

C-3 | Develop Marketing Materials for Collection and Vermicomposting of Food Service Establishment (FSE) Waste

DRI Funding Request/Total Project Cost
\$8,400/\$8,400

Project Description

This initiative leverages the City's existing pilot-scale vermicomposting project to include collection and composting of downtown Food Service Establishment (FSE) food waste. Vermicomposting differs from traditional windrow composting through its process, which occurs in trenches by the action of worms and requires no regular windrow turning. This results in much lower energy and labor requirements.

This project includes the development of unified messaging materials for participating FSEs, which will help bolster downtown Cortland's identity as eco-conscious and will help encourage more FSE's to participate in the vermicomposting program. Messaging materials include window decals, flyers, and branded waste collection bins.

Project Location/Address

This project will extend throughout DRI area. The City has identified 26 FSEs and 1 neighborhood grocery market within the DRI zone that could be potential participants. Not all of these FSEs are likely to be viable candidates, but it is expected that 15 or more will be interested.

Sponsor

City of Cortland

Strategies

- Create an identity that will appeal to current and future generations;
- Increase collaboration between downtown and local institutions; and
- Encourage projects that reduce the City's environmental footprint.



Mockup of window decals touting participation in Cortland's vermicomposting program

Public Support

The City of Cortland's Climate Action Plan (CAP) includes the goal of increasing the beneficial reuse of materials that will otherwise be landfilled. The CAP was developed over a considerable amount of time with the assistance of the Central NY Regional Planning and Development Board. The CAP then became the subject of public hearings and was finally approved by the Common Council. Additionally, the Environmental Advisory Committee was approached by the proprietor of a downtown restaurant expressing interest in this exact type of program.

Project Ownership

City of Cortland

Project Partners

Larsen Engineers, Organix Green, downtown FSEs, SUNY Cortland

Capacity

Organix Green Industries has been operating a Vermicycling Facility in the Town of Seneca Castle, NY for over 10 years. This has included food waste and lawn and yard debris. Larsen Engineers has provided consulting planning and engineering to Organix and other municipalities. Larsen has also undertaken Waste Stream Studies for the City of Auburn, colleges and industry. SUNY Cortland's Institute for Civic Engagement has extensive experience in matching up students with worthwhile learning experiences in roles that benefit the local community.

Project Budget

\$8,400

- Project Development/design (Larsen Engineers) - \$4,500
- Waste Collection Bins - \$3,400
- Production of unified message materials - \$500

Funding Sources

The project will be fully funded through the DRI.

Feasibility and Cost Justification

This project will result in reduced waste disposal costs for food establishments and position downtown eateries as environmentally positive. This project will also improve "town/gown" relations through utilization of students in applied learning roles during development of the project.

This project aligns with the City's and County's goals of reducing the amount of organic wastes entering the county landfill and promoting sustainability among downtown businesses and their patrons. Potential impact includes slight reduction in disposal costs and potential increase in patronage in response to publicity regarding sustainability.



Mockup of window decals touting participation in Cortland's vermicomposting program

Regulatory Requirements

None

Timeframe for Implementation and Project Readiness

- Weeks 1-2: Planning, Waste Stream Analysis, Business Education;
- Weeks 3-4: Program Design and Equipment Selection and Procurement;
- Weeks 5-6: Education and Training;
- Week 8: Kickoff with Chamber Luncheon.

Project Reporting

Larsen Engineers, a designated food material hauler, and Organix will track volume of food scraps and paper collected from each food and grocery establishment. Questionnaires will be sent to FSEs regarding their perception of the program. SUNY students will perform street polling of downtown patrons to gauge their knowledge of and favorability toward the program.



Mockups of window decals touting participation in Cortland's vermicomposting program