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Contact: Amy Bartucci, Administrator
Illinois Food Scrap & Composting Coalition
illinoiscomposts@gmail.com
312 282 8676

Plans Underway to Celebrate International Compost Awareness Week

April 23, 2025, Illinois Environmental and recycling businesses, organizations, community groups and individuals around the U.S. are making plans to celebrate the annual International Compost Awareness Week (ICAW) coming up the week of May 4-10. The goal of ICAW is to build public awareness on the benefits of compost use and recycling organics – including food scraps and yard waste.

ICAW is promoted across the country and worldwide by holding different types of group activities and events. Volunteers in different states spend the week working to educate their local citizens in their towns, cities and statewide about composting by holding different onsite programs and online workshops and trainings. From compost giveaways to touring composting facilities to planting gardens, ICAW is a fun and educational program that annually reaches thousands of people.

This is the fourth year the [Illinois Food Scrap & Composting Coalition](#) is producing a lineup for more than farmers, gardeners and composting industry folks. These are fun and informative opportunities for all individuals, adults, youth and families to experience. *“On behalf of the ICAW team, we’d like to invite everyone out to attend these engaging and unique events taking place across Illinois, and for all ages. These include farm festivals, garden tours, composting application and how-to demos, plant sales, giveaways, storytimes and so much more. We want anyone to have access to learning more and taking part in our Adventures in Composting”* noted Merleanne Rampale, ICAW Committee Chair.

[Illinois will be hosting over 50 in-person and virtual events throughout twelve counties.](#)

Sustainable Communities Begin with Compost! is the ICAW theme for 2025. This theme was chosen with the goal of highlighting composting in all kinds of communities at any scale – from backyard home composter, to community composters, to large-scale facilities to all those who recognize the many benefits of using compost on our soils. As has been done for the past several years, the theme was chosen by all of the international partners who are part of the [International Compost Alliance](#) – making it truly an international theme. This year’s theme was inspired by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal #11 “Sustainable Cities and Communities: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.”

Here are some benefits from organic recycling and compost use:

- Composting reduces methane emissions through aerobic managed decomposition, providing for a more sustainable community.
- Composting lowers greenhouse gasses by improving carbon sequestration in the soil. Getting the carbon back into the soil serves as a “carbon bank,” helping to store carbon thereby removing it from the atmosphere.
- Compost provides essential nutrients for plants, promoting vibrant gardens and farms. Healthier soil leads to healthier, more nutritious food for our communities.
- Compost use increases the water-holding capacity of our soils; important as our communities are more and more often seeing drought and or intense rain events causing soil runoff and erosion.
- Community Gardens and Green Spaces: Compost plays a vital role in community gardens, fostering green spaces that provide fresh produce, recreational opportunities, and community gathering places.

International Compost Awareness Week, a program run in the United States by the Compost Research & Education Foundation, is the largest and most comprehensive education initiative of the compost industry. It is celebrated nationwide and in other countries each year during the first full week of May. ICAW was started in Canada in 1995. Since then, ICAW has continued to grow as more people, businesses, municipalities, schools and organizations are recognizing the importance of composting food scraps and yard waste and using compost to create healthier soil.

More information on ICAW can be found at: <https://compostfoundation.org/ICAW/ICAW-Home>
To locate events and opportunities in Illinois go to: <https://illinoiscomposts.org/icaw-2025/>

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**The Compost Research & Education Foundation** is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that supports initiatives that enhance the stature and practices of the composting industry by supporting scientific research, increasing awareness, and educating practitioners and the public to advance environmentally and economically sustainable organics recycling.