If You Build It, Will They Sort It?
Composting in the Academic Library Learning Commons

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Economy | Environment | Justice

World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987

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Unsustainable

“Loading Dock Trash” by Faye Chadwell / OSULP
Campus Waste Diversion

“Campus Recycling” by Uta Hussong-Christian / OSULP
Got Compostables?

“Pizza Boxes” by Kristin Swetland / OSULP
Waste Audit | Collect, Sort, Measure

“Waste Audit, Dec 2015” by Beth Filar Williams / OSULP
The Numbers

Audit Weights (by Material Type)

- Trash (actual): 91 lbs (52.9%)
- Compostable material: 59 lbs (34.3%)
- Commingled recycling: 22 lbs (12.8%)
The Numbers

Audit Weights (by Material Type)

- 91 lbs (52.9%)
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- 22 lbs (12.8%)

Trash (actual)

Commingled recycling

Compostable material

WOW!
US MSW Discards AFTER Recycling/Composting, 2013

- Food: 21.1%
- Plastics: 17.7%
- Paper & paperboard: 15.1%
- Yard trimmings: 8.1%
- Metals: 9.1%
- Glass: 5%
- Wood: 8%
- Rubber, leather & textiles: 11.6%
- Other: 4.4%

"Total MSW Discards" by US EPA
Less Unsustainable

“Loading Dock Trash” by Faye Chadwell / OSULP
Dining Hall Composting
Preparations
Materials

- BPI certification for liner bag required
- Approval needed to purchase “custodial supplies”
Valley Composting

“Valley Compost Bins” by Uta Hussong-Christian / OSULP
Successful? Absolutely!

Challenges? Plenty!
Successes

• Library patrons found the bins the first day
• Expanded from 1 bin location to 4 bin locations around Learning Commons
• Patrons thanked us for having compost bins
Contamination

“Compost Bin Lid” by Uta Hussong-Christian / OSULP
Signage

**COMPOST**

**NO:**
- Plastic Bags
- Plastic Utensils
- Plastic Containers
- Meat
- Regular Paper
- Free Liquids

**All food scraps**
- Napkins & paper towels
- 100% Paper plates
- Coffee & tea bags
- Pizza boxes

Composting is Orange.

“Valley Compost Bins” by Uta Hussong-Christian / OSULP
Pests
Natural Effective (!) Remedy

Apple cider vinegar
  +
1-2 drops dish soap
  +
Film “lid” with holes
  =
24-36 hour miracle
“The library is a heavily-used space and we are conscientious about the amount of material we send to the landfill.”

FAYE CHADWELL
DONALD & DELPHA CAMPBELL UNIVERisty LIBRARIAN & OSU PRESS DIRECTOR

#BeavsRecycle

“Faye Chadwell” by Andrea Norris / OSU Recycling
Parting Words

Programs such as these provide a means for sustainability to “become firmly established within the existing value structure of societies while simultaneously helping that value structure evolve toward a more viable long-term approach to system global problems.”

Edwards, “The Sustainability Revolution”
Questions?

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References

