July 2022 Newsletter

IFSC Board Chairman, Benjamin Krumstok

"It is my honor to share an update with our IFSC Membership from the Chairman’s seat. What an exciting history and "life to this point" the IFSC has had. Conceived at a Food Scrap Forum in Highland Park in 2012, registered with the IL Secretary of State in 2015, formally “structured” in 2016, and continuing to grow and mature!"

Read an important letter from Benjamin, IFSC Board Chairman HERE.

Read Benjamin's update about the IFSC Compost Market Development Committee HERE.

New Member Orientation "Office Hours"

New and "curious" IFSC folks are invited to an Orientation Office Hour on Tuesday, July 19th from 6:30-7:30pm OR Thursday, July 21st from Noon - 1pm via Zoom to talk with Amy Bartucci, IFSC Administrative Coordinator.

Do you have questions about our committees, history, and key resources? All new IFSC members and "curious" are highly encouraged to attend. Let's amplify your work and mission through collaboration. RSVP for Zoom link by emailing illinoiscomposts@gmail.com.

IFSC Member Appreciation Event

Save the Date: Membership Appreciation and Networking Event on October 27, 2022 at Duke's Alehouse in Crystal Lake (conveniently
located near the Metra train stop). More details coming soon. All are welcome!

If you are interested in becoming a sponsor of this event, please email illinoiscomposts@gmail.com.

## IFSC in Action

### Collective Resource Compost

**Collective Resource Compost** has just reached another milestone: **9000 tons diverted from the landfill** reached by contributions from 3000+ customers since June 2010. A recent success story is continuing to divert organics at the concert venue on Northerly Island in downtown Chicago. Peter Scruggs, Regional Sustainability Coordinator for Live Nation reports:

"Huntington Bank Pavilion at Northerly Island adopted Live Nation's Sustainability Program in 2019 and has partnered with Collective Resource Compost (CRC) since the beginning. Thanks to the tireless help and support provided by CRC, the venue has been able to make strides towards zero waste, an ambitious goal that requires attention to detail, dedication, and collaboration. Introducing composting at the venue has led to meaningful policy change and the Sustainability Program hopes to use this momentum to continue to educate staff and fans alike. It has been a pleasure working with CRC thus far and we're looking forward to continuing our partnership for many seasons to come."

### Natural Resources Defense Council

NRDC sees compost as a central component in building resilience and fairness in the food system. NRDC's policy advocates weighed in on the USDA's [Framework for Shoring Up the Food Supply Chain and Transforming the Food System to Be Fairer, More Competitive, More Resilient](https://www.nrdc.org/waste/how-to-divert-food-waste). Read how our IFSC Gold Sustaining Partner NRDC is identifying opportunities in the 2023 Farm Bill [HERE](https://www.nrdc.org/waste/how-to-divert-food-waste).

### Recycling Connections

For over 20 years, IFSC member
organization Recycling Connections has coordinated an annual ‘bulk’ purchase of the Home Compostor™ bin on behalf of municipalities, organizations and groups interested in selling compost bins as a way to promote backyard composting and assist with climate or other sustainability goals. More on our blog HERE.

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**Seven Generations Ahead**

Students at Conley Elementary School and Martin Elementary School in Huntley Community School District 158 dedicated a part of a school day in May to conduct waste audits, which were part of a collaboration between Seven Generations Ahead’s Zero Waste Schools team and the district’s Food Service Director. The audit data supports a plan to introduce recycling and commercial composting to all district elementary schools. More from our IFSC Gold Sustaining Partner HERE.

Jen Nelson shares lessons learned from the recent ReFed Food Waste Solutions Summit, and why focusing on food is more important than ever in the climate fight. Read more HERE.

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**UIC**

This past spring, UIC’s Sustainability Office hosted interns Fern and Sean to work on zero waste initiatives, including a food waste collection in one of UIC’s cafeterias. **Together, they diverted 81.7 lbs of post-consumer food waste from the landfill** through peer-to-peer outreach and education, getting over 430 students to scrape their plates into compost collection bins placed near the dish return window. Read more from Liz Bosarge, Director of UIC's Zero Waste Program and IFSC Board Member, HERE.

