



Henderson County Local Government
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Henderson County Receives \$90,000 USDA Grant to Support Organic Pilots

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Did you know that up to 40% of all food in the United States is never eaten? This translates to \$218 billion lost at the consumer level, retail, wasted water, energy, fertilizers, cropland and production costs. Since 2015, Henderson County has been working on issues around wasted food and continues to pilot multiple organic programs including the first food waste drop off program in Western North Carolina that diverts about two tons of material from the landfill a month. Thanks to a generous grant from the USDA, Henderson County will receive additional support.

On August 25, Henderson County was awarded a \$90,000 grant from the USDA to expand the County's organics pilot programs. Through the Community Compost and Food Waste Reduction (CCFWR) Projects, USDA is investing approximately \$1.09 million in 13 pilot projects that develop and test strategies for planning and implementing municipal compost plans and food waste reduction. Henderson County's "Organics Pilot Expansion" project was selected out of 578 applicants across the county, with only two in the Southeast and the only recipient in North Carolina. The County's grant proposal will support critical electrical and equipment needs for the compost facility pilot at the Transfer Station, expand the lunchroom composting pilot program to additional schools and start a residential backyard compost bin program.

Henderson County has multiple partners on this two-year project including, Henderson County Soil and Water Conservation District, Henderson County Cooperative Extension, Henderson County Public Schools and Waste Reduction Partners.

"The Henderson Soil & Water Conservation District is excited to be partnering on this project. Compost education and expansion is an important piece of the puzzle to enhance soil health. We are proud to help expand the one of the many aspects our local farming community uses in the production of healthy and nutritious crops," says April Hoyt, Conservationist/Education Coordinator.

Henderson County staff is excited for the opportunity to gather additional data, test various methods and ultimately be a case study for other municipalities across the state and nation.



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For questions about the County's organic pilot programs, please contact Christine Wittmeier, Environmental Programs Coordinator, at 828-694-6524 or visit hcrecycles.org

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