



**Vision Statement:** We envision a future where all Illinoisans see organic materials as valuable resources and urgently take action to rescue edible food and divert food scraps to avoid emissions, and to restore nutrients to the soil through the creation and use of compost.

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

## Illinois Food Scrap & Composting Coalition Strategic Plan 2024-2026

<p><b><u>Advocacy</u></b> policy development &amp; state funding</p>	<p>to develop and support legislative and regulatory policy and to secure funds to grow industry and end markets for finished compost.</p>
<p><b><u>Diversion</u></b> implementation &amp; education</p>	<p>to develop, implement, and maintain educational and recognition programs that drive food scrap diversion through technical support and partnerships.</p>
<p><b><u>Market Development</u></b> infrastructure &amp; end markets</p>	<p>to drive specific attainable and sustainable end market development strategies that will have statewide impact, expand capacity for more diversion, and develop demand for the end product.</p>
<p><b><u>Engagement</u></b> communications &amp; membership</p>	<p>to EQUITABLY strengthen the composting community and support organizations and individuals to expand access, awareness and distribution of composting resources.</p>

### Advocacy – policy development & state funding

**Goal:** *to develop and support legislative and regulatory policy and to secure funds to grow industry and end markets for finished compost.*

#### OBJECTIVES

1. Represent IFSCC in statewide policy work to support and promote legislation that will advance food scrap diversion.
  - a. **IFSCC POLICY PLAN:** Develop a comprehensive IFSCC plan for a statewide policy push, including developing a tiered food scrap composting diversion plan, introducing policies to support the materials management plan, and setting goal targets related to outcomes.
  - b. **STATE REPRESENTATION:** IFSCC representation on appropriate statewide policy committees and task forces. Ensure composting is addressed in the statewide materials management plans.
  - c. **STATE ADVOCACY:**
    - i. Work with advocacy groups and partners to identify 3-5 key pieces of legislation to support.
    - ii. Review progress being made in other states to identify policy opportunities.

- iii. Secure funding for compost-related efforts, address food scraps in yard waste transfer stations; organic food waste ban; mandated use of finished compost rather than recommended; plastic bag and plastic packaging reduction or ban to help to reduce contamination in the organics compost stream.
  - d. STATE POLICY EDUCATION: Support the incorporation of language on food scrap diversion and compost use in state, county, and municipal plans.
    - i. Maintain and share a list of existing Illinois legislation (with links).
    - ii. Track and support state materials management plan recommendations related to composting and wasted food.
    - iii. Keep track of USCC policy to identify what IFSCC can support and share with Illinois members.
    - iv. Review and share compost procurement model documents/ordinances with local government purchasing and facilities management departments.
    - v. Work with soil, water and energy groups to ensure language related to the beneficial use of compost is incorporated into their policy work.
- 2. Advocate for **local/county composting policy and ordinances**.
  - a. COUNTY SOLID WASTE PLANS: Work to have language on composting and compost use incorporated into County 5-year plan revisions. Compare and contrast benchmarks for counties ensuring that composting instructions are easily identified on county and municipal websites.
  - b. MUNICIPAL/LOCAL POLICY: Develop recommendations for municipal and county language related to sustainability, climate, and composting.
    - i. Municipal/State/Agency Compost Use Ordinance advocacy
- 3. Advocate for **re-establishment of a state grant funded program** for market development in composting related sectors.
  - a. SOLID WASTE FUND: Advocate for at least \$1M per year of the Solid Waste fee revenue be used for projects and equipment that expand compost processing and sales.
  - b. PROJECT FUNDING: Identify state funding and projects to support composting, including:
    - i. Advocate for more allocation of existing government funding.
    - ii. required use of compost by government agencies in construction and maintenance projects.
    - iii. state funded marketing campaign to drive the sale of Illinois compost.
    - iv. statewide education regarding contamination of food scrap feedstock.
  - c. STATE PLAN: Track and support state materials management plan recommendations related to funding and market development.

## **Diversion - implementation & education**

**Goal:** *to develop, implement, and maintain educational and recognition programs that drive food scrap diversion, through technical support and partnerships.*

- 1. Provide **education and technical support** to develop more food scrap collection programs and use of finished compost across Illinois in the residential and commercial sector.
  - a. PUBLIC EDUCATION CAMPAIGN: Develop an education campaign addressing food scrap diversion; use of finished compost; connections between food waste, compost

and climate change (Project Drawdown); and minimizing contamination.

