



Innovative Public - Private Recycling Partnership in Massachusetts

Working with the Supermarket Industry



Massachusetts
Department
of
ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION


ASTSWMO, September 2005

Julia Wolfe, MassDEP



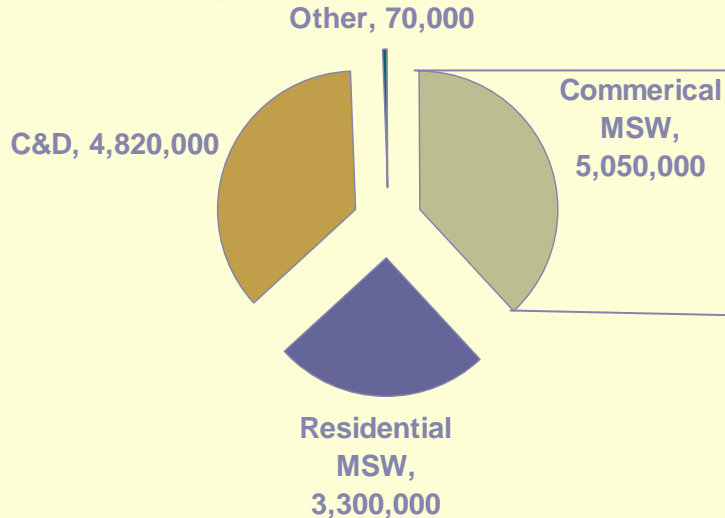


Innovative Public - Private Recycling Partnership

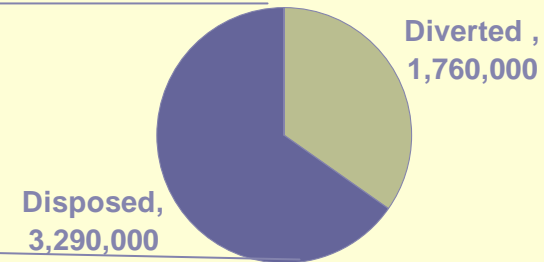
- Why organics/compostables?
 - Why supermarkets?
 - What is SORN?
 - History of program
 - Results
 - Why working
 - Challenges
 - Opportunities
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Why Organics/Compostables?

2002 MA Total Waste Generation (13,240,000 tons)



Commercial MSW Generation



- Food Residuals: identified as priority material in *Beyond 2000 Solid Waste Master Plan*.
- Commercial food waste represents about 18% (880,000 tons/yr) of the total commercial waste stream.
- Less than 10% commercial food waste generated each year is diverted.



Why supermarkets?

- Almost 600 supermarkets in the state.
 - These supermarkets generate an estimated 90,600 tons of compostables per year.
 - To generate \$10,000 to \$20,000 of profit, a supermarket would need to sell \$1-\$2 million of product.
 - Trade association receptive because proven to save money – willing partners.
 - Tipping fees average \$80-\$100/ton in MA.
 - Existing processing capacity.
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What is SORN?

- Supermarket Organics Recycling Network
 - Innovative partnership between MassDEP, the Massachusetts Food Association, individual supermarkets, haulers and processors to advance organics and other recycling in the supermarket industry.

