

## **SWEO Updates: Feb. 2023 – May 2023**

### Operations

- Equity and Environmental Justice Plan
  - Conducted 3 focus groups
    - Battle Ground Community Library – April 10<sup>th</sup>
      - 7 participants
    - Bridgeview Resource Center – May 1<sup>st</sup>
      - 0 participants
    - La Center High School – May 10<sup>th</sup>
      - 2 participants
  - Completed outreach to Latino residents at St. John the Episcopal Catholic Church – June 25<sup>th</sup>
    - Portillo Consulting, International spoke with church attendees and completed 26 surveys with Spanish-speaking folks
  - Received over 1600 responses on survey
    - Survey was also translated into Spanish and Russian but didn't receive many responses in either language
    - 90% completion rate
  - Draft of Equity and Environmental Justice Plan is in progress

### Green Business

- Restarted Morning Blend events on 07/27,
  - Hoping to turn these into successful monthly networking events.
- Have been successfully diverting food waste with Congregation to Compost sector of We Compost

### Green Neighbors

- The Natural Garden Tour was held on July 16 with 762 unique visitors and 2,738 total visits to eight gardens.
  - We received 207 visitor surveys pledging to try out at least one natural gardening technique.
- The Green Neighbors program lead position has been filled, and Camille Shelton's first day was August 1.
- The Green Neighbors program has hired a new AmeriCorps member who will start September 1.

### Green Schools

- Completed launch of composting program at Washington State School for the Blind
  - Implemented 5-gallon buckets in residential cottages of students at WSSB to collect food waste
  - Students collect food waste in kitchen and then take the buckets out to roll carts behind the cottages; roll carts picked up by Waste Connections
- Completed cafeteria waste audits at various schools
  - La Center School District
    - La Center schools saw a huge reduction in garbage and increased diversion rates in recycling and compost after sort tables were implemented
      - La Center HS final compost rate was 99% (56% of garbage was food waste before sort table)
      - La Center MS final compost rate was 99% (49% of garbage was food waste before sort table)
  - Hockinson Middle School
    - Completed a waste audit of cafeteria and kitchen
    - Had minimal contamination in the food waste roll cart
    - Hockinson MS certified with EarthGen in Waste and Recycling
- Continued support of new and existing school food waste composting programs

- Provided lessons on food waste reduction
  - Led worm bin lessons and taught students about the nutrient cycle, decomposers, and the importance of composting
    - Fort Vancouver Regional Library worm bin lesson – April 15<sup>th</sup>
    - Columbia Valley ES worm bin lesson – May 2<sup>nd</sup>
      - Kept the worm bin
    - Hollingsworth Academy worm bin lesson – May 16<sup>th</sup>
    - Sifton ES at Heritage Farm worm bin lessons – May 24<sup>th</sup>
    - Illahee ES worm bin lessons – May 24<sup>th</sup>
    - Homeschool worm bin lesson – May 25<sup>th</sup>
    - Gaiser MS at Heritage Farm worm bin lessons – May 26<sup>th</sup>
    - Washington State School for the Blind worm bin harvest – May 31<sup>st</sup>
      - Vermicompost used for school garden
    - iTech Prep Academy at Heritage Farm worm bin lessons – June 2<sup>nd</sup>
    - Jason Lee MS worm bin harvest – June 7<sup>th</sup>
      - Vermicompost used for school garden
    - Illahee ES worm bin lessons – June 13<sup>th</sup>
- Attended school garden tours to promote worm bin composting
  - Glenwood Heights ES and Laurin MS – April 18<sup>th</sup>
  - Illahee ES – May 3<sup>rd</sup>
  - Hazel Dell ES – May 17<sup>th</sup>
  - River HomeLink – June 1<sup>st</sup>
- Completed 12 sessions of summer camp for ESD 112
  - Six schools received recycling lessons and worm bin lessons
    - Burnt Bridge Creek Elementary
    - Columbia Valley Elementary
    - Franklin Elementary
    - Ellsworth Elementary
    - Image Elementary
    - Sifton Elementary

### Composter Recycler

- Community Worm Bins
  - <https://clarkcountymcomposts.org/worm-bin-request-form>
  - 64 Community worm bins distributed for food scrap diversion.
  - 221 Community worm bins have been distributed since the beginning of this grant cycle.
    - Each worm bin on average diverts 180 pounds of food waste annually or 39,780 pounds or 20 tons
  - The worm bins the CR program provides can house up to 1 pound of redworms under optimal conditions.
    - Redworms consume ½ pound per day of food waste or 3.5 pounds per week.
      - [Based on this calculation each worm bin will](#) divert an estimated 180 pounds of food waste annually from the landfill.
- Community Backyard Compost Bin - Enviro World FreeGarden™ EARTH compost bin
  - <https://clarkcountymcomposts.org/buyacomposter>
  - 39 Backyard compost bins distributed for organics material diversion.
  - 102 Community Compost Bins have been distributed since the beginning of this grant cycle.
    - Each compost bin on average diverts 290 pounds of food waste annually or 29,580 pounds or 15 tons.

- [Seattle Public Utilities estimated that households that were backyard composting food scraps diverted an estimated 290 pounds of food per year. https://www.biocycle.net/backyard-composting-developments/](https://www.biocycle.net/backyard-composting-developments/)
- Spring CR Workshops Series
  - 8 workshops offered
  - 366 registrations
  - 205 attendees (56% show rate)
- Fall CR Workshop / Webinar dates set:
  - <https://clarkcountycomposts.org/classes-and-workshops/current-offerings>