

## **Garbage to Garden testifies before the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources to encourage an Increase of Organic Material Recycling in the State of Maine**

PORTLAND, ME  
September 11, 2015

PORTLAND — September 11, 2015 — On September 10, 2015, Kendall Hinkley of Garbage to Garden, along with representatives from Exeter Agri-Energy, Casella Organics, Maine Resource Recovery Association, the Maine Municipal Association and met in Augusta to provide insight surrounding composting, recycling and source reduction before the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources (ENR). These testimonies are a follow up To Increase Recycling in Maine through Increased Composting and Energy Recovery from Organic Wastes (LD 659); and An Act To Increase Organic Waste Recycling in the State (712), first explored but not passed into legislation by the ENR in March of 2015.

The State of Maine failed to meet its own goal of recycling 50 percent of its solid waste in 2014, a goal set in 1989 that remains unmet. As a result, the ENR, lead by Committee Chairs Senator Tom Saviello (R, District 17) and Representative Joan Welsh (D, District 46), are seeking to develop a comprehensive state policy regarding organic materials and waste. Among the topics and issues addressed included developing methods of increased composting, recycling and source reduction rates with a primary focus on increasing composting.

As Maine's first and New England's largest market-based curbside composting program, Garbage to Garden's popularity and steady growth offers a model that proves a market-based system can eliminate organics from the waste stream while saving municipalities money on tipping fees.

"Cities need ways to save money, not spend" says Kendall Hinkley of Garbage to Garden. "Fortunately, our program offers cost-savings to both households and municipalities, among other benefits. Protecting market-based programs like Garbage to Garden is essential to the growth of organics diversion. The benefit is that you enable competition which keeps costs low and prioritizes customer satisfaction."

A complete record of the ENR's September 10th interim meeting on solid waste is available here: <http://www.maine.gov/legis/opla/ENRmeetingmaterials091015.pdf>

About Garbage to Garden:

Founded in 2012, Garbage to Garden, Portland, ME's beloved curbside composting program, continues to spearhead efforts to keep food waste out of landfills to mitigate the effects of climate change and regenerate local soils.

For \$14 dollars a month (free for volunteers) Garbage to Garden provides households with an easy to open bucket for food scraps (including meat, dairy and bones) that is picked up on garbage day each week, and left in its place is a clean bucket and finished compost (upon request). In Portland, 1 in 6 households choose to participate, as well as over a hundred schools, hotels and restaurants. Thanks to the efforts of the Portland area community, Garbage to Garden diverts up to 50 tons of food from landfills every week.

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