

Memorandum

To: The Honorable Town Council of the Town of Bristol
From: Timothy E. Sweeney, Council Member

Re: Black Earth Composting

May 17, 2024

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Town Council:

I would like to invite Black Earth to our meeting on May 29th to discuss the potential of composting as a cost-saving and environmentally friendly solution. Their expertise in compost management will be invaluable for our discussion and could lead to a potential collaboration.

I want to emphasize the importance of composting as a way to reduce our increasing tipping fees, save on taxes, and help the environment. If we divert 10% (105 residences), we can save \$12k, and doubling the diversion would result in even greater savings.

Part of the discussion would include partnering with Black Earth and allocating funds to subsidize bins or a monthly fee in the 2025/26 budget. Considering their successful service to 69 residences in town, this collaboration would not add extra tasks for DPW.

Thank you for your consideration.

Tim

Timothy E. Sweeney



Municipal Program

As we get closer to our landfills' closing dates and the cost of trash removal doubling and tripling in some areas, we believe every municipality needs to start thinking about a strategy for waste diversion. With organic waste making up nearly half the municipal solid waste going to incinerators/landfills, towns should implement food scrap collection programs that aim to have around 50% of their population participating to divert organics from the waste stream by 2030. Building infrastructure and new habits to shift our waste management practices takes years and we'd like to help in any way we can to get the conversation started.

We have 14 years of experience implementing large, successful private programs as well as city funded programs backed by grants with thousands of households paying which lowers the costs. Program highlights include:

- Residents sign up directly and Black Earth handles all aspects of customer service
- Black Earth can provide reporting on tonnage diverted through programs
- Pricing structure is density driven so higher participation means lower rates - see chart below
- All customers receive 1 bag of free compost per year
- We don't require any RFP or contract with a town to get started

How Towns Can Participate:

- Towns can help subsidize all or part of a subscription cost
- Towns can buy starter kits for residents
- Help market and drive initiative through communication channels such as flyers, postcards, press releases, newspaper articles
- Schools are a great way to grow a residential program

Bristol Pricing Thresholds:

Private Collection Rates Per Household				
Bristol Households	Weekly Collection		Every Other Week Collection	
	Annual	Monthly Price	Annual	Monthly Price
69 - Current Level	\$149.99	\$14.99	\$114.99	\$11.99
300	\$139.99	\$13.99	\$109.99	\$10.99
600	\$129.99	\$12.99	\$99.99	\$9.99
1,000	\$119.99	\$11.99	\$89.99	\$8.99
2,000	\$99.99	\$9.99	\$79.99	\$7.99

Starter Kit & Bin Pricing

Our “starter kits” include two sizes of bins (4 and 13 gallons) and a variety of sizes of certified compostable bags that residents can use to collect their food scraps. Towns can purchase these kits in bulk which helps lower the cost for the resident and drive participation rates. We can deliver these to residents directly or towns can be involved in the distribution. *For households with two or more people we recommend the 13-gallon bin.*

Starter Kit Pricing					
Distribution	13 Gallon Bins			4 Gallon Bins	
	Bins Only	Starter Kit	Starter Kit + Countertop Liners	Bins Only	Starter Kit
Black Earth Distribution	\$29.50	\$36	\$39.50	\$12	\$16
Town Purchase & Distribution to New Customers (84 min.)	\$28	\$34.50	\$37	\$11	\$15

How To Market & Increase Participation in Compost Program

- Email to Residents
- Series of social media posts
- Press Release
- Add compost program details to website
- Water bill mailer to residents
- Table at farmers markets or local events. We do not typically have capacity to staff all the events we would like to but can provide material to display, in the event we can not be there.
- Webinar or informational event in coordination with local library or local media channel.
- Post signs/flyers/yard signs around town buildings.
- Education and awareness through schools. Get flyers out in kids backpacks.
- Host a Pumpkin Smash Event in the Fall or a Bulk/Bagged Compost Pick Up Event in the Spring.
- Any additional means the towns have, like trash apps, etc.

REPEAT...

Repeating the messaging throughout the program initiative is very helpful. You can change the message to inform residents of waste reduction progress, changes in price or enrollment, what’s compostable and the benefits of composting.

Larger Actions That will Educate and Motivate Residents

- Pay as you throw trash program
- Every other week trash collection
- Implement compost programs in the schools, with full circle gardening programs and raised beds.
- Incentive based referrals

We can help you with any of these examples:

Press Releases:

Brookline, MA

<https://patch.com/massachusetts/brookline/brookline-launches-curbside-composting-incentive-program>

Watertown, MA

<https://www.watertownmanews.com/2023/03/31/free-curbside-compost-bins-available-for-watertown-residents/>

Website Content:

<https://www.brooklinema.gov/3551/Curbside-Composting>

<https://www.watertown-ma.gov/740/Composting>

Can include links to our [what's compostable, residential collection](#), or [FAQ page](#).

Articles:

<https://wellesleyma.gov/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=2125>

<https://www.watertownmanews.com/2023/05/23/residents-can-sign-up-for-curbside-composting-pick-up/>

<https://patch.com/massachusetts/brookline/brookline-launches-curbside-composting-incentive-program>

Social Media:



Yard Signs:



Flyers: We can customize these to your town's needs.

TURN SPOILS TO SOIL WITH
CURBSIDE COMPOST



Join Your Little Compton Neighbors - The More People the Cheaper It Becomes



COMPOST ALL FOOD SCRAPS



FREE BAG OF COMPOST

For a limited time receive a free starter kit

EVERY OTHER WEEK PICK-UP PLANS
\$16.99 / MONTH OR
\$89.99 / 6 MONTHS

Reduce Your Waste by 30%

SIGN UP AT BLACKEARTHCOMPOST.COM

COMPOST BLACK EARTH COMPOST
COMPOSTAR AQUI!

FOOD SCRAPS DESECHOS DE ALIMENTOS



SOILED PAPER PRODUCTS PAPEL SUCIO DE COMIDA



CERTIFIED COMPOSTABLE TABLEWARE COMPOSTABLES CERTIFICADOS



The labels biodegradable or compostable does not mean we accept it.

NO TRASH TIRAR A LA BASURA, NO AQUI



Municipality	2023 2024 C.A.P	Tons over 2023 Cap	Households	Current landfill disposal cost	Compostable Material 33% of total MSW	1%		5%		10%		15%		20%	
						Diversion	Reduction Savings	Diversion	Reduction Savings	Diversion	Reduction Savings	Diversion	Reduction Savings		

Bristol	6,364.00	7,436.00	-1,072.00	8,700.00	\$372,294.00	2,100.12	21	105	210	315	420	\$1,228.57	\$6,142.85	\$12,285.70	\$18,428.55	\$24,571.40
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2024 municipal rate tipping fee under cap = \$58.50/ton

2024 municipal rate tipping fee over cap = \$115/ton

Participation Goals	# Households
1%	87
5%	435
10%	870
15%	1,305
20%	1,740