Accepted

Bread, Pasta, Rice & Beans Dairy & Nuts Coffee & Tea

Fruits & Vegetables Processed Foods Food Waste Papers

Not Accepted

No Meat, Fish or Bones No Diapers or Toilet Paper
 No Glass, Plastic, Foam, Metal or Foil No Clothing or Textiles
 No Dryer or Vacuum Lint No Rocks, Sand, Dirt, Lumber or Logs
 No Pet Waste or Cat Litter No Pills or Medications
 No Garbage or Trash No Chemical or Cleaning Wipes

City of Gainesville Questions? Call 352-334-2330
 Visit CityofGainesville.org/FoodWaste

Food Waste Decal

- Bucket Mini Flyer (Service Guide).** SWD staff worked with the City’s Communications graphic designer to create the 8” by 10” full-color double-sided service guides. A magnetic strip applied to the top of the backside of this piece was designed to allow participants the ability to hang this handout on their refrigerator or in another location for quick reference when needed. 250 customer printed service guides were delivered along with the bucket and kitchen pail for each new sign-up. A pdf copy of the service guide was shared in the initial sign-up received email message sent out to new participants, and a downloadable copy was made available on the food waste pilot webpage.



- Contamination Labels (Oops Tags).** SWD staff developed contamination notices to be printed on 3” by 4” sticky note pad sheets. The food waste Oops Tags were designed not to be overly burdensome for the auditor to complete when contamination was spotted and give the auditor the ability to stick completed tags to the top of the yellow bucket lids. The minimum print order for sticky note pads was 500 pads with 25 sheets per pad, so with 12,500 contamination labels available, the SWD is well stocked with this item. After weekly audits by the BPC collection team and two field audits by SWD staff, there hasn’t been one instance of contamination or the need to leave an Oops Tag.



Copy of Contamination ("Oops!") Tag

- Educational Piece on Reducing Food Waste (Love Food, Hate Waste).** In cooperation with Working Food, and the City’s communication graphic designer, SWD staff developed an education piece on the Benefits of Reducing Food Waste. This letter-sized, double-sided, full-

color educational piece includes tips on how residents can reduce wasted food at home. The layout concept for this piece was modeled after a 2021 education piece created by Recycle Florida Today Organics Recycling Committee. This education piece has been shared with the general public through the SWD’s social media platforms and other city-wide publications. Program participants were sent this information in pdf format in the July 2021 monthly email. Printed versions of this piece are pending. A “Reduce Food Waste” red apple logo was developed from this piece and used as a trademark for food waste reduction education message.

Love Food, Hate Waste!
Reducing Wasted Food

Most people don't realize how much food they throw away every day—from uneaten leftovers to spoiled produce. **In the United States, over 63 million tons of food is sent to landfills each year, and only about 4% of all food we throw away gets diverted to composting.** By managing food sustainably and reducing waste, we can save money, provide for those who do not have enough to eat in our communities and conserve resources for future generations.



Benefits of Reducing Food Waste


-  **Saves money by buying less food that may not be eaten.** The average American consumer spends roughly \$1,300 per year on food that ends up being wasted.
-  **Reduces methane emission** generated from landfills and lowers greenhouse gas emissions. Landfills are the third-largest contributor of methane in the United States.
-  **Conserves resources**, such as energy, land and water. It also reduces pollution associated with the growing, manufacturing, transporting and selling of food.
-  **Supports the hungry** by providing donated, untouched food that would have otherwise gone to waste. In 2019, 10% of Americans suffered from food insecurity.

City of Gainesville    

How You Can Reduce Wasted Food at Home
 Planning, prepping and storing food can help your household waste less food. Here are some helpful tips:


Made Easy! Plan & Organize

- **Plan out your meals for the week** and stick to your shopping list, buying only the things needed for those meals.
- **Check your refrigerator and pantry before going to the store;** avoid buying food you already have.
- **Keep your refrigerator organized** by rotating new items to the back and items that need to be eaten soon to the front and center.
- **Create an "eat me first" box or bowl** to consume the most perishable items first.




Made Easy! Storage & Preparation


- **Keep fruits** that give off natural gases as they ripen (bananas, apples, tomatoes) **in a different bin than other fruits and vegetables.**
- **Preserve fresh foods and leftovers by putting them in the freezer.** Bread, meats, sliced fruit and abundant seasonal produce can all be frozen.
- **Wait to wash berries until you are ready to eat them** to prevent them from molding too soon.
- **Prepare foods for quick and easy access** by storing them in clear serving size storage containers.



