

County of Santa Clara

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June 4, 2009

To: Technical Advisory Committee

From: Sarah Smith

Subject: Home Composting Education Program 2010 Classes

The SRR Subcommittee met on May 28. The main topic of discussion at the meeting was Countywide (SWPF) budget. The revenue for a planned Home Composting Education Program (HCEP) budget increase for FY 2009/2010 is no longer available due to a sharp drop in tonnage in the current fiscal year and the projected ongoing affects of the economy in the upcoming fiscal year. The Implementation Subcommittee needs to examine the possible use of fees for various HCEP classes and workshops, as appropriate, to supplement the budget to support program goals.

The group discussed replacing composting workshops with Bay-Friendly gardening classes in 2010. They also discussed the possibility of charging fees for workshops, Master Composter Training classes, and fees for school presentations and related supplies. Staff would prefer to keep all classes free but we can't improve the program by switching to the Bay-Friendly classes without additional funding. In order to teach a new class of volunteers, who are crucial to HCEP, additional funding is needed to pay the instructors. Suggestions for additional funding were distributed to the subcommittee. If our Countywide budget declines or remains static we will need to further discuss charging the public for HCEP services.

- Additional funding is needed for a paid instructor for the 10 week 2010 Master Composter Volunteer Training in January. If we don't receive this funding, the class will be cancelled and we won't have new volunteers to provide the manpower for the program to be successful. The class schedule and applications need to be finalized and printed and distributed. Recruitment of the new class needs to start ASAP. Note there was no Master Composter volunteer training held in 2009.
- If TAC decides to switch from compost workshops to Bay-Friendly Gardening classes in January 2010 then additional funding for instructors will need to be added to the budget.

In conclusion, Staff prefers to keep our services free, but if TAC wants to change to the Bay-Friendly model we will need to increase funding through some mechanism.