



Willow Tree Community Compost

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VORS 2020

Why Willow Tree?



What is Willow Tree?

- A small, local curbside compost pick-up company serving Hartford, VT

Goals:

- simple and accessible
- build community
- keep nutrients in the community



Getting Started



Brainstorming/Planning

- Decided on name and logo
- Attended Grow More/Waste Less Workshop with Cat Buxton
- SCORE mentor

Housekeeping

- Email/website
- Business bank account
- Registered Tradename
- VT State Hauling permit
- Town of Hartford Business permit
- Liability Insurance

Logo by



PILOT PROGRAM: Finding Participants

WILLOW TREE



COMMUNITY
COMPOST

E-mail willowtreecompost@gmail.com or call 603 498-0746

Are you interested in Curbside Compost Pickup?

Reduce your trash!
Keep food scraps out of the landfill!
Help provide compost for community gardens!

WILLOW TREE



COMMUNITY COMPOST

Join our pilot program now for pick-up starting in May

\$40 Participation Fee Includes:

- Five gallon bucket and compostable liners
- Two months of weekly curbside pick-up
- Thank you gift for providing feedback

For more information or to sign up
E-mail willowtreecompost@gmail.com or call 603 498-0746



Getting Ready for Pilot Program: Built a 3-bin system



Getting Ready for Pilot Program: Purchased a trailer



Getting Ready for Pilot Program: Purchased Buckets/Stickers



Pilot Program Summary

- 10 Participants
- Two months
(May and June 2019)
- Weekly Pick-up
- Experimented with
 - liners vs. no liners
 - pick-up scheduling
 - collection system



14 months Later...

- ## Services
- 5 gallon bucket curbside pickup
 - Weekly
 - Bi-weekly
 - Drop-off
 - Dump your own
 - Bucket swap
 - 32 gallon bin weekly pickup

- ## Current Customers stats
- 80 Customers
 - 19 Weekly
 - 39 Biweekly
 - 19 Drop Off
 - 5 32 gallon shared bins
 - 64 residential
 - 3 commercial
 - 3 offices
 - 115 condo/apartment households

Partnership with Sunrise Farm



FOOD SCRAPS DIVERTED FROM LANDFILL
(since May 2019)

17,590 lbs
currently ~1000lbs/week

Marketing

- Word of mouth
- Every Door Direct Mailing
- Hanging Flyers
- Social Media



CrowdFunding

- Participated in The Local Crowd crowdfunding campaign through Vital Communities (Nov-Dec 2019)
- Raised \$4,080 to help grow the business
- Gained customers through exposure during the campaign
- Partner Sunrise Farm also ran a campaign to raise money for their on-farm composting facility



Sunrise Farm Partnership



- Located on Route 5 in Hartford, VT
- 350 Member Community Supported Ag (CSA)
- Vegetables, meat (chicken and sheep), eggs and maple syrup
- Owned by Chuck Wooster since 1999



WILLOW TREE



COMMUNITY
COMPOST



On-Farm Composting

Funding

- State grant from Working Lands Board
- Crowdfunding Campaign

Structure

- Post and beam structure with Solar panels on roof
- 3 large compartments on a poured concrete slab
 1. Drop off/mixing
 2. Active aeration
 3. Secondary cure

Consultants

- James McSweeney
(Compost Technical Services)
- Cat Buxton
(Grow More/Waste Less)

Specs

- Medium Compost Facility Permit
- ~130 cubic yards of food scraps per year

**~200 Cubic yards of compost
per year**



White River Community Garden



The Perks

- Member benefits
 - Compost share back
 - Personal touch- email updates
 - Flexibility
- Supporting Community
 - Local Farm
 - Community Garden
 - Local businesses



Challenges



Contamination



Animals



Carbon Sourcing



Winter

Future of Willow Tree



- Increase food scrap capacity
- Offer educational opportunities
- Create composting network
- Other service
 - Compost tea
 - Vermicompost