Made Easy! Be Thrifty & Save Money

- **Be creative when cooking.** Casseroles, soups and smoothies are great ways to make use of leftovers and fruits and vegetables past their prime.
- **Shop smart!** Start by shopping in your own refrigerator and cupboards first.
- **Avoid shopping when you're hungry,** as that can lead to overbuying.
- **Buy locally-grown foods** and less than perfect looking fruits and vegetables to save money.
- **Pay attention to expiration dates** and learn the difference between "sell-by," "use-by" and "best-by" on products.



Thank you for your efforts to keep food waste out of the trash reduces waste going to the landfill and lowers greenhouse gas emissions. For more tips, visit www.spa.gov/recycle/reducing-wasted-food-home and SaveTheFood.com.  Printed on 100% recycled paper.

- **Emails to participants.** SWD developed an email addresses distribution list for 189 of the 192 program participants (3 participants didn’t have email addresses). Emails were sent out prior to participants a few days before the first bucket deliveries to remind residents that the program was starting. Monthly email messages are sent out to program participants with program updates, service information, and tips for reducing food waste.

DATA TRACKING

Participation Numbers and Set out Rates. The total number of yellow food waste buckets set outs are recorded each week by BPC and relayed to SWD staff for program tracking. **The average weekly set out rate through week 24 was 76.7%.**

Field Measurement Methods and Data. SWD staff performed random samplings of yellow buckets set out for collection twice. SWD staff measured and recorded for each sample the:

- Pilot zone
- Bucket Weight with the lid on including the food waste (pounds)
- Bucket Fullness (visually measured in increments of 10 from 0% to 100%)
- Percent contaminated (visually measured) and other notes, as needed



Yellow Bucket With Food Waste

A portable electronic scale with a digital readout was used to measure the bucket weights. The scale was accurate to 0.5 pounds and was recalibrated to zero at the start and midway through of each day's samplings. The average weight of the food waste was calculated by subtracting the tare weight (2.5 lbs.) of the yellow bucket with the lid on from each sample.

Date	Sample Size	No. Participants in Program	Percentage of Total Sampled	Average Weight of Food Waste	Average Fullness	Average Contamination
4/27/2021	39	174	22%	6.8 lbs.	49%	0%
6/15/2021	46	190	24%	10.0 lbs.	45%	0%
9/14/2021	52	201	26%	7.3 lbs.	49%	0.21%
AVERAGE:				8.03 lbs.	48 %	0.07%

FINANCIALS

Expenditures.

Category	Share	Item (Vendor)	Budgeted Amount	Quantity Purchased (Status)	Amount Spent to Date
Supplies	Federal	5-gal. buckets & lids (Uline)	\$3,000.00	480 (completed)	\$2,755.20
Supplies	Federal	2-gal. kitchen compost pails (Toter)	\$2,000.00	240 (completed)	\$1,695.00
Supplies	Federal	Bucket Mini Flyer, Service Guide (Magnetic Attractions)	\$260.00	250 (completed)	\$173.00
Supplies	COG	Contamination Lables (Print4Less)	\$420.00	12,500 (completed)	\$392.79
Supplies	COG	Decals & Stock Photo Rights (Kewanna Screen Printing/Shutterstock.com)	\$1,300.00	900 (completed)	\$1,060.16
Supplies	COG	5-gal. buckets & Lids (Uline)	\$0.00	50 (completed)	\$453.67

Contractual	Federal	Weekly Collection Service & Compost Management (Beaten Path Compost)	\$45,000.00	4 of 15 months (July 2021 to Oct. 2022)	\$11,910.00
Contractual	Federal	Printing of Education Material on Reducing Food Waste	\$750.00	1	\$31.60
Contractual	COG	Weekly Collection Service & Compost Management (Beaten Path Compost)	\$9,000.00	3 of 3 months (Apr. 2021 to June 2021)	\$8,325.0
Contractual	COG	Equipment Usage & Space (Grow Hub)	\$3,275.00	(ongoing)	\$531.10
Contractual	COG	Educational Services (Working Food)	\$2,000.00	(ongoing)	\$1,200.00
Contractual	COG	Printing & Mailing of Sign-up Postcards	\$1,000	3 mailings (completed)	\$2,458.21
Indirect	COG	Program Income	\$10,000.000	(canceled)	\$0.00

Contractual Costs Notes.

