

County of Santa Clara

Department of Agriculture and Environmental Management
Integrated Waste Management Division



1553 Berger Drive, Bldg. #1
San Jose, CA 95112
(408) 918-4640
www.ReduceWaste.org

April 30, 2009

To: Technical Advisory Committee
From: Sarah Smith
Subject: Update on Home Composting Education Program Activities

In FY09 3rd Quarter there were participants at our events as follows:

- 11 special lecture with attendance of 179
- 50 school presentations with attendance of 975
- 13 compost workshops with attendance of 450
- 3 table displays with attendance of 840
- 530 volunteer hours were donated during this quarter
- 15 attendees at first Bay Friendly Basics class

In FY09 3rd Quarter 44 Earth Machine Compost bins were sold, 37 wing-diggers, 39 thermometers, 18 kitchen containers, and 71 worm bins.

Workshop sign-ups are exceeding supply of instructors and meeting room space.

Unfortunately we are getting a lot of no-shows to the classes. People wanting compost bins are being referred to the bin sales held during the Saturday workshops and appointments for office sales.

Highlights of 3rd quarter:

- The first Bay-Friendly "Gardening Basics" class was held on March 21 in Campbell. 2 paid staff and 4 volunteer instructors taught the 3 hour class. The next class is scheduled for May 2 in Cupertino and June 6 at the Willows Senior Center. The first Bay-Friendly "From the Ground Up" workshop will be held on May 16 in Campbell. TAC members are encouraged to attend this new workshop series to learn more about this new program. Register on-line at www.ReduceWaste.org
- Staff attended a Bay-Friendly Landscaping CoBay-Friendly/sustainable landscaping stakeholder meeting on April 1. The next meeting is Friday, May 8 the goal is to establish priorities and a timeline for implementing Bay-Friendly program components. You are welcome to provide input on the agenda for the meeting.
Date: Friday, May 8, 2009
Time: 9:30 am - noon (meeting starts at 10am sharp, come at 9:30 for coffee and networking)
Location: Evergreen Room at Blossom Hill Annex, 1020 Blossom Hill Road, San Jose. Draft agenda items:
 - Priorities & timeline for implementing Bay-Friendly
 - Next steps for sustainable landscaping collaborative
 - Informational speakers (tentative)

- Updates & reports

RSVP to Martha Berthelsen, martha@thewatershedproject.org, (510) 665-3689

- San Jose Christian School students and entire staff have been making efforts to understand what it means to be good stewards of the world. One way these principles are playing out at San Jose Christian School is through students' efforts to reduce the amount of lunch waste that is produced each day. Each day, students sort their lunch waste into recyclables, compost, or landfill waste. Sixth grade students weigh the recyclables and compost each day and record their data on a chart. At the end of each week, we calculate the total amount of waste we diverted from the landfill. So far this year, we (6-8th graders (whole middle school and staff, approx. 100 students and 25 staff) have diverted approximately 630 pounds of waste. Students receive rewards for every 150 lbs they are able to keep out of the landfill. Throughout this process, sixth grade students are learning how to apply the scientific method to this experiment in order to form scientific questions and hypotheses. They are also learning how to collect and record data and use an Excel spreadsheet to create graphs to analyze the data. Additionally, students are learning about the incredible process and life cycle of how worms and other decomposers turn food scraps into nutrient rich soil to be used as fertilizer to grow more plants.
- San Jose distributed 35 worm bins to teachers at the Go Green Conference in San Jose on April 4th.
- HCEP has begun charging a \$10 materials fee for worm bins to teachers.
- Castro School in Mountain View received 23 classroom presentations in April. Parent volunteer and Master Composter volunteer Maja Popovich organized the effort with the help of several other Master Composter volunteers and Castro parent Aiko Sidle. The goal was to teach the importance of healthy food growth and consumption, healthy soil maintenance and sustainable organic matter disposal practices via worm composting. Each classroom received a 20 minute presentation, 20 minutes of hands-on worms experience and a trip to the Castro school garden to observe the school's worm bin.
- HCEP was recognized by a proclamation at the Board of Supervisors on April 7 declaring April as Santa Clara County Garden & Green Month.