

HELP TO CLOSE THE LOOP

YOU CAN HELP MAKE SURE YOUR COMMUNITY IS TRULY SUSTAINABLE
IN MANAGING ITS FOOD SCRAPS AND OTHER ORGANIC RESOURCES



Larger Loops = Greater Environmental Cost

The most environmentally sustainable approach to managing our organics is to “close the loop.” That means keeping resources close to where they’re generated – creating less harm from transport trucks, and more benefit for local greening projects.

In an ideal world, every household would compost their scraps at home and use the compost to grow food or beautify the yard.

We know that’s not possible in most cities, so we also need **community compost sites** (like neighborhood parks and community gardens, or even schools, hospitals, restaurants and grocery stores). But even if we reset priorities so public land is more open for community composting, our cities weren’t designed for the most environmentally friendly solutions. So we also need some *centralized municipal or commercial recovery* (like curbside pickup) that is set up to close the loop as much as possible rather than trucking organics far away.

BUT THERE’S A PROBLEM

Often the discussion wrongly starts with – and overemphasizes – centralized recovery because it’s the cheapest. But that’s the kind of thinking that helped cause so much harm to the environment in the first place. Of course operational cost matters, but it must also include the hidden costs to the environment, which are often omitted or ignored. If anybody says they want to do the “green thing” or that they are truly “committed to sustainability,” they can’t ignore those hidden costs.

We need to develop home and community scale composting more substantially because they are the best. Only then, should we centralize the rest.

ASK THE HARD QUESTION:

Does our discussion about the vision for organics recovery truly include genuine and meaningful support for home and community composting, **or are we just using the word “sustainability” without considering that sustainable practices require attention to the hidden environmental costs?**

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