

On-Farm Composting Toolkit

WORKSHEET

DEFINING COMMUNITY

About this worksheet: Move forward with clear understanding of who you want to serve and engage. This worksheet will guide you toward a definition of your Project Community for the purposes of planning a farm-focused food scrap diversion project.

Opening reflection: Imagine it's food scrap collection day for your farm-focused food scrap diversion project. Notice where you are – at a church? A school? A parking lot? Out in the open at a farmers market? At a farm's CSA pick-up? Who is coming to drop off food scraps?

Consider: It's rarely the case that everybody in a given community actually benefits from or participates in community programs. Usually, the reality is a subset: one particular school or particular area of the town. Being intentional in your definition of this project community makes it more likely you'll get the results you want. Also, project communities change over the life of a program. We encourage team organizers to start with a manageable definition of community.

WHAT IS YOUR PROJECT COMMUNITY?

Given *current project goals and organization* (these may change later):

1. Who (what groups, individuals, or organizations) is most likely to benefit from your food scrap diversion program and why?
2. Who (what groups, individuals, or organizations) do you most want to benefit from your food scrap diversion program and why?
3. Who (what groups, individuals, or organizations) is most likely to participate in (adopt early, volunteer for) your food scrap diversion program and why?
4. Who (what groups, individuals, or organizations) do you most want to participate in your food scrap diversion program and why?
5. Considering all your answers above, come up with the Project Community you want to launch with and describe that community in a single sentence:
6. If necessary, also describe the Project Community you want to move toward over time, as the program develops and becomes more established:

Base your initial food scrap volume assessments on the Project Community you identified in #5.

ALIGNING WITH TEAM AND PARTNERS

Everyone involved in your project needs to understand and agree on how “community” is defined. If a partner or team member imagines the program engaging or serving a different slice of community, there's probably a reason. Take a minute to think about what you have heard from other members of your team or from former partners that might suggest that your definitions don't quite line up. Have conversations to clarify your understanding of their thinking, then come up with definitions that everyone feels they can agree on.

Describe your team's Project Community here:

Closing reflection: Think back on the goals and organization you began with. Do any of these need to change now that you have a clearer sense of who you most want to serve and engage? If your Project Community will change over time, what needs to happen to make that possible?

Consider: Community definitions can change as projects evolve. This exercise is a great one to come back to after your project has been up and running for at least a year.

Visit www.onfarmcomposting.org to submit questions or comments about this tipsheet and download more.

COMPOSTING ASSOCIATION OF VERMONT
PO Box 643 Hinesburg, Vermont 05461 Tel. 802-373-6499 Email: info@compostingvermont.org

The On-Farm Composting Toolkit was funded by a USDA Rural Utilities Solid Waste Management Grant. The Composting Association of Vermont is an equal opportunity employer and service provider. Get the full toolkit at www.onfarmcomposting.org.