

COMPOST CREW

2023 IMPACT REPORT



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ABOUT US

Our History

Compost Crew was founded and has been collecting food scraps from thousands of residential and commercial customers across the Greater Washington D.C. area since 2011. Our company transports these food scraps to local composting facilities to support a closed loop system.

Compost Crew was acquired by Ben Parry in 2018. In 2022, our company became a public benefit corporation.

Earth's systems are regenerative by design, supporting all kinds of life, from flora and fauna to us humans. We envision a world where all organic matter is recycled, as nature intended, rather than being lost or wasted.

We're not just a food scrap hauler. We are a team of sustainability professionals on a mission to eliminate food waste and revitalize the earth's soil through affordable, clean and convenient solutions available to everyone.

Our Fleet

We added 11 vehicles to our fleet to keep up with the substantial growth in customers, including our first electric vehicle! While many of the vehicles the company uses for collections do not yet have comparable electric models, our new Ford eTransit allows us to deliver composting supplies and finished compost while reducing the use of fossil fuels.



Our Mission

- Recycle compostable waste
- Reduce dependence on landfills and incinerators
- Build community wealth
- Revitalize our soils
- Protect the planet





IMPACT REPORT

Our Impact Report

Compost Crew more than doubled the number of customers being serviced across the Greater Washington, D.C. area in 2023. We had our largest totals to date, recycling nearly twenty million pounds of food scraps and producing 1150 tons of compost at our small-scale composting sites. Ninety percent of this compost was used directly on-farm.

We had a major growth in production at one of our sites, giving our company an opportunity to start our own brand of compost for sale to the public.

Compost Crew has solidified our position as the leading food scrap recycling company in the Mid-Atlantic.


"It has been a busy year for our team with significant momentum behind composting in our service area. We remain ever grateful for the increasing number of residents, businesses, governments and community leaders who are joining the mission to eliminate food waste." -Ben Parry, *Compost Crew CEO*

**19,590,000
POUNDS OF FOOD
SCRAPS COMPOSTED**

**18 EMPLOYEES
ADDED TO THE CREW**

**OVER 2,000,000
POUNDS OF COMPOST
PRODUCED & USED ON
LOCAL FARMS**

WHY COMPOST?



When food waste is composted instead of buried in a landfill, it transforms into a rich, biologically active, soil enhancer otherwise known as "black gold" or compost. Compost revitalizes our soil, protects watersheds and supports sustainable agriculture when applied to our farms and gardens.

A portion of the food scraps we collect are sent directly to our Compost Outposts®, which are smaller-scale composting sites that are located throughout our service area. These locations shorten driving distances between where the food scraps are rescued and where they get recycled, actively supporting a circular economy and creating jobs within our community.



New Compost Outpost in Virginia

To continue ongoing efforts to process food scraps closer to where they are generated, we opened our fourth Compost Outpost in partnership with Fairfax County's Solid Waste Management Program.

This new Outpost, located at the I-66 Transfer Station, processes food waste that County residents bring to the Transfer Station drop-off location, as well as additional material collected from local government offices. The finished compost that is being produced at this location will then be applied on the pollinator garden on the County's retired landfill, creating a circular system within the County.

Looking ahead, Compost Crew partnered with the City of Greenbelt and the Town of Edmonston to begin construction on two additional Outposts, funded by Composting and Food Waste Reduction grants from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. These sites will start processing food scraps in 2024.



“This [outpost] lets us test in a small environment a system where we remove food scraps and plant materials from the waste stream and turn them into something that provides a benefit to the community in a decentralized way.

This is one of the efforts the county is taking to move towards our new sustainability goals.”

- Matt Adams, Director of the Fairfax County Solid Waste Management Program in the DPWES Engineering & Environmental Compliance Division

FARM FEAST

Finished Compost

We have been producing a compost at our outposts using local food scraps, hay, wood chips and leaves.

With more food scraps coming in and a hard-working composting crew, we have been producing more compost than can be used on farm. Thus, we joyfully launched our very own brand of finished compost, called Farm Feast. *Available to purchase bagged or in bulk.*

For years, our finished compost has been used directly on-farm, aiding in plant growth, restoring nutrition and even enhancing the taste of our local food sources. That's actually where we came up with "Farm Feast" but don't let the name fool you. This nutrient-rich soil amendment can be used in a wide range of places including potted plants, landscaping projects and gardens of all sizes and soil types.



Compost Back

Our crew volunteered to distribute 6,630 bags of compost during our Compost Back events!

This was the first Compost Back that we were able to offer Farm Feast finished compost in bulk, distributing 44.5 cubic yards of compost.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Compost Crew participated in 118 community events and farmers markets, educating a wide range of audiences around the DMV on the benefits of composting their food scraps.

Keeping Communities Clean

The Sustainability Coordinator for the City of Greenbelt orchestrated a clean-up near Trinity Church. The Greenbelt Advisory Committee on Environmental Sustainability (ACES), local high school students and some of our Compost Crew staff worked shoulder to shoulder with Greenbelt Mayor, Emmett Jordan, who readily grabbed some gloves and got to work. Together, we rid the forested area of trash, removed pesky vines and over 100 abandoned tires, making room for a new outpost!

