

## **Composting Case Studies: Camp Loyaltown, Hunter, NY**

Composting was a natural step for Camp Loyaltown in Hunter, NY when compost manager Tony Amico wanted organic material to use in an organic vegetable garden. He worked with Cornell Waste Management Institute (CWMI) to establish a food scrap composting program in 1997 that has helped the camp create a beneficial product and reduce waste disposal costs.

### **Facility Type**

Camp Loyaltown provides overnight accommodations for disabled children and adults from May through September. Located on a 275-acre site, the camp has a farm with a variety of animals and gardens. While camp is in session, it is staffed so that each camper has one or two staff helpers, depending on their needs, 24 hours per day. Maintenance staff are present year-round. A total of 400 campers and staff members eat three meals per day when camp is in full swing, producing 300 pounds of food scraps each day. To date, Camp Loyaltown has composted approximately 15,000 pounds of food scraps.

### **Source Separation and Collection**

The camp's kitchen staff separates food preparation scraps into 30-gallon plastic containers. Campers, with the assistance of their staff helpers, separate post-plate waste into the same type of containers. Napkins, paper towels, paper plates, and other paper products are also included in the mix. The containers of scrap are transported via a bucket loader or pick-up truck to the compost site about 1/4 mile away on camp property.

### **Compost Method**

The site is approximately one quarter of an acre with a 100-foot x 100-foot gravel pad located behind the farm animals used in camp programming. Once there, the scraps are mixed with woodchips provided by a local utility company, and manure and yard trimmings from the camp grounds. The camp's maintenance staff use a bucket loader to blend a mixture that is approximately one-third food scraps. They also borrow a chipper to chip large brush or branches generated on-site to add to the mix. Once mixed, the scraps are added to a haystack shaped pile that is twelve feet in diameter and six feet tall.

Amico decided to use this shape because it is easy to work with using the bucket loader. Because scraps are collected only when camp is in session, new scraps are continuously added to the pile throughout this time. When camp is not in session, piles are managed through the active period and left to cure for use the following summer.

### **Savings**

Camp Loyaltown pays between \$40 and \$60 per ton to landfill waste, so their composting program should save them about \$300- \$500 each season. Due to the special nature of the camp's services, the compost program is not used in any educational programs. However, the site is located right in the heart of the Camp's barnyard where campers can view the process.

### **Added Bonus**

Camp Loyaltown has not encountered any problems with the program, but they have benefited from it in a totally unforeseen way. Camp Loyaltown used to suffer from frequent dumpster raids by a bear. However, once the food scraps were taken out of the waste stream, the bear has stopped coming. She has shown no interest whatsoever in the compost pile.

The Cornell Waste Management Institute provided technical assistance to the project and developed this Case Study. The project was funded in part by Empire State Development Office of Recycling Market Development. October 1998

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