

The Upper Valley Super Compost Project

Project Overview and Timeline

Institutionalize living compost systems into your schools' outdoor classroom to increase real world problem solving opportunities, enhance the health of your schoolyard and save money!

The Upper Valley Super Compost Project will support living compost systems as K - 12 outdoor classrooms in schoolyards across 5 supervisory unions in the Upper Valley of Vermont over a 5-year period. This replicable model will lay the foundation for other regional schools to collaborate in systemic change-making. Participant schools will reduce food waste, connect with local farms to divert food scraps to farm animals, and manage the rest in student-run, hot composting systems. The project includes developing a community of practice to support the ongoing resilience of the program. Early estimates from survey results of the 24 participating schools indicate that at least 200,000 lbs of food scraps will be diverted from the trucking and landfill waste streams into quality compost to enhance the soil health of schoolyards and community projects throughout the region.

On-site compost systems have the potential to shift current organics hauling fees paid by most schools into an investment in school staff, students, community engagement and regeneration. In addition to saving money, compost systems serve as a classroom extension enhancing STEM curriculum and providing a mechanism for a student-run business.

SCHOOLS GET:

- A complete compost system of choice, installed ([menu of options](#))
- A roofed area to house the compost system, year-round
- 2 years of expert training from a technical service provider (roughly 50 hours per school) to guide participating schools and implement the skills and human systems of a functioning, student-run hot composting system, including developing community-based feedstock supplies.
- All of the tools needed to sustain a program, including training, curricula, an outdoor classroom
- Ongoing technical and classroom support from [Regeneration Corps](#) during and after project timeline completion.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR SCHOOLS:

- Be a school within the 6 SU's invited to this pilot project:
 - Orange East; White River Valley; Rivendell; Windsor x 2; Hartