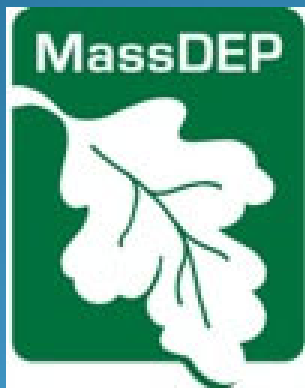


Further Discussion of Potential Proposed Approach



John Fischer
Organics Subcommittee
December 2, 2025

Meeting Agenda

- Recap October Presentation
- Identify concerns, questions, and barriers for further discussion
- Identify stakeholders and representative organizations to engage with further

Goals and Capacity

- Food waste 21% of our trash - 930K tons/year
 - Estimate 510K tons commercial/420K tons residential
- 2030 goal –780K tons total
 - At 370K tons in 2024
- Waste Ban Expectations
 - 2014 ban - increase from 100k to 300k tons/year
 - 2022 ban - includes about 100K addl. tons/year

Commercial Organics Ban

History

- Organics Action Plan – established 2012
- Initial Commercial Organics Waste Ban –2014
- Expanded Commercial Organics Waste Ban – 2022
- 2030 Solid Waste Master Plan – published 2021
 - “Conduct stakeholder process by 2025 to assess whether to ban all organic waste from disposal by 2030.”

Annual Food Waste Diversion

(total rounded to nearest 10K tons)

Type of Use	2016	2,017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Anaerobic Digestion	48,234	87,856	159,563	187,947	211,215	175,264	217,180	249,284	263,734
Compost	79,586	52,991	42,321	40,569	33,038	25,273	28,651	26,499	21,247
Animal Feed	26,250	26,777	39,593	40,014	8,828	24,719	43,033	43,820	34,052
Food Donation	22,712	25,940	26,637	27,703	30,004	23,591	22,085	21,020	23,555
Other	13,277	12,819	8,065	9,552	38,745	27,295	30,822	31,845	25,060
Rounded Total	190,000	210,000	280,000	310,000	320,000	280,000	340,000	370,000	370,000

Additional Capacity Need

- 2030 goal – 780,000 tons total food waste diversion
- Total Current Capacity – about 510K tons
- Available Current Capacity – about 140,000 tons
- Additional statewide capacity needed by 2030 – 270,000 tons
- More distributed capacity needed to reduce transportation distances

Residential Food Scraps Collection

- Municipal programs
 - 160 municipalities report some type of food waste collection program
 - 82 drop-off
 - 14 curbside
 - 9 both
 - 55 have preferred vendor for food waste collection
 - Collected 21,882 tons of food waste in 2024
 - 160 municipalities sell home compost bins to residents

Transition to Action Plan

Factors Driving a Program Shift

- Solid waste disposal capacity severely limited
- Food waste diversion progress leveled off last 3 years
- Need for more effective enforcement at ½ ton per week ban threshold
- Encourage more food donation & rescue
- Estimated available capacity – 140,000 tons
- Need and opportunity for more diversion
- Spur continued capacity growth going forward

Factors to Consider for Potential Expanded Waste Ban

- Effectiveness of voluntary programs
- Cost-effectiveness of collection from smaller sources
- Ability of infrastructure to manage additional materials
- Potential increased contamination from small businesses and residents
- MassDEP ability to inspect and enforce effectively

Potential Proposed Approach for Discussion

Potential Stage 1 Expansion

- Stage 1 – on or after November 1, 2028
- Lower Commercial Organics Ban threshold to zero
- Consider exemption for businesses with incidental food waste (e.g., offices with lunch-room waste, medical offices, non-food retail, etc.)
- Would most likely include all schools (assuming have a cafeteria)

Potential Stage 2 Expansion

- Stage 2 – no sooner than November 1, 2030
- Expand ban to include residential food waste
- Establish municipal compliance program standard
- Municipalities with specified program would be considered compliant
- Could include curbside, drop-off, home compost bin and/or subscription service options
- May vary for curbside and drop-off programs
- Eligibility requirements may increase over time

How would ban implementation work in practice?

- Inspections at solid waste facilities
- No allowable disposal amount in regulations
- Consider action levels – like cardboard, bottles & cans
- Solid waste facilities use action levels for implementation purposes – e.g., 10% for cardboard
- MassDEP considers action levels but may enforce below action level in certain scenarios

How would ban implementation work in practice?

- Issue enforcement for significant amounts of banned materials
- As with other materials – would not enforce against individuals or for minimal quantities
- Would not require knowing exactly how much from each generator



Discussion Questions

- Recap October Presentation
- Identify concerns, questions, and barriers for further discussion
- Identify stakeholders and representative organizations to engage with further

Next Steps

- Obtain feedback on proposed approach
- Engage stakeholders to participate in process
- Hold follow up meetings to work on specific issues
- Develop refined proposal and updated Action Plan
- Estimate 9-12 months for this process
- Develop draft regulations and guidance
 - Would need to go through public comment & hearings
- Promulgate final regulations
- Implement ban and supporting programs

Contact Information

John Fischer – john.fischer@mass.gov

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massdep-organics-subcommittee>

Additional Background Information

Supporting Programs: Capacity

- Recycling Business Development Grants
 - For capital costs
 - Past grants up to \$400,000
 - Now finalizing Fall 2025 application
 - Considering larger grant cap



Supporting Programs: Capacity

- Recycling Loan Fund
 - Open for applications on ongoing basis – up to \$500,000
 - Considering increase to maximum loan amount
 - Up to \$1.5 million for anaerobic digestion

Supporting Programs: Capacity

- Recycling Works in Massachusetts
 - Compost site technical assistance
- Waste Reduction Innovations Grant
 - Accepted proposals for start up and pilot projects for food waste in 2025
 - Will consider for larger capital projects for food materials in next cycle

Supporting Programs: Businesses

- RecyclingWorks in Massachusetts
 - Web-based resources and guidance
 - Email and phone assistance
 - On-site assistance
 - Outreach
 - Speaking at meetings
 - Newsletter and blog posts
 - Shown here: food waste collection station



Supporting Programs: Schools

- Green Team
 - Educational programs
 - Small equipment grants
- RecyclingWorks in Massachusetts technical assistance
- Green Sword Workgroup
- MassDEP Grants for Schools
 - SMRP – expanding equipment grants for schools – carts, collection containers, equipment

Supporting Programs: Municipal/Residential

- SMRP Equipment Grants
 - Food waste collection carts
 - Food waste drop off equipment
 - Organics Capacity Grants – larger projects



Supporting Programs: Municipal/Residential

- Recycling Dividends Program (RDP) Funding
 - Municipalities earn up to 3 points for food waste programs
 - Municipalities earned \$320,000 in RDP funds in 2024 from implementing organics programs
 - From 2021 to 2024, municipalities spent \$865,000 of RDP funds on food waste programs