- i. Identify new sectors to target with education campaigns.
  - ii. Write articles and broaden our social media presence.
  - iii. Continue to provide educational tours of composting facilities.
  - iv. Develop and share a list of technical assistance providers and consultants.
- b. **RESIDENTIAL**: Continue to partner and expand relationships with:
- i. Municipalities to increase community knowledge of and use of food scrap composting programs.
  - ii. GoGreen groups, environmental commissions and other grassroots organizations to increase community engagement to educate and drive compost use.
- c. **COMMERCIAL**: Continue to partner and expand relationships with food scrap generators, haulers, compost processors, end users, and solid waste agencies.
- d. **SCHOOLS**: Continue to work with K-12 schools, universities and colleges to incorporate organics diversion and the education that supports that diversion.
- i. Leverage the Wasted Food Action Alliance school toolkit to promote composting in schools.
  - ii. Develop a targeted campaign that includes the value of composting as a third stream strategy to conserve landfill space for material.
  - iii. Educate to reduce contamination.
  - iv. Connect schools to their community to educate and grow awareness of residential programs and better engage residents in composting.
2. Develop a multi-pronged strategy for **minimizing contamination** related to organics diversion for composting. Work with IEPA to develop and share:
- a. **STATE GUIDELINES**: Standard statewide guidelines: work with IEPA and compost sites to identify acceptable materials.
  - b. **COMPOSTER EDUCATION**: Put on a composter summit in late 2025 to learn best practices (note that urban and suburban areas have different challenges).
3. Maintain and expand the **We Compost recognition program**.
- a. **MEMBER SUPPORT**: Support and build connections with existing We Compost partners (newsletter and social media).
  - b. **GROW WE COMPOST**: Grow membership in the We Compost program.
    - i. Add 25 more partners per year.
    - ii. Focus We Compost efforts on generators of food scraps including institutions, food producers, etc.
  - c. **BEST PRACTICES**: Identify and benchmark best practices to provide a blueprint for action.

## Market Development – infrastructure & end markets

**Goal:** to drive specific attainable and sustainable end market development strategies that will have statewide impact, expand capacity for more diversion, and develop demand for the end product.

1. Support and track the results of **Illinois compost use projects and research**.
  - a. **ASSEMBLE LIST**: identify Illinois composting projects and research and share info on projects and key partners
  - b. **COMPOSTER DATABASE**: Collaborate with Illinois EPA to maintain, improve, and



update the composter database and map.

2. Serve as the Illinois State Chapter of the United State Composting Council (USCC).
  - a. CHAPTER MEETINGS: Provide representation at USCC state chapter meetings.
  - b. MEMBERSHIP: Grow membership in both IFSCC and USCC.
  - c. Maintain focus on diversion of food scraps from landfill AND the sale and use of finished compost created from all organic feedstocks.
3. Collect Data: Collect and use data on organics being composted and the sale and use of finished compost in Illinois. to secure funding.
  - a. Use data to show the value of use of finished compost to consumers to increase demand for finished compost.
  - b. Use data to drive statewide impact
4. Develop strategy targeting specific end market sectors to educate about and encourage the use of compost as a replacement for herbicides, pesticides.
  - a. IDENTIFY AND ENGAGE WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS using finished compost
  - b. PROCUREMENT SPECIFICATIONS: Provide specifications on IFSCC website for planting guides and incorporation of compost for a variety of uses.
  - c. EDUCATION ON USES AND BENEFITS OF FINISHED COMPOST: Educate public and commercial/institutional constituents on the US Composting Council's Seal of Testing Assurance Program (USCC-STA).
  - d. INCENTIVES AND GRANT SPECIFICATIONS: Add language to government grants to require projects to utilize finished compost (see Advocacy goal).

## Engagement - communications & membership

**Goal:** to *EQUITABLY* strengthen the composting community and support organizations and individuals to expand access, awareness and distribution of composting resources.

1. **Build the IFSCC membership base**; in quantity, quality and equality; improving membership #s and committee engagement.
  - a. EVENTS: Conduct annual appreciation events and foster member engagement.
  - b. USCC: Coordinated IFSCC/USCC Illinois Chapter Member recruitment drive.
  - c. COMMITTEE DEVELOPMENT: Determine steps to recruit committee members and build a sustainable committee structure / build a robust committee and renewing chair term limits.
  - d. STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH: Target and engage external stakeholders for collaborative action.
2. Stronger and better resourced **communication, marketing, media, website, and social media campaign**.
  - a. MARKETING PLAN: Create and implement a marketing plan to disseminate education materials to the public and stakeholders to communicate the value of diverting and composting all organics, using finished compost and growing IFSCC membership.
  - b. COMMUNICATION PLAN: Create and implement a communication and education plan.
    - i. Align IFSCC efforts with recommendations of the Illinois Materials Management Advisory Committee and statewide committee efforts.
    - ii. Get composting on the radars of counties, municipalities, solid waste agencies



- and large generators. Raise awareness of composting facilities that accept food scraps.
- iii. Develop an outreach plan for International Compost Awareness Week.
  - iv. **Position IFSCC as a connector between like minded organizations**
3. Improve internal IFSCC **communication and collaboration**; support the incorporation of **equity** in each committee and the Board.
    - a. COMMITTEE COLLABORATION: Conduct quarterly committee collaboration meetings, with the chairs of committees coming together to cross pollinate.
    - b. EQUITY: Identify opportunities for each committee to incorporate
  4. Create and implement a **development and fundraising plan**
    - a. GRANT FUNDING: Identify sources for and obtain grant funding to support project and staffing needs of IFSCC.
    - b. FUNDRAISERS: Identify and hold focused fundraisers to provide grants to less resourced projects/partners.
  5. **Use data** on compost infrastructure and end use to effectively communicate impact, promote involvement, and identify opportunities.
  6. Frame the **roles of and interactions of staff, volunteers, and board members** in advancing the work of IFSCC.
    - a. VOLUNTEER TOOLS: Develop tools and resources to frame the **role and impact of volunteers** in advancing the work of IFSCC. Reframe volunteer roles and expectations to show them in more manageable ways.
    - b. GROWTH MANAGEMENT: Explore the potential to grow as an organization, identifying strategic goals, how to achieve those goals and needed staffing and funding.