

Organics Subcommittee Meeting Agenda October 17, 2024

10:00 – 10:45 MassDEP Food Waste Reduction Updates, John Fischer, MassDEP

10:45 – 11:10 Franklin County Food Waste Composting Program, Jan Ameen,
Franklin County Solid Waste Management District

11:10 – 11:35 Town of Arlington Food Waste Composting Program, Charlotte
Milan, Town of Arlington

11:35 – 12:00 City of Boston Food Recovery Initiatives, Laura Alves, City of
Boston Office of Food Justice

Food Waste Reduction Updates



Organics Subcommittee
John Fischer, MassDEP
October 17, 2024

Goals and Capacity

- Food waste about 21% of our trash - about 930K tons/year
 - Estimate 510K tons commercial/420K tons residential
- 2030 goal – increase annual diversion by 500K tons over 2018 baseline of 280K tons
 - 780K tons total
 - At 380K tons in 2023

Goals and Capacity

- Waste Ban Expectations
 - 2014 ban - increase from 100k to 300k tons/year
 - 2022 ban - includes about 100K addl. tons/year
- Remainder may need to come from smaller sources
- Current management capacity – about 500K tons
- Future need for more distributed capacity and expanded collection infrastructure
- Increasingly regional, inter-state capacity picture

Waste Ban Implementation

- Inspections, Compliance & Enforcement
 - Solid waste facilities required to maintain and implement waste ban compliance plans
 - MassDEP conducts inspections at solid waste facilities
 - Issue enforcement when observe loads with significant amounts of a banned material
 - Typically, only enforcement against business, institutional, or government generators or waste haulers
 - Not individual residents

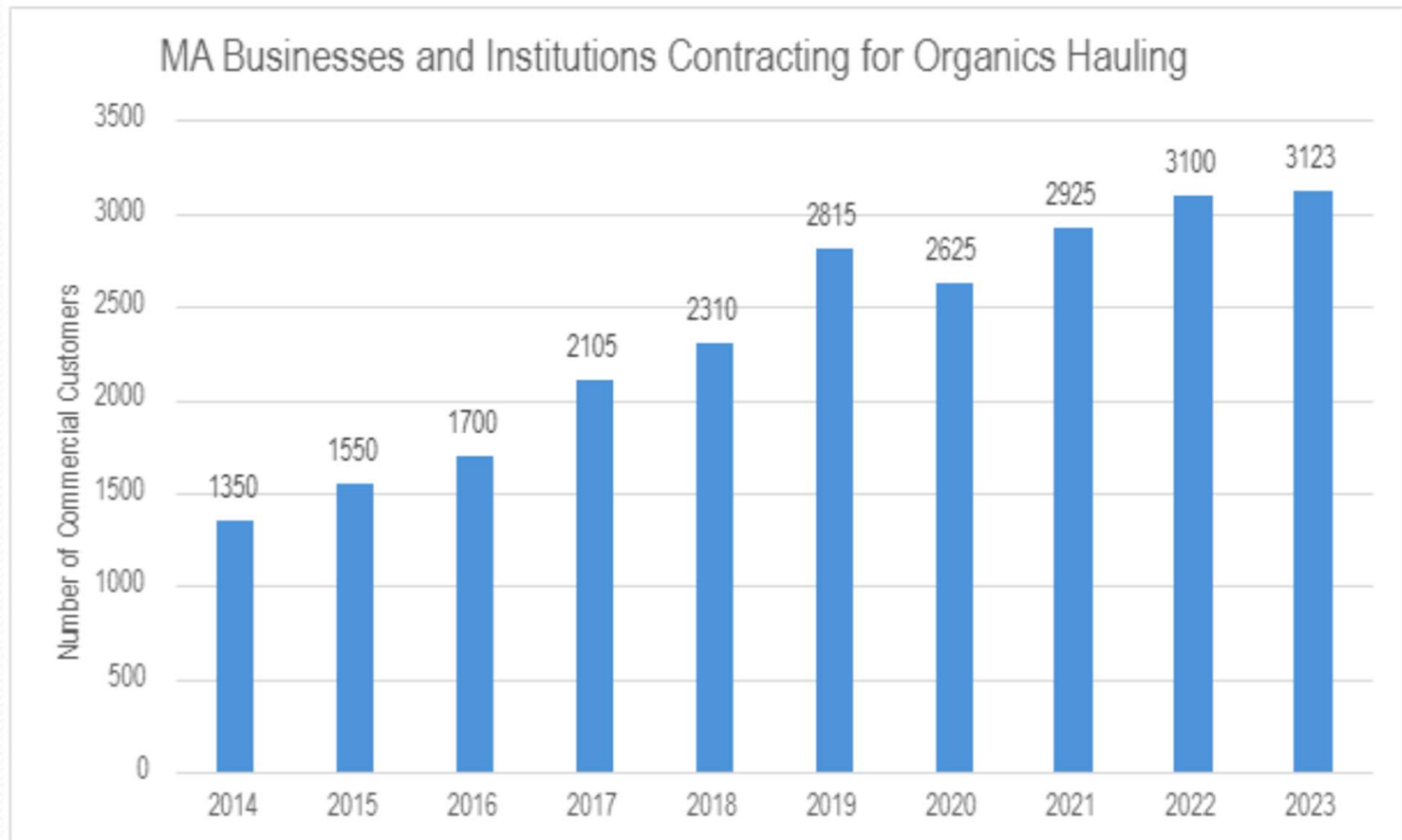
Change to Food Waste Ban

- Initial commercial food waste ban in 2014
 - Businesses that dispose of >1 ton per week
 - About 2,000 businesses
- Expanded commercial food waste ban
 - Effective November 2022
 - Businesses that dispose of > ½ ton per week
 - Roughly doubled number of businesses subject from about 2,000 to 4,000