Compost Crew also gives back to nearby communities by planting trees, establishing school gardens and donating thousands of dollars of free services and compost to area schools and nonprofits.

Fellowship Program

Compost Crew's commitment as a public benefit corporation also extends to educating as many people as possible about the benefits of composting and giving back to our local community. Our Composting Fellowship Program has taught dozens of participants the science behind composting to prepare them to work in the field.

Since the inception of the program, 20 participants have passed their Maryland Compost Facility Operators exam with half of these participants consisting of Compost Crew employees. In 2023, five participants passed their exam, including our Commercial Accounts Manager, Kathleen.



Digital Engagement

Compost Crew extends our reach, virtually, with our social media content reaching over 200,000 views from individual social media users and gaining over 700 new followers. We use these tools to reduce contamination and share best practices and important compost updates with people across the nation.

Our quarterly newsletter was launched at the end of 2022 and has continued to be a space for anyone to receive the latest compost news and access digital resources like our new [graphic list](#) of accepted items available for download.

Events

Compost Crew attended, hosted, and collected food scraps for dozens of educational and networking events across the country.

In 2023, we led multiple tours for local farms, organizations and political figures who were curious and engaged when it came to the process of composting. Some visitors include Red Wiggler Farm staff and volunteers, Maryland Food System Resilience Council Incubator Farm, Purple Mountain Farm.

During the summer, we had our first Food Scrap Fest where all were welcome to visit One Acre Farm, our longtime partners and home to our first Compost Outpost® site. This was the only International Compost Awareness Week (ICAW) event in Maryland in 2023. Our Crew anticipated this to be a great opportunity for people to see and learn how we process their food scraps into compost. We hosted a Scavenger Hunt to encourage guests to retain this new information, just like plants retain moisture. We even offered an array of engaging, hands-on demonstration stations including a planting booth, sorting booth and more.

Compost Crew also participated in events like the U.S. Composting Council's Compost 2023 and ReFED 2023 where our Composting Director, Krisite Blumer, moderated.

We continue to seek spaces that bring food businesses, founders, solution providers, innovators, policymakers, nonprofits, and more together to drive the adoption of food waste solutions during spotlighted times of the year like Food Waste Prevention Week, Earth Month and more.



Schools

Schools are a space for education and growth and are also a place that generates tons of wasted food that needs to be recycled. We welcomed eight new schools and are now servicing over forty schools, from elementary schools to universities, throughout the Greater Washington area.

Marshall Road Elementary School

Located in Vienna, Virginia, Marshall Road Elementary School began composting with us and started a school garden all in one year, introducing environmental education and sustainability behaviors to Northern Virginia youth. Dozens of students, teachers and volunteers, including one of our Composting Operators, picked up a shovel and joined this beautiful gesture towards their community and our planet.

Kensington Nursery School

Compost Crew cruised over to Kensington Nursery School in Kensington, Maryland. Tots got the chance to see inside of the truck and learn more about compost right from our drivers.

Sligo Creek STEAM ScienceFair

Students at the Sligo Creek STEAM Science Fair created colorful compost-inspired and environmentally positive artwork. They remained engaged at our booth and made us grateful for this next generation and their budding efforts towards a greener planet.

Lunch Out of Landfills

Lunch out of Landfills is a food waste reduction initiative that started in Maryland's Frederick County. They share our passion to engage and educate the next generation to equip them with to support the health of our planet. They are actively supporting the composting programs of over 20 schools and we are proud to be a partner.





Local Fight Against Wasted Food

Compost Crew has been in the front line with fellow environmental advocates. We presented on composting education and advocacy for Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education, Illinois Recycling Foundation and more.

On May 7th, Maryland motioned towards expanding on-farm composting by signing bill SB262/HB253, which will allow farmers to double the size of their food scrap composting footprint! This event was held at the Maryland State House, the oldest state capitol in continuous legislative use, where Governor Wes Moore signed a series of bills with delegates and community leaders including Delegate Emily Shetty and Senator Jason Gallion. Local leaders Emily Ranson, Director of Maryland's Clean H2O Action, Keith Farmer from Porch View Farm LLC. and our Director of Composting, Kristie Blumer, were each a part of this legislation.

The District of Columbia also recently passed a law that tackles the many ways in which schools, businesses and organizations can combat food waste in the district. This includes purchasing wisely, storing food properly, donating excess food safely and separating food scraps from other solid waste for collection. This law will increase the number of businesses and organizations that need to divert their food waste, over time. The District's leadership has shown, in more ways than one, that it is invested in the zero waste goals that were introduced in 2014 with a goal of diverting 80% of solid waste away from landfills by 2040.



Community Composting

Community composting program and farms across the region, including ECO City Farms and Compost Crew, were highlighted in a recent [series of videos](#) by the Institute of Local Self-Reliance for the EPA.

These videos serve as a call to action and provide education describing the social, environmental and economic benefits of community composting.



