Mission: The Illinois Food Scrap & Composting Coalition (IFSCC) is a thriving not-for-profit organization advancing diversion and composting of all organics in Illinois through advocacy, program implementation, market and business development, policy, and outreach.

Minutes August 7, 2023

# of Attendees: 59

Welcome (Amy DeLorenzo, IFSCC Conductor)
Speaker Spotlight:

Mark started composting in 1986 when public works never made it to pick up leaves on his parkway. Armed with Stu Campbell's book Let it Rot, a rototiller, and a spot behind his garage he successfully composted the leaf pile and has been hooked ever since!

Mark has been in the Green Industry since 1994 and a full-time organics recycler since 2014. He composts on-site at community gardens, parks, and backyards from the south side of Chicago to southern Wisconsin.

He uses the same processes and equipment type that a centralized commercial compost facility uses.

For homeowners open to using red-wigglers he incorporates vermicomposting into backyard bins. He's actively supporting Chicago's community garden/food scrap pilot through one of the six gardens involved in the program.

Currently he's working on bringing his equipment and processes to a Chicago rooftop!

Teegen Compost website HERE.
Contact: Mark Teegen, teegencompost@gmail.com
Ryan Anderson, Midwest Grows Green shared in chat: Results from Mark’s schoolyard restoration bit.ly/RayRestoration

Q&A
Q: How do you avoid shredding the red wigglers in the fall?!
A: I take out a couple handfuls of worms and put them under where the open bin sits. Some do go
through the shredder, after a couple of seasons there will be a red wiggler eco-system in your yard. If you feed them food scraps they will come back into the bin.

In chat: JN: My red wigglers survived many Chicago winters and summers.

Q: Are there any concerns about introducing red wigglers, which are not native, to the environment?
A: My understanding is that they are good for the soil and compost. You want them in the soil anyway. I have not had issues with introducing vermicomposting worms into my compost bins.

Q: Do you restrict meat and dairy in your bins? Is the answer different if you add vermicompost to the equation?
A: No meat, no dairy in my bins. What I’d want to grow IN my garden is what I suggest putting back IN my compost bins. Some commercial composting can handle this feedstock in their larger operations though. We are not vegetarians, and we throw out very little meat & dairy, less than 5% of our total organics!

Q: What volume do you work with per stop? How much compost are you generating?
A: The bin is a cubic yard. The bin can be filled up to 5-6 times in one season depending on customer use. After processing each bin, there’s about ⅓ of a yard material (compost) made per bin.

Q: Have you had experience introducing composting to school boards?
A: Turnover with management and schools has not been as successful (probably due to the year-long wait I suggest in order to shred the material and complete the process successfully at scale in these environments). I have had better success with churches.

Q: Can you comment on jumping worms?
A: The worms I incorporate into the bins are from the original family I started with 3 years ago. There is no reason I would get jumping worms in the bins unless you already had them in your yard.

Q: How do you address other wildlife getting into bins?
A: I line the bins with 1/4" vinyl coated hardware cloth and use a lid if the composter wants to pay extra for rodent protection.

Q: What are you shredding with? What are the specific machines you use? You mentioned using several ones for different purposes.
A: I have an ag + automotive background. A few of the machines and equipment has been modified so I can make it work for my business purposes. Royer for wet material and Elite for the dryer types of material. Mark made his conveyer to help with the diversion of material/ effective use of equipment.

Q: Do you add manure to piles, or do you recommend that?
A: I don't but would welcome chicken manure for those composters raising chickens.
IFSCC Executive Director update – (Benjamin Krumstok) benjamin@compostingpartners.com
- Nov 9th, SCARCE in Addison, IL: IFSCC Strategic Planning session. More details for members to participate, coming soon!
- IFSCC recently joined Forefront to join alongside other area non profit organizations, learn from available resources and tools offered and IFSCC is currently participating in an organizational assessment (iCAT).
- Benjamin thanked those that are participating in the iCAT survey from Forefront and mentioned that this info will instruct Strategic Planning.
- ICAW: coming in May 2024. Invited folks to join us! 2024 Theme is Compost... Nature's Climate Champion