Food Waste Diversion Data

Type of Use	2016	2,017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Anaerobic Digestion	48,234	87,856	159,563	187,947	211,215	175,264	217,180	239,370
Compost	79,586	52,991	42,321	40,569	33,038	25,273	31,931	26,499
Animal Feed	26,250	26,777	39,593	40,014	8,828	24,719	43,033	43,820
Food Donation	22,712	25,940	26,637	27,703	30,004	23,592	22,085	24,773
Other	13,277	12,819	8,065	9,552	38,745	40,380	43,615	43,609
Rounded Total	190,000	210,000	280,000	310,000	320,000	290,000	360,000	380,000

Businesses Diverting Food Waste



How can my Business Comply?

- Not dispose of >1/2 ton per week of food waste in trash
- Can comply through any combination of:
 - Waste reduction/prevention
 - Food rescue and donation
 - On-site systems
 - Sending food waste to animal feed, compost, or anaerobic digestion
- If comply with the 1 ton per week ban, may need to take further reduction/diversion steps now

Common Questions

- What if a chain with multiple locations?
- What if multiple businesses together (e.g., shopping mall food court?)
- What if a school system with multiple locations?
- Is packaged food subject?
- How does the ban apply to dormitories or retirement communities?
- <https://www.mass.gov/doc/guidance-for-businesses-institutions-haulers-commercial-organic-materials-waste-ban/download>

Inspections and Enforcement

- Since November 2022 inspected >4,400 loads of trash
- Since October 2014 inspected 45,000 loads
- Issued 145 enforcement actions for “commercial organic material”
 - 131 notices of non-compliance
 - 14 consent orders with penalties (\$860-\$5,160)
- Have hired two new inspectors
 - Plan to increase from 134 to 224 inspections this year
 - About 4,500 loads of trash

Waste Ban Compliance

- Also issue “warning letters” based on load observations, facility data, or third party data
- Sending request for information letters to individual businesses in targeted sectors
 - So far - letters to 50 companies with 700 locations
 - Requires to confirm compliance with waste ban
 - Requires MassDEP follow up and tracking
 - More rounds of letters in process

Supporting Programs & Policies

- Recycling Works in Massachusetts
 - Business assistance
 - More than 750 food waste assistance deliveries
 - Compost site assistance
- Recycling Business Development Grants and Recycling Loan Fund – for food waste alone:
 - 17 loans for \$4.6 million
 - 17 grants for \$1.7 million
 - Another large grant round to be announced shortly

Strategy by Generator Size

- Large and Medium: $>1/2$ ton per week
 - 2014 Waste ban for >1 ton per week
 - 2022 waste ban for $>1/2$ ton per week
 - Technical assistance & market development grants/loans (processing & collection)
- Small: $<1/2$ ton per week and residents
 - Multi-pronged approach
 - Curbside, drop-off, home composting, small scale local composting, reduction education, possible ban

Residential – Activities to Date

- Sustainable Materials Recovery Program (SMRP) Grants
 - \$1 million in grants
 - Supporting facility development & collection programs
- Recycling Dividends Program (RDP) Funding
 - Municipalities earn up to 3 points for food waste programs & can use RDP funding to support food waste collection programs
 - Municipalities earned \$320,000 in RDP funds in 2024 from implementing organics programs
 - From 2021 to 2023, municipalities spent \$625,000 of RDP funds on food waste programs

Residential – Activities to Date

- Municipal programs
 - 89 municipalities report some type of food waste collection program
 - 72 drop-off
 - 12 curbside
 - 5 both
 - These programs reported collecting 21,000 tons of food waste in 2023
 - 167 municipalities report selling home compost bins to residents
- Green Team equipment to schools
 - Distributed compost bins to 140 schools to set up on-site composting programs

Residential – Activities to Date

- Recycling & Reuse Business Development Grants
 - In addition to grants to support anaerobic digestion, composting, animal feed, and de-packaging operations, MassDEP awarded 7 RBDG grants for food waste collection totaling \$420,000
 - Will help expand collection infrastructure to make food waste collection more cost effective
- Recycling Works in MA Composting Assistance
 - Delivered technical assistance to 65 compost operations, including 10 municipal compost sites for composting food materials
 - Held four workshops for compost site operators, with training materials available on line

Future Program Focus

- Continue to target RBDG business grants & SMRP municipal grants on food waste infrastructure
 - Focus on more distributed capacity and growing collection capacity.
- Provide guidance & share effective models for residential food waste programs with municipal officials
- Support growth of composting, particularly community scale operations, through Recycling Works in MA technical assistance
- Continue to distribute composting equipment to schools through the Green Team program
- Highlight food waste prevention benefits through our RecycleSmart MA program, social media channels, and School Green Team

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

For More Information

- Solid Waste Master Plan

<https://www.mass.gov/guides/solid-waste-master-plan>

- MassDEP Food Waste Page

<https://www.mass.gov/guides/commercial-food-material-disposal-ban>

- Organics Subcommittee

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

- Organics Action Plan

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/massachusetts-organics-action-plan-january-2022/download>

- RecyclingWorks in Massachusetts

www.recyclingworksma.com

- John Fischer – john.fischer@mass.gov