



DATE: March 9, 2023

TO: Programs & Administration Committee
Planning Committee/Recycling Board

FROM: Jeannie Pham, Senior Program Services Specialist
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SUBJECT: Compost Hubs and StopWaste Environmental Educator Training (SWEET)

SUMMARY

StopWaste currently partners with urban farms and Member Agency staff to co-develop Compost Hubs to increase access to compost across the county. Leveraging these partnerships, StopWaste reshaped our annual StopWaste Environmental Educator Training (SWEET) program to activate urban farmers in making and using compost and teaching the public about its benefits. At the March 9 meeting, staff will share an overview of the Compost Hub and SWEET projects and highlight the role partnerships play to contribute to a healthy community food system.

DISCUSSION

Compost Hubs are sites offering free compost to residents year-round, made possible by partnerships between urban farms, Member Agencies, and StopWaste. A pilot Compost Hub launched in March 2022, and there are now 4 established Hubs in the Cities of Alameda, Albany, Livermore, and Piedmont. Six more hubs are in development in unincorporated Alameda County, Fremont, Hayward, Oakland, Pleasanton, and Union City. Compost distributed by Hubs contributes towards Member Agencies' SB 1383 procurement requirements. The Hubs also attract residents and provide cost savings for community-based organizations who grow and donate fresh produce to food recovery organizations.

Related to Compost Hubs, SWEET is a peer-to-peer learning program that supports urban farmers in becoming expert composters and educators by teaching the science and practices of composting, sharing methods for teaching the public, and building a network of urban farms. All Compost Hub partners, plus additional farmers, participated in SWEET's 2022 cohort. The SWEET and Compost Hub projects work in tandem to elevate community-based organizations' capacity to support public education regarding home and municipal composting and community food systems.

RECOMMENDATION

This item is for information only.