- **Educational Piece on Reducing Food Waste (Love Food, Hate Waste).** The printing of this piece has not taken place at this time. However, we were successfully able to share pdf versions of this piece with participants and the public. The \$31.60 expenditure was for stock photos purchased by the City to complete the design of the piece.
- **Mailing Overages.** The expenditure for printing and mailing sign-up postcards to residents in the pilot zones was more than double the initial budget amount. This was in large part related to the decision to cancel the \$50 program fee and the need for additional sign-up postcard printing and mailings. Also, the first-class postage rate was more than initially anticipated.
- **Reorder Additional Buckets.** Due to the unexpected loss (theft) of over 50 yellow buckets, the City purchased additional supplies of 50 yellow buckets and lids in October of 2021. This \$453.67 expenditure was not anticipated when the project budget was developed.

Indirect Costs Notes.

- **\$50 participation fee canceled.** The City opted to eliminate the \$50 participation fee to increase program participation. No participants or residents were ever charged this fee.

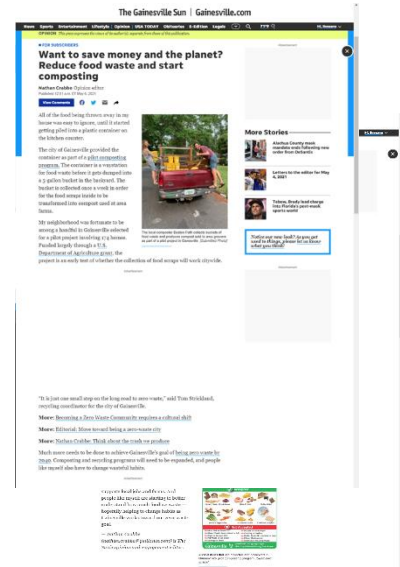
SAMPLE PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

- *I am very excited to start this project.*
- *I am so happy to see our city take on this initiative!*
- *This is a wonderful idea. I hope it will be a success!*
- *Very happy to see this pilot program!*
- *Thanks to the very nice city employee who came to our door following up on the mailer! It's nice to know the city is willing to put resources behind getting this going.*

- *We eat a lot of produce and are left with plenty of plant trimmings perfect for composting. Thanks so much!*
- *What a wonderful opportunity! I'm so excited about this! Thank you!*
- *This is fantastic & I am greatly thankful to participate!*
- *It will be good to help the environment in this way...*
- *I just wanted to say that we are grateful for this program- many thanks to you and your team for setting it up! We're having fun seeing the amount of trash from our home that is destined for a landfill dwindle every week as our compost bucket fills more and more. As a household without a garden, we've been attracted to the idea of composting for a long time but couldn't quite figure out how to make it work for our current situation. I hope this service is here to stay!*
- *We are really enjoying the program so far.*
- *Hello and I wanted you to let you know we are very impressed with this program!*
- *I'm so glad I was allowed to be part of your composting buckets trial.*

MEDIA

The Gainesville Sun, Online Issue on 5/6/21, Printed Issue on 5/9/21.



UNEXPECTED ISSUES

- **COG Purchasing Policies.** The strict policies of the COG’s Purchasing Department limited the equipment choices for this program. Only a limited number of vendors were willing to adhere to the City’s purchase order guidelines.
- **Participation Fee.** While SWD staff was able to correctly gauge the strong interest from residents for a food waste diversion program, it was a surprise to discover the lack of enthusiasm for contributing a partial payment for the program. Promoting the fee as “less than 65 cents per week” didn’t really seem to help sell the program. Ultimately, the \$50 participation fee was eliminated in order to increase participation.
- **Bucket Pirates.** Approximately 50 yellow buckets has been lost to the program because of bucket thefts. Initially, SWD staff ordered an extra supply of yellow buckets and lids for potential replacements should the buckets break or get damaged. As it turned out, empty yellow buckets sitting curbside proved to be too enticing for some individuals passing through the pilot zones

on service days. An additional supply of yellow buckets and lids was ordered in October 2021 to offset the buckets lost to theft.

- **Zero Contamination.** The contamination rate in food waste materials set out for collection was consistently measured at zero. SWD staff attributes this to the quality of the educational materials, regular communication with participants, and the participants taking the time to read the instructions thoroughly.
- **Backyard Composters.** In early 2021, when going door-to-door to recruit new sign-ups in the Sugarfoot neighborhood (Zone 1), SWD staff discovered that a high number of residents in the neighborhood indicated that they were already putting their food waste in their own backyard composting system. Later on, SWD staff learned that this neighborhood was targeted a decade ago to promote backyard composting and distributed free compost bins to residents.