Today 62 supermarkets composting in MA

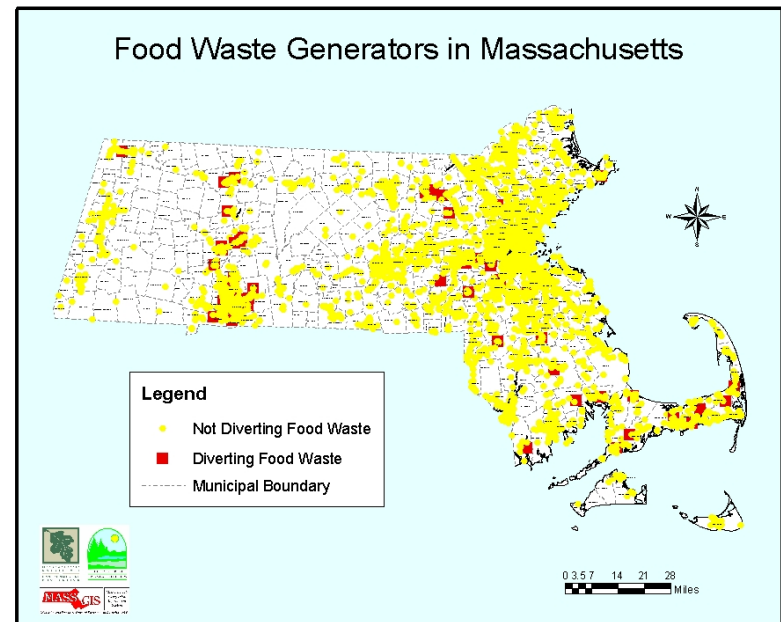


History of program

- **1998 – 2000:** Piloted composting at supermarkets in W. Mass and Cape Cod (13 Stop & Shop's and 4 Big Y)
 - **2000:** *Beyond 2000 Solid Waste Master Plan* identified food waste diversion as a priority focus area for waste reduction.
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History of program (cont.)

- **2002:** Completed studies:
 - Commercial Waste Disposal Analysis calculated amount of food waste disposed by supermarkets.
 - Density Mapping Study identified food residual generators in state.






History of program (cont)

● 2002-2003, SROI:

Supermarket Recycling Organics Initiative

- published step-by-step guide
 - engaged upper management
 - provided start-up TA.
 - Documented waste reduction and financial savings at Roche Bros. Supermarket:
 - Dedicated compactor to organics
 - 5-10 tons of material diverted per week/per store
 - \$10,000-\$20,000 overall savings per store
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History of program (cont)

● 2003 – 2006, SORN:

Supermarket Organics Recycling Network:

- Received EPA funding to advance program
- Gathered baseline information on existing MA supermarket programs.
- Provided TA for start-up and program expansion
- Provided MA WasteWise Supermarket Recycling Leadership Awards to 6 supermarket chains.
- Developed and signed MOU with Massachusetts Food Association





Results to Date

- 62 Supermarkets composting in the following chains: Big Y, Roche Bros., Stop & Shop, Shaw's/Star, Whole Foods.
 - Working with three additional major chains to develop pilots.
 - Documented annualized results in 54 stores:
 - 53,300 tons of total waste
 - 26,200 tons recycled cardboard
 - 8,900 tons is source-separated organics
 - 1,000 tons is recycled plastic shrink and stretch wrap.
 - 17,200 disposed of as trash
 - Savings: average of ~\$45,000 per store (organics alone = \$3,000 - \$20,000 per store)
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Signed on August 24, 2005



From left: MassDEP
Commissioner Bob Golledge,
MFA President Chris Flynn,
EPA New England Stephen
Perkins.

Signed memorandum of understanding
with Massachusetts Food Association to
jointly advance recycling and composting
in the supermarket industry.



Some Elements of MOU

- MassDEP to develop voluntary supermarket recycling program certification:
 - Provide annual waste ban regulatory relief to individual stores. This is a “beyond compliance” program.
 - Provide tools to jump-start and expand programs, including:
 - supermarket-composting manual
 - list of haulers and composters
 - technical assistance for training and store program development
 - Publicize program and results.
 - Work together to identify recycling solutions
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Why Working?

- Proven savings and ability to measure results
 - Contractors with an “in” to the industry
 - Solid waste costs rising and recovered materials markets are strong.
 - It takes time....and money
 - Public recognition very important to supermarket industry – thru awards, press releases, e-mails, peer pressure.
 - “Solid Waste” not a competitive issue
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Challenges

- Ensure stable processing facilities
 - Develop network of haulers
 - Need menu of source separation options – no one size fits all (e.g., compactors, toters, dumpsters, etc...)
 - Funding/developing a sustainable program beyond govt. funding
 - Ongoing public recognition
 - Need for ongoing training – cultural change
 - Changes in industry (e.g., buyouts, mergers)
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Opportunities

● For Supermarkets:

- Additional saving from increased diversion.
- Roll out to more supermarkets and chains.

● For Government:

- Certification program could be a model for other industries.
 - Building an infrastructure to expand composting to other sectors (e.g., hotels, hospitals, restaurants, universities)
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More Information

Massachusetts DEP

- www.mass.gov/dep/compost.htm
- Certification program in the next few months, MA WasteWise

Massachusetts Food Association

- www.mafood.com
 - Supermarket Composting Handbook
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For Additional Information on Program Contact

Julia Wolfe

MA DEP

One Winter Street

Boston, MA 02108

617-292-5987

Julia.wolfe@state.ma.us

www.mass.gov/dep/compost.htm

