USDA Announces Cooperative Agreements for Community Compost and Food Waste Reduction

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WASHINGTON, May 17, 2021 - The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced the availability of up to $2 million for local governments to host Community Compost and Food Waste Reduction (CCFWR) pilot projects for fiscal year 2021. The cooperative agreements support projects that develop and test strategies for planning and implementing municipal compost plans and food waste reduction plans and they are part of USDA's broader efforts to support urban agriculture.

USDA's Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production (Office) will accept applications on Grants.gov until 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on July 16, 2021. Projects should span two years with a start date of September 25, 2021 and completion date of September 25, 2023.

"Finding ways to turn food waste into nutrient rich compost is a win-win for farmers, communities and the environment," Deputy Under Secretary for Farm Production and Conservation Gloria Montaño Greene said. "The level of enthusiasm and creativity communities are putting towards this kind of problem solving is inspiring, and USDA is proud to support it."

Details

Cooperative agreements support projects led by local governments that:

- Generate compost.
- Increase access to compost for agricultural producers.
- Reduce reliance on and limit the use of fertilizer.
- Improve soil quality.
- Encourage waste management and permaculture business development.
- Increase rainwater absorption.
- Reduce municipal food waste.
- Divert food waste from landfills.

Priority will be given to projects that anticipate or demonstrate economic benefits, incorporate plans to make compost easily accessible to farmers, including community gardeners, integrate other food waste strategies, including food recovery efforts and collaborate with multiple partners.

This is the second year the Office has offered this funding opportunity. Examples of previously-selected projects include:

- **Department of Sanitation of New York and nonprofit Big Reuse** are establishing food scrap drop-off locations while New York City Parks Department is diverting wood chips and leaves from landfill disposal to create compost. GreenThumb, Brooklyn Grange, Hellgate Farms, Gowanus Canal Conservancy and other urban farms are distributing the compost for food production in the boroughs of Queens and Brooklyn, diverting approximately 600,000 pounds of food scraps and green waste from landfills and providing 350 cubic yards of compost to food producers.
- **The City of Prescott, Arizona** is collaborating with the farmers' market, volunteers, restaurants, Yavapai County Cooperative Extension and Prescott College to design, build and implement the Prescott Community Compost Program. The program educates the community about composting, reduces food waste by collecting and composting restaurant food scraps and provides high-quality compost to gardeners and farmers in Central Yavapai County, creating approximately 28 tons of compost over the two-year program.

Webinar

A pre-recorded webinar will provide an overview of the cooperative agreements' purpose, project types, eligibility and basic requirements for submitting an application. The webinar will be posted at farmers.gov/urban.

More Information

Questions about this cooperative agreement opportunity can be sent to UrbanAgriculture@usda.gov.

The Office was established through the 2018 Farm Bill and is designed to be a USDA-wide effort. Representatives from agencies throughout USDA play a critical role in successfully servicing urban customers. Other grant and engagement opportunities are available in addition to the CCFWR agreements. More information is available at farmers.gov/urban.

Additional resources that may be of interest to urban agriculture entities include NIFA grants, FSA loans and AMS grants to improve domestic and international opportunities for U.S. growers and producers.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. In the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and

producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit www.usda.gov.

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