



Mission: The Illinois Food Scrap & Composting Coalition (IFSCC) is a thriving non-profit organization advancing diversion and composting of all organics in Illinois through advocacy, program implementation, market and business development, policy, and outreach.

Vision: 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.

Minutes February 2, 2026

of Attendees: 64

Welcome: Amy DeLorenzo

Hi all, and happy New Year - I like to think I can say happy new year to folks' if I haven't talked to them since the previous year :) In the time since we've met, things have been very difficult for our friends all over the country, especially in Minnesota. Since we know what that's like around here in Chicago, we've heard from some of our compost colleagues about the best ways to support them at this time and this came back as a resource. I'm going to drop it in the chat, and please do also feel free to reach out to me if you want further connection to helping our friends.

[Send a lovenote to MN](#)

Speaker Spotlight: Susannah Sun, Green Era's Business Operations Manager, joined us to learn more about community-owned anaerobic digestion in Illinois. Silver Sustaining Member Green Era is bringing together an ecosystem of farmers, food system leaders, and community organizations to turn food waste into renewable energy, soil, food, and jobs.

Susannah Sun is a sustainability and operations leader working at the intersection of climate action and environmental justice. As Business Operations Manager at Green Era, she leads partnerships, data, and policy. Susannah serves as a Policy Co-Chair at IFSCC and sits on the board of the Illinois Stewardship Alliance. In her spare time, she volunteers with the Chicagoland Food Sovereignty Coalition and is working on her first quilt.

Presentation [HERE](#)

Email: susannah@greenerachicago.com

Q&A

Q: How much carbon source do you add and what is the process to continue the decomposition to

get to usable compost?

A: Some of these details are also handled by Urban Growers Collective. 1;1 or 1:2. Application rate depends on the actual digestate. Most if not all digestate is currently being used on UGC land.

Q: Do other urban farms receive your compost?

A: Yes, Green Era currently works with the Academy of Global Citizenship –we are being very intentional about partnerships. Want to create a compost cooperative. For free or a subsidized rate. Green Era already makes compost available to area residents by the bucket/fee.

Q: Were the canned goods in the presentation heading to the digester?

A: The digester accepts a limited # of canned goods. Typically, accepting these in bulk are not ideal. They need to be fed slowly. The Green Era needs capital \$ to get additional equipment to accept canned goods better scale.

Q: What % of food delivered to food banks is inedible?

A: Studies have shown this as high as 1/3 is inedible.

Q: Can we go on a tour?

A: Yes! A Green Era tour will be on the books with IFSCC for 2026! Here is a [video segment](#) from WGN.

Q: Can you please review the legislation you mentioned?

A: [Link](#)

Q: Is this model economically sustainable in other parts of the Chicago area or State?

A: Green Era is certainly interested in expanding. Still trying to scale up operations. Need financing. Community owned is a big part of the model. Did not have original access to capital. Want to be intentional on expansion. Need to focus on the community model.

Q: Can Green Era buy additional properties to expand?

A: Determines on the project. The “Prize” helped a lot to getting Green Era started.

Q: Can you speak to increased employment opportunities?

A: Yes, we are striving for business incubation, urban farms and increased jobs–Green Era can scale to ~100 jobs! Lots of possibilities.

Q: Curious if you’ve heard any feedback from your recycling hauler regarding compostable packaging. Do fiber- or bioplastic-based foodware products get sorted differently from recyclable plastics by the depackager?

A: Green Era treats these like the rest of the recyclables. It is hard to determine if these are all PFAS free. Green Era is not confident in customers' ability to distinguish/sort correctly. We generally support using reusables when possible.

Q: Can you talk more about the depackaging process and possible contamination with PFAS and other toxins from plastic? Are you studying your digestate for any residual contaminants?

A: There will be PFAS as there are PFAS everywhere. The studies will be important to determine how MUCH there is. Re: other issues like Maine, there have been PFAS bc industrial waste has been included. Strict control process –only taking in food waste. Regularly testing their material.

Q: Describe the process working with a food bank/s.

A: We take food from both stores and food banks! Discounted pricing can be offered for banks in this way. A large volume is coming from food banks. Pallets can be less expensive than being sent to a landfill.

