

# News Release



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## County's Food Waste Composting Program Grows to 30 Schools

*196 tons have been collected from participating schools*

[Charleston County's Environmental Management Department](#) (CEM) continues to grow its food waste composting program through its partnership with [Charleston County School District \(CCSD\)](#). The [Greening Schools Program](#) has expanded to include food waste recycling at 27 elementary schools and three middle schools across the county.

In September 2012, Lambs Elementary School in North Charleston was the first school to participate in a food waste diversion pilot program, which utilizes a [three-way sort collection station](#) with three separate containers marked for food waste, recyclable items, and trash. Shortly thereafter, CCSD selected 3 additional elementary schools to participate in the pilot. During the second half of the school year, seven additional schools were included, resulting in a total of 72 tons of food waste collected from the 11 participating school for the 2012-2013 school year.

Based on the success of the food waste diversion pilot, CCSD recognized the benefits of food waste composting and turned the pilot into a permanent program by modifying the structure of its waste management contract to include food waste collection services.

Since the beginning of this school year, this CCSD program has continued to expand throughout the County to include an additional 17 elementary schools and two middle schools; 196 food waste tons have been collected this school year.

"Food waste composting is such a great educational opportunity for our students," said Maggie Harrelson, [Charleston County School District's](#) Sustainability Coordinator. "The program not only increases student awareness about how their daily actions impact our environment, but also fosters a deeper understanding of basic cradle to cradle principles."

CCSD hopes to continue expansion of this program to additional elementary, middle, and high schools during the 2014-2015 school year.

Charleston County's food waste composting program also accepts food waste produced by the commercial sector. Local restaurants and large food waste generators, such as grocery stores, utilize private food waste haulers, who deliver the material for a fee to the County's Bees Ferry Compost Facility. For a video on how to collect food scraps for composting in a commercial kitchen, click [here](#).

**For more information and to learn how to get involved, contact Bronwyn Santos, Charleston County Environmental Management's Greening Schools Community Representative at (843) 720-7111 or [bsantos@charlestoncounty.org](mailto:bsantos@charlestoncounty.org).**

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- written by Shawn Smetana -