Board Chair and USCC update – (John Lardner, IFSCC Board) jlardnerpe@aol.com (not present)
- Benjamin briefly updated attendees on USCC’s Chapter Rewards Program
- Mentioned the DEIA goals/priorities of the USCC (input is very valuable to instruct our work)

Food:Land:Opportunity, funded by a grant from the Kinship Foundation and the Searle Funds at The Chicago Community Trust. (Jen Nelson, IFSCC Board) jennifer@sevengenerationsahead.org
Jen gave a general policy/infrastructure update as they relate to the FLO Grant. The goal is to use finished compost in larger IL projects and expanding infrastructure in particular throughout the local food system to reduce food waste. Jen mentioned the funder is particularly interested in impacting a Foodshed that is broader than northern IL. Jen Invited folks to help her pitch ideas she/they can implement to the funder in order to expand IFSCC reach and make a greater impact to achieve our mission. Please email her directly.

Admin update: (Amy Bartucci) illinoiscomposts@gmail.com
- Office Hours Recap, Committee Guide and Resources have been shared
- Tabling Events + Presentation Form: Next up in Morton Grove, Lake County and more!
- Strategic Planning will take place this fall. IFSCC Members: Keep your eyes out for ways you can contribute to the process.

Committee Reports:
- We Compost: Mary Beth Schaye and Amy Bartucci, Co-Chairs, illinoiscomposts@gmail.com
  Mary Beth gave a summary of our recent attendees in the committee and also our newest connection in Crete, IL (Hidden Gem Acres). We have added a few new partners in the We Compost program and recognize there are second locations for a few of our businesses already in our Directory. Mary Beth reminded attendees to email us if you know of any businesses that are composting that we can invite to join our program.
- Communications: Amy DeLorenzon and Steph Katsaros, Co-Chairs, steph@brightbeat.com
  Amy D announced the next Communications Committee meeting will be specifically with SCARCE in attendance this MONDAY. A few attendees requested a meeting link to join
this important call. Goal is to plan collaborative communications for Pumpkin Smashes happening this fall.

- **Policy:** Liz Kunkle and Tommy Vaughan, Co-Chairs, [liz@ilenviro.org](mailto:liz@ilenviro.org), [tommy@wastenotcompost.com](mailto:tommy@wastenotcompost.com)
  - Most recent updates
    - A Bill allowing for the incidental sales of finished compost passed and was signed into law July 28!
    - A Bill creating an Extended Producer Responsibility Study and Task Force passed and was signed into law July 28!
  - Mid-July update [HERE](#).

- **Education:** Jen Nelson, Co-Chair, [jennifer@sevengenerationsahead.org](mailto:jennifer@sevengenerationsahead.org) and Dianarose Fraum
  - Dianarose gave updates about IFSCC Strategic Planning in the Education committee and invited more folks to join the calls to continue this work together. Keep watch for an upcoming IFSCC blog post about multi-dwelling unit composting in Chicago!

- **Compost Market Development:** Kila Harwick and Mike DiMucci, Co-Chairs, [kharwick@greensoilsmanagement.com](mailto:kharwick@greensoilsmanagement.com), [mike@gpocompost.com](mailto:mike@gpocompost.com)
  - Working heavily on increasing CMD COMMUNICATIONS and MEDIA
    - First ad went into last months, landscape contractor magazine about the benefits of compost and water holding capacity.
    - Second ad on contamination will be in the August issue of the landscape contractor magazine
    - CMD will not put an ad in September’s contractor magazine, but will do some social media advertising to line up with turf education/benefits of compost with turf and grass.
    - Benjamin K, Kila H and Mike D are currently being interviewed for the landscape contractor October issue on sustainability and how compost and the IFSCC is working to make that happen.

**Committee Meetings for 2023 (Contact illinoiscomposts@gmail.com for links to join)**
- Communications - 2nd Monday, 2pm
- Compost Market Development - 3rd Tuesday, 9am
- Education - 2nd Tuesday, 12pm
- Policy - 3rd Thursday 9am
- We Compost - 3rd Friday at 12pm

**News from IFSCC Membership:**
Meeting adjourned: 1:00
Next meeting will be Andrea Collins from NRDC sharing about a newly released Food Waste Reduction State Model Policy Toolkit from 12:00-1:00 pm on **September 11.**
Please plan to join us. [illinoiscomposts.org](http://illinoiscomposts.org)