



AGENDA COVER MEMO

Memorandum Date: February 13, 2024

Order Date: February 27, 2024

TO: Board of County Commissioners

DEPARTMENT: Public Works

PRESENTED BY: Maya Buelow, Waste Reduction Specialist

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: ORDER/ IN THE MATTER OF ACCEPTING A GRANT FROM THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA) IN THE AMOUNT OF \$400,000 TO DEVELOP A COMMERCIAL FOOD WASTE COMPOSTING PROGRAM AND DELEGATING AUTHORITY TO THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO EXECUTE THE GRANT AND ASSOCIATED CONTRACTS.

I. MOTION

Move approval of accepting a grant from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) in the amount of \$400,000 to Develop a Commercial Food Waste Composting Program and Delegating Authority to the County Administrator to Execute the Grant and Associated Contracts.

II. AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

In August 2023, Lane County Waste Management submitted a grant application for a proposed project that seeks to address a missing element in the current Lane County food waste reduction plan: *ensuring that an increasing supply of commercially produced food-waste compost is accessible to more county residents, particularly in historically underserved rural communities*. Food scraps are wet and dense and need to be bulked up and mixed with a substantial volume of other materials. In order to accept more food waste, Lane County commercial composters need a reliable market to move the product, as they are limited by storage capacity and footprint of their operations.

The proposed program will provide funding for purchasing and delivering compost to Lane County agricultural producers (1-500 acres). Lane County will also host eight Free Compost Days over two years. The project deliverables set the following targets for compost distribution and equitable access:

- Distribution of 7,260 tons of free compost over two years, 2024-25.
- Forty percent of the compost will be distributed to minority communities/businesses.
- Develop promotional, educational, and outreach materials for the free compost program. Fifty percent of outreach materials will be culturally specific and multilingual.
- Engage with 250-500 agricultural producers each year, 2024-25. One hundred percent of the farms should be between 1-500 acres, and 40 percent should be minority owned.
- Engage with 100 residents in four cities each year, 2024-25.

III. BACKGROUND/IMPLICATIONS OF ACTION

A. Board Action and Other History

None

B. Policy Issues

The proposed program addresses environmental justice issues. The target audience is rural Lane County residents and agricultural producers, with a focus on serving minority populations and minority-owned farms. The program will collaborate with community organizations on targeted outreach to Lane County's Hispanic, Black, and Asian communities in cities and surrounding areas in Lane County, which include more diverse communities and have relatively high rates of poverty (percent), such as Cottage Grove (21), Junction City (13), Oakridge (29), and Springfield (16).

C. Board Goals

The proposed project aligns with the Board's Collective Impact Lens by addressing the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Food Recovery Hierarchy. Lane County, in collaboration with city partners and local haulers, is already working on the top food-recovery-hierarchy strategies by promoting food waste reduction, food donation, and feeding animals through public education campaigns to residential and commercial sectors but is *only promoting commercial food waste hauling and composting services for food waste that cannot be prevented or recovered*. Promoting compost application and free access to compost for Lane

County's underserved rural and minority communities will reinforce the closed loop of organic material in the county.

D. Financial and/or Resource Considerations

The total project cost is \$533,333 and includes \$133,333 of in-kind match from Public Works for salary and fringe for 7 people at various levels in the organization. The remaining cost of \$400,000 will be covered with federal grant funds. There is no cash match required by this grant program.

E. Health Implications

None

F. Analysis

A missing element in the current Lane County food waste reduction plan is *ensuring that an increasing supply of commercially produced food-waste compost is accessible to more county residents, particularly in historically underserved rural communities*. Food scraps are wet and dense and need to be bulked up and mixed with a substantial volume of other materials. In order to accept more food waste, Lane County commercial composters need a reliable market to move the product, as they are limited by storage capacity and footprint of their operations.

G. Alternatives/Options

1. Accept grant funds from USDA for a commercial food waste composting program to help mitigate climate impacts.
2. Do not accept grant funds from USDA and continue with business as usual wherein substantial volumes of food waste go to the landfill and contribute to methane gas emissions.

IV. RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommend Option 1; Accept grant funds from USDA for a commercial food waste composting program to help mitigate climate impacts.

V. TIMING/IMPLEMENTATION

The timeline below summarizes program milestones and deliverables (Spring 2024-Spring 2026). Maya Buelow will be the primary project lead and will be supported in contract administration by Waste Reduction Program Supervisor, Angela Marzano. Danielle Hiestand will contribute staff time for marketing and outreach efforts.

Spring 2024 - Contract with commercial food waste composters/ Contract with community partners/ Develop marketing, outreach and education materials with community partners / Conduct marketing and outreach / Start to deliver free compost to producers / Plan Free Compost Day events for the fall.

Summer 2024 Continue marketing and outreach efforts and planning the fall Free Compost Days.

Fall 2024 - Deliver up to 3,570 tons of free compost to producers/ Host 2 Free Compost Day events/ Continue marketing and outreach efforts.