COMMERCIAL COMPOSTING

In 2023, nearly 100 commercial customers either started their composting program for the first time or expanded to various locations in an amazing effort to join the fight against food waste. Some new customers include five Inova hospitals, the Park Hyatt Hotel Washington D.C., Blue Henry, Soft Stuff Distributors and Home Chef.

Howard Community College is one example of an existing customer that decided to expand their composting program in 2023. This school is now composting at additional campus locations with over 20,000 students and staff.

Building by building, we can decrease the harmful impact waste is having on our planet.

Visit compostcrew.com/commercial to learn about recent food waste laws, how your business can join the mission and tips on how to reduce waste, and over a dozen more schools introduced composting to students and staff.

Commercial | Rita Bernert | rita@compostcrew.com

“As a meal delivery company, reducing food waste – in customers' homes and within our operations – is a substantial part of how our business lowers its environmental impact.

Working with Compost Crew has allowed us to easily streamline that process at our largest production facility in Baltimore.”

- Cody Ferrantino, Home Chef's sustainability and Impact Program Manager.

MUNICIPAL PROGRAMS

Central to the increase in customers was Compost Crew's selection via competitive bidding processes as the contractor for two separate municipal curbside composting programs launched in 2023.

The District of Columbia

Throughout the last decade alone, the District's leadership has shown, in more ways than one, that it is invested in the Zero Waste goals that were introduced in 2014 with a goal of diverting 80 percent of solid waste away from landfills by 2040. In the District of Columbia, Compost Crew was selected via a competitive bidding process to collect food scraps from approximately 9,000 participating homes across all eight Wards that registered for the District's curbside composting pilot. The pilot program has diverted nearly 300 tons of food scraps in the first few months of the curbside program.

"The DC Curbside Composting Pilot Program represents a significant step towards increasing access to composting across the District of Columbia and providing residents with more convenient opportunities to reduce their food waste, support the city's zero waste goals, and contribute to a healthier environment for all," said DC Department of Public Works Director, Timothy Spriggs.

The city's recent law is tackling the many ways in which schools, businesses and organizations can combat food waste in the district.

Alexandria, Virginia

In March 2023, the City of Alexandria began its own curbside composting program with financial support from a USDA grant, and also chose Compost Crew to provide the collection service. This new program motivated over 1,100 Alexandria residents to sign up last year, resulting in over 115 tons of organic material diverted from area landfills.



Alexandria Makes the News

WUSA9 featured the launch of Alexandria's curbside composting pilot, interviewing Howard Lee, recycling program analyst for the City of Alexandria, and Compost Crew SVP of Growth, Dan Israel.

"I like to encourage people to think of food waste as a resource, so when you compost you're adding that resource back into the environment. Residents are just excited to get started with it, I think that they've been waiting for something like this for a long time, so this is a great opportunity."

- Howard Lee, Recycling Program Analyst for the City of Alexandria



RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

Curbside Service

Compost Crew has been offering convenient curbside service including food scrap pick-up, pumpkin pick-up and complimentary compost delivery.

Our routes, extending as far north as Towson, Maryland and as far south as Alexandria, Virginia became more dense after an increase in sign-ups with increased awareness through community events like Farmer's Markets, tours, garden center promotions, local grants and more.

Drop-off Locations

Obstacles like HOA, apartment restrictions, financial and spacial limits may hinder a resident from composting. Compost Crew makes composting more accessible by offering multiple food scrap drop-off locations throughout the DMV.

“Being new to Bethesda from Massachusetts, I was pleased to see the outreach done by the Compost Crew. My apartment building didn't participate but there was a very easy drop-off that I could use 24/7 and as many times a week as needed. It is amazing how much waste occurs and what can be composted. Please consider using them and broadening their services. It is a very easy way to make a difference”

-Mary S., *Bethesda Resident and Compost Crew subscriber*



OUR CREW

The Hiring Process

To keep pace with 2023's rapid growth, Compost Crew increased our full-time employee headcount by 40%, adding 18 new green jobs.

We depend on dedicated Collections Drivers and Helpers to pick-up food scraps from thousands of homes, businesses and organizations. Our Human Resources Director, Marcia Guzy, attended multiple local job fairs in an effort to meet a diverse group of attendees, including refugees.

We focus on hiring the best available candidates who are interested in career-oriented, full-time, position with living wages and strong benefits.

Benefits

One of our goals is to help employees thrive professionally and personally. We offer our crew free curbside food scrap pick-up along with a plethora of benefits including paid holidays, an employee assistance program (EAP) and healthcare plans that are better than plans offered by most large companies.

Safety

Our Safety Committee collaborated with our marketing team to roll out a series of educational emails as a resource during health and safety awareness months.

During Hydration Awareness month, office staff volunteered to take cold drinks to drivers along their route. While we had resources to predict warm temperatures, we didn't expect the extreme wildfire in Canada that diminished the region's air quality. We had to act on our feet to communicate action plans to the entire crew, with alerts about the current AQI (air quality index), tips to stay safe and work suspensions to preserve employee health.

Transparency is Key

We hold regular meetings with the entire company to both celebrate accomplishments, combat challenges and continue building a better company for our customers, workers and our planet!