IFSCC Board President/Vice President update Mike DiMucci, mike@gpocompost.com and Spencer LaBelle, SLaBelle@scsengineers.com
Spencer thanked Susannah and Green Era’s support for IFSCC. He noted that IFSCC [Membership drive](#) is in effect. IFSCC is a hub for dialogue and important compost and composting discussions. Our group is growing. ICAW is coming up quickly! Spring will be here

IFSCC Administrator update Amy Bartucci, admin@illinoiscomposts.org

- **Thank you** for showing up for compost and composting! From volunteers and leaders to all our members and followers (renewed + upcoming!). I see you. Currently I am working closely with the IFSCC Board of Directors in their leadership transition. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me with questions, ideas or a connection during this time.
- **EVENTS**
 - Soil Health Week with IL Stewardship Alliance - March 2-8, 2026 ([Take a peek](#) at the IFSCC photos and past events!)
- **ACTIONS**
 - Membership renewal + recruitment --[Now is the time!](#)

USCC update Merleanne Rampale, IFSCC ICAW Chair, MRampale@swalco.org and Sarah Wilcox swilcox@stlcompost.com IFSCC Young Professionals Group

- COMPOST2026 is in effect now through Feb 5th.
- [2025 Policy Report](#) is available on the USCC site.

Committee Reports:

- We Compost: Mary Beth Schaye Co-Chair
 - Next Meeting, March 13, Noon
- Communications: Amy DeLorenzo and Steph Katsaros, Co-Chairs, amy.delorenzo@gmail.com, steph@brightbeat.com
 - Enjoying so much collaboration with a lot of the IFSCC committees.
 - YP’s are literally developing a web to help so much of the work of IFSCC.
 - Speaking and Tabling opportunities still exist–reach out to help us.
 - Membership Targets for 2026:

Potential 2026 target IFSCC members / folks we want to learn from this year! If you represent these sectors or have connections — let us know!

- Large Event Facilities
- Food Business (Farm, Restaurants, Food Service/Catering)
- Individuals, always
- Non-profits / Advocacy Groups outside of Greater Chicago
- Municipalities within and outside of Greater Chicago

Policy: Liz Kunkle and Susannah Sun, Co-Chairs, lizkunkle@gmail.com, susannah@greenerachicago.com

- Committee is continuing to track food scrap bills
- SB2852 has been a very big conversation/agenda item in meetings
- Good News! IL has a draft resolution to recognize compost awareness in IL –for ICAW –(Sen Fine) and now Rep Mason both in support of this! [HR636](#)
 - Next committee meeting is Feb 24th this month.
- Liz K will be the Speaker Spotlight for Legislative Lunch & Learn on May 4 at Noon
- Education: Jen Dowd and Natasha Nicholes, Co-Chairs, jennifer@sevendgenerationsahead.org, and natasha@wesowwegrow.org
 - Education Committee Update: We are telling the story of the impact IFSCC has had over the years!
 - [LINK](#) to retrospective: *Illinois Needs Compost*
 - Next Education Committee meeting Tues 2/10 @ noon
- Compost Market Development: Mike DiMucci, Chair, mike@gpocompost.com and Jess Polansky jpolansky@midwestorganicsrecycling.com
 - Amy B announced that Mike has a new co-chair. Jess Polansky.
- International Compost Awareness Week (ICAW), Merleanne Rampale, Chair MRampale@swalco.org
 - Website has new info
 - Please register an ICAW event!
 - Toolkit has a tremendous amount of resources for site hosts.
 - Happening May 3-9 –cut off date for registering the program is April 10
 - Reach out to Merleanne to brainstorm an event.
 - And some of our sites will have compost special sales during ICAW week as well! We will also have some ICAW fun at the May general meeting featuring Liz K on policy and maybe a "live from" at one of the happenings taking place that week.
- Young Professionals Group (YPG), Caroline French and Tommy Vaughan, Co-Chairs, caroline@sevendgenerationsahead.org, tommy@wastenotcompost.com
 - Next Meeting Feb 13
 - New SLACK channel –coming up!
 - Graphic design for IFSCC’s Annual Report

Committee Meetings for 2026 (Contact admin@illinoiscomposts.org for links to join)

- Communications - 2nd Monday, 2pm
- Compost Market Development - 3rd Tuesday, 11am
- Education - 2nd Tuesday, 12pm
- Policy - 3rd Thursday 11am
- We Compost - March 13, noon
- ICAW - As needed, Next meeting is Feb 3rd
- YPG - Next Meeting, Feb 13, Noon

News from attendees: And listing NEW attendees...

- Adam Schwartz, The Urban Canopy
- Linda Lin, Village of Glencoe Task Force
- Jen Panattoni, a new member of IFSCC and volunteer advocate with Go Green Park Ridge
- Sari Smart Sustain CoCC:
- Kyler Haynes, an intern at Seven Generations Ahead and getting masters in Sustainability at Loyola Chicago.
- Zoe Friedman, UIC, ERC
- Shreya Mahajan, new Conservation and Agriculture Policy Manager for the Illinois Environmental Council. Currently working on pushing organic waste policies forward.

Meeting adjourned: 1:00PM

Next IFSCC Meeting: March 2, 2026

Please plan to join us and email admin@illinoiscomposts.org if you need a link to join.