



Independent coverage of composting, wood recycling and organics management



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Federal food waste bills promote composting

By Ken McEntee

Food waste reduction bills introduced to the U.S. House and Senate late last month contain provisions that encourage composting as a conservation practice eligible for support under USDA's conservation programs, which include loans and grants.

On July 27, Rep. Chellie Pingree (D-Maine) introduced H.R. 3444, the Food Recovery Act, which aims to reduce food waste in stores and restaurants, schools and institutions, on farms and in American homes. The bill was referred to the House Agriculture Committee and several other committees for consideration.

A companion senate bill, S. 1680, was introduced by Sen. Richard

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Austin expands curbside composting

The city of Austin will expand its curbside composting collection program to about 38,000 additional homes in October. The program collects food scraps, yard trimmings and food soiled paper and converts them into nutrient-rich compost.

The program is part of the city's Zero Waste goal to divert 90 percent of materials from landfills by 2040.

Prior to this expansion, curbside composting was in a pilot phase, which included 14,000 homes throughout Austin. Austin Resource Recovery, a department of the city of Austin, plans to add all curbside customers to the service by 2020, pending funding approval by City Council in future years.

"During the pilot, the city collected more than 15,000 tons of compostable materials, including food scraps, yard trimmings and food-soiled paper such as pizza boxes," said Sam Angoori, interim director of Austin Resource Recovery. "As we add

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Austin reduced its cart size to an optional 32-gallon size because residents said a 96-gallon cart was too large.

Photo: City of Austin

CalRecycle awards \$24 million in organic waste grants

The California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) has awarded \$24 million in grants to help convert more of the state's organic waste - food, green waste and wood - into renewable energy and compost.

CalRecycle said the grants are aimed at the state's efforts to slow and reverse the effects of climate change.

"These latest climate investments provide a much-needed boost to California's organic waste recycling capacity, which the state must roughly double to meet its greenhouse gas

reduction and 75 percent recycling goals," said CalRecycle Director Scott Smithline. "These infrastructure projects will diversify our local economies, creating durable green jobs that can't be outsourced."

CalRecycle helps fund construction,

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Highlights

- n **New Fed book touts benefits of organic agriculture**
- n **National compost prices**

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