Winter 2025 - Plan 2 Free Compost Days for Spring 2025 / Continue marketing and outreach efforts – refine with community partners.

Spring 2025 - Host 2 Free Compost Days / Deliver up to 3,570 tons of free compost to producers / Continue marketing and outreach efforts.

Summer 2025 Start finalizing data collection and analysis.

Fall/Winter 2025 - Deliver remaining free compost to producers / Complete data analysis and draft final report.

Spring 2026 – Host 2 Free Compost Days/ Final report

VI. ATTACHMENTS

Notice of Grant Award Email

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF LANE COUNTY, OREGON

ORDER NO: 24-02-27-05

In the Matter of ORDER/ ACCEPTING A
GRANT FROM THE UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
(USDA) IN THE AMOUNT OF \$400,000 TO
DEVELOP A COMMERCIAL FOOD
WASTE COMPOSTING PROGRAM AND
DELEGATING AUTHORITY TO THE
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO
EXECUTE THE GRANT AND
ASSOCIATED CONTRACTS.

WHEREAS, the Lane County Public Works, Waste Management Division has a plan to reduce food waste by expanding composting opportunities for commercial food producers; and

WHEREAS, the US Department of Agriculture solicits grant applications for funding projects that support their mission for commercial food waste reduction and Lane County has been awarded grant funding for this project; and

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners approves all grant awards in excess of \$150,000; and

NOW, THEREFORE, the Board of County Commissioners of Lane County **ORDERS** as follows:

1. Accepts the grant from the US Department of Agriculture in the amount of \$400,000 for making commercial food waste composting more accessible throughout Lane County.
2. Delegates authority to the County Administrator to sign the grant documents and execute associated contracts.

ADOPTED this 27th day of February, 2024.

Laurie Trieger, Chair
Lane County Board of Commissioners

COOK Linda L (PW)

From: BUELOW Maya C
Sent: Monday, January 29, 2024, 9:46 AM
To: COOK Linda L (PW); MARZANO Angie R; ORLANDINI Jeffrey T; DAVIS Paula L; DUKES Laurie S
Cc: HURLEY Daniel M; ELLIS Matt T (PW); HOWARD Katherine E (PW)
Subject: FW: CFWR Press- Release!!

Here is the email announcement...

Maya Buelow (she/her)
Waste Reduction Specialist Waste Management Division,
Lane County Public Works
3100 E. 17th Avenue, Eugene, Oregon 97403
Direct: 541-682-4339

Information is like compost, it does no good unless you spread it around. ~Eliot Coleman

From: Maya Buelow <mayab4@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 26, 2024, 12:03 PM
To: BUELOW Maya C <Maya.BUELOW@lanecountyor.gov>; MARZANO Angie R <angie.marzano@lanecountyor.gov>
Subject: Fwd: CFWR Press- Release!!

[EXTERNAL]

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Kaume, Lydia - REE-NIFA <Lydia.Kaume@usda.gov>
Date: Fri, Jan 26, 2024 at 11:26 AM
Subject: CFWR Press- Release!!
To: Kaume, Lydia - REE-NIFA <Lydia.Kaume@usda.gov>
CC: Turner, Sydney - REE-NIFA <sydney.turner@usda.gov>, Potts, Sean - FPAC-NRCS, DC <Sean.Potts@usda.gov>, Medley, Sarah - REE-NIFA <Sarah.Medley@usda.gov>, Williams, Sharonte - FPAC-NRCS, DC <sharonte.williams@usda.gov>, Guse, Brian - FPAC-NRCS, DC <Brian.Guse@usda.gov>, Stluka, Suzanne - REE-NIFA <Suzanne.Stluka@usda.gov>

Greetings NRCS-OUAIP- CFWR Recommended Awardees:

As you start your weekend, we wanted to make sure you were notified that the embargo on your CFWR recommended award is now lifted!! Your organization is now free to make public statements and are invited to use the information in the press release.

The press release was published yesterday and can be found here:

<https://www.usda.gov/media/pressreleases/2024/01/25/usda-invests-approximately-115-million-composting-and-food-waste>



USDA Invests Approximately \$11.5 Million in Composting and Food Waste Reduction Projects in 23 States

WASHINGTON, Jan. 25, 2024 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is investing approximately \$11.5 million in 38 cooperative agreements that support innovative, scalable waste management plans to reduce and divert food waste from landfills. The Composting and Food Waste Reduction cooperative agreements, which are funded by the American Rescue Plan Act, are part of USDA's broad support for urban agriculture.

www.usda.gov

Have a great weekend and let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Lydia Kaume, PhD. RDN (she/her/hers)
National Program Leader
Division of Nutrition
USDA, National Institute of Food and
Agriculture Kansas City, Missouri
lydia.kaume@usda.gov
Phone: 816-642-4607



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[NIFA's Grants Application Guide](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions: Applying for a Grant](#)

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