

Readfield Awarded Maine Food Composting Grant

Expanded composting efforts to begin this spring 2021

Members of the SWRC and our Town Manager wrote a successful grant application for expanding our composting efforts to include food waste and have been awarded a 1-year grant for \$20,300. The town will be contributing \$22,312 in services and labor for a total project value of \$42,612. Concurrent with this application process Readfield was also selected by the Mitchell Center for Sustainability Solutions at the University of Maine at Orono to participate in their Maine Zero Food Waste Pilot Program in conjunction with KVCOG (Kennebec Valley Council of Government.). The combined efforts of these two programs will provide support to purchase needed supplies and equipment to support the expanded composting efforts of citizens and to assist in promoting the project through advertising and educational materials and events.

We will begin the planning phase in February and proceed through setup, advertising and education in March and April with a full rollout in May. We will be able to provide containers for residents to collect food waste and bring to the Transfer Station. They will have the option to leave and pick up a clean container to take home. (Collection containers will be rinsed by staff and provided back to residents clean to use when they drop off material again.) We will also be providing up to 100 home composting bins/cages for those residents who want to expand their home composting efforts. Folks will need to participate in some brief informational sessions in order to receive collection materials in order to learn what items can be included and safe ways to handle materials.

With food waste comprising between 15% and 27% of our MSW (Mainstream Solid Waste, or what we think of as 'trash') weight in tons, we have the opportunity to significantly alter our waste stream from burying food waste in bags in the ground at a landfill to collecting food waste and mixing it with other organic wastes (leaves, grass, plants, wood chips, manure) to create a valuable nutrient rich soil additive to be added back to the earth in our own towns. The benefits are huge: reducing materials added to our landfills, reducing transportation costs, reducing the tipping cost of the material, providing valuable compost for residents, enriching local soils, increasing awareness of food waste, and encouraging folks to garden more for food either at home or in community gardens.

The Readfield Transfer Station service the towns of Fayette, Readfield and Wayne and this program is open to all residents in each town. We hope to have at least 12% of our residents choose to collect food waste and participate in this effort. Be on the lookout for more information soon!

Change of Operation Practices continue due to Covid-19

We will continue to operate meeting standards from the Maine government including the following practices:

- All vehicles must stop at the Attendant Booth to speak with an employee about what materials you are bringing in, to receive directions on where to dispose of these materials, and to pay any required fee. Paying by check is preferred and if using cash to please have exact change and place it in the mailbox within easy reach for the driver.
- Please wear a face covering at all times while at the Transfer Station.
- Please leave when you are finished to avoid making the space congested.
- Please do not approach the employees within 6'. Our goal is to maintain social distancing for their health and safety.

**WASTE LESS
SAVE MORE**



**RECYCLE
COMPOST**

*Readfield Solid Waste and
Recycling Committee*