

Project C, Campus Composting at FIU by Yanina Onyewenjo

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Our society has a waste problem. In the United States about 65.4 percent of waste is not recycled, that's the equivalent of waste produced by Spain (26.34 million tons p.a.), the United Kingdom (34.85 million p.a.), Germany (48.84 million p.a.) and Japan (52.36 million p.a.) combined! Organic waste makes up 21% of all waste produced in the U.S.

Wasting organic matter is a wasted opportunity, and leads to environmental pollution in landfills. Out of all waste produced at Florida International University (FIU) 30.8% is organic matter. However less than 5% is recycled.

Composting offers a useful solution to divert waste into our Organic Garden while reducing greenhouse emissions. This project aims to outline how FIU students and faculty can work together to develop a thriving, campus-composting solution.

Our main objective is to increase organics recycling rate at Parkview Hall (PVH). PVH is easily accessible to the organic garden, and produces a large quantity of organic waste. Students living in PVH should expect to benefit from pamphlets detailing how to compost, and compost bins in the trash room.

The success of a permanent composting project at FIU depends on volunteers who will offer their time to pick up and manage organic waste at the Organic Garden at FIU.

Dr. Amir Khoddamzadeh, the Faculty Supervisor of the FIU Organic Garden, Faculty Advisor of the Garden Club, and instructor of Intro to Environmental Science (EVR 1001) at FIU has offered volunteer hours for students to help pick up compost at PVH. We will encourage more teachers in the science disciplines to offer this opportunity for students.

The compost can be used for a range of disciplines, including environmental courses who wish to study the properties of compost as well as marketing students who wish to sell the compost for commercial purposes.