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**The Urban Canopy**

The Urban Canopy has merged with Healthy Soil Compost. Their combined customer base now offers rewards as they continue to include more people in the local food circular economy. Learn more about The Urban Canopy HERE and access their market schedule in their summer newsletter HERE.
We Sow We Grow

IFSC Member, We Sow We Grow, is having a call for speakers for their summit, October 7-9. We Sow We Grow is looking for compost enthusiasts and soil health professionals willing to talk with a global gardening community about building compost and long term compost care. Email natasha@wesowwegrow.org if interested.

Volunteer days for the urban farm at We Sow We Grow are Saturdays from 9 - Noon through July 30th. We Sow We Grow is building chicken coops, putting up fencing, building raised beds, applying compost and so much more. Address of the farm is 657 W 120th Street. Email volunteer@wesowwegrow.org to sign up.

And the Winner is

Save the dates May 7 - 13, 2023 for International Compost Awareness Week (ICAW).

The 2023 theme is "For Healthier Soil, Healthier Food...Compost!"

The Compost Research and Education Foundation (CREF) worked closely with its international partners, through the newly formed International Compost Alliance (ICA), on picking the same, unified theme to help promote ICAW worldwide. The ICA partners decided together that the themes over the next several years should relate to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the ones that fit closely with our collective work with compost. For this year, the group picked the SDG goal focused on hunger and food. The SDG goal is To Help Feed the World. The ICA partners felt that the chosen 2023 theme best reflects the goal of focusing on how compost can help feed the world.

Each year, ICAW holds a poster contest to pick a new design. Get your creative juices flowing. Read more about the contest which is open to anyone in the world age 14 or older beginning September 1, 2022 HERE.

If you are interested in joining IFSC's ICAW Planning Team to coordinate events in Illinois, email illinoiscomposts@gmail.com.
Committee Spotlight: Policy

The IFSC Policy Committee promotes policy that supports food recovery and food scrap composting efforts in Illinois. In 2022, the regenerated Policy Committee closely tracked and analyzed relevant food scrap- and compost-related legislation during the Illinois General Assembly session from January to April. The Committee continues to focus on state level policy and legislation while expanding its scope to include more federal, regional, and local analysis and coordination as well.

The highlight of the 2022 IL legislative session was the adoption of Senate Resolution 706, which was introduced by Senator Fine and which recognized May 1 - 7, 2022 as Compost Awareness Week in Illinois. Senator Fine also introduced SB3451, which would recognize the first full week of May every year as Compost Awareness Week in Illinois. HB4552 was introduced by Representative Cassidy and would include natural organic reduction under the definition of “cremation.”

The Committee will continue to track these and other food scrap- and compost-related legislation, such as incidental sales of finished compost on farms, edible food recovery, excess food donation, food scrap recycling, food scrap bans in landfill, etc. in the veto session in the fall of 2022 and the regular General Assembly session in 2023.

In the meantime, the Committee is working on the following initiatives:

- tracking and sharing information about relevant federal legislation and policy;
- updating the list of enacted food scrap- and compost-related legislation on the IFSC website;
- coordinating and collaborating with agencies and organizations like the US Composting Council, the NRDC, and the Illinois EPA; and

The Committee meets monthly, generally on the third Thursday at 9am by Zoom. If you have questions, ideas, or would like to join the Committee, please contact co-chair Liz Kunkle at liz.kunkle@gmail.com.

Important Note: The IFSC Policy Committee will start sending Action Alerts about local, state, and federal food scrap- and compost-related policy and legislation. Please email illinoiscomposts@gmail.com with the subject line "IFSC Policy Action Alerts" to opt in and receive these Action Alerts.

Partner Projects

CompostAble Chicago
IFSC is an Executive Sponsor of CompostAble Chicago, with invaluable local support provided by LRS, Resource Center, and the infallible waste sorting team.

CompostAble Chicago was borne out of Illinois Food Scrap Coalition and Chicago Sustainability Task Force members seeking greater transparency and understanding from local compost facility operators regarding the acceptance and/or issues with compostable packaging. The study involved digging into local foodservice operations, organics diversion programs, and associated waste streams in order to: develop a methodology and identify best practices; engage the input of a variety of stakeholders, and; drive dialogue across the organics value chain. Primary objectives were to gain a greater understanding around the nature and quantity of contaminants in Front-of-House (FOH) foodservice composting streams and how packaging choices may impact contaminants in those streams, and how the use of compostable packaging in foodservice influences actual capture of post-consumer food scraps destined for composting facilities.

**Approach**

- Four Chicago eating establishments with front-of-house (FOH) collection of compost were selected
- Venues exhibited varying levels and approaches regarding implementation of compostable serviceware; an array of best practices were identified
- Materials in landfill, compost, and recycling streams were collected, sorted into distinct categories, and analyzed
- Waste compositions were analyzed and compared; measurement included weight and volume

**Key Results**

- With the exception of the School Cafeteria, contamination levels trended lower with increased adoption of compostables.
- With the exception of the School Cafeteria, food capture in FOH compost is observed to trend higher at venues using a higher percentage of single-use serviceware items that are compostable.

**Next Steps**

- Methods employed in this project are intended to pave the way for further study to increase the sample size & enable statistical correlations to be explored for these relationships.
SCARCE: Food for Thought

Sustaining Gold Partner SCARCE, published a blog post about food waste. The best change you can make: Start Composting. We agree! "Food is one area where each of us can have an impact on the waste-stream. With everyone helping, we can change the waste created by what we eat and grow." Read more HERE.

USCC Updates

USCC and BPI Issue Joint Guidance on Compostable Products and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Programs

Read the joint guidance that the US Composting Council (USCC) and the Biodegradable Products Institute (BPI) released on how best to address compostable products in Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) programs for packaging.

This is part of a new Board approved strategic partnership designed to guide the extensive collaboration that exists between the two organizations. BPI and USCC are supportive of a variety of funding mechanisms to help cover the costs of collecting and processing compostable products associated with food scraps, including but not limited to extended producer responsibility programs (EPR). These EPR fees should not, however, be considered the only means of funding a national network for food scraps composting, which would need to be addressed through grants/loans and voluntary funding mechanisms. Read full text HERE.

Compost Training Program: In-person during August 1-5th in East Lansing, Michigan. Watch an informative video and find out more details HERE.

News, Events & Resources

News:
Crain’s 2022 Notable Leaders in Sustainability
Huge congrats to IFSC members (pictured left) making measurable environmental impact. Read more [HERE].

**Feed Earth Now (FEN)** LLC of Skokie, Illinois has agreed to sell a majority interest in the partnership to Digital Utilities Ventures, Inc. FEN ownership includes past monthly IFSC meeting presenter Cathy Scratch and current member John Lardner. FEN manufactures a revolutionary, proprietary soil microbe formula (Terreplenish) from food scrap that absorbs plant available nitrates through atmospheric Nitrogen. More about the new venture [HERE].

**Compost as a Solution** As a global fertilizer shortage persists into the unforeseeable future, opportunities to try alternate methods of tending to crops and land emerge. When it comes to compost vs fertilizer, compost could be a solution that growers explore to achieve better soil health and long-term resiliency. While both methods provide nutrients to plants, compost nourishes the soil. Read more from [Kiss the Ground HERE].

**Events:**
Illinois Recycling Foundation (IRF) 2022 Annual Conference, Aug 30 - 31
Recycling: The Secret Weapon to Combat Climate Change. The tours look amazing (one specifically focusing on compost).

[HERE] is our shared events calendar with the Wasted Food Action Alliance.

**Resources:**

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Thank you to our new and renewed partners

**PLATINUM SUSTAINING PARTNERS**

**GOLD SUSTAINING PARTNERS**
SILVER SUSTAINING PARTNERS
ORGANIZATION MEMBERS

71 South Wacker Drive LLC
Beans & Bagels
Beyond Hunger
Biobag USA
Bright Beat
Champaign County Environmental Stewards
City of Chicago
Cook County Department of Environmental Control
Composting Partners
Compost Supply
Garden Prairie Organics
Go Green Barrington
Green Soils, L.L.C.
Healthy Soil Compost (the Urban Canopy)
Illinois County Solid Waste Management Association
Illinois Restaurant Association
Illinois Sustainability Technology Center (ISTC)
Kane County
Knox College
Land and Lakes/National Solid Waste Management Association
Metropolitan Water Reclamation District
Midwest Grows Green
Mindful Waste
Northern Illinois Food Bank
Novamont North America Inc
Quercus Consulting
Recycling Connections
River Forest Sustainability Commission
Save Our Soil Composting Solutions
The GardenWorks Project
University of Illinois at Chicago
Village of River Forest
Waste Management
WeCare Denali, LLC
We Sow We Grow
Will County Green
Zero Waste Chicago

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

Amy Bartucci
Carya Haas
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**Illinois Food Scrap Coalition**

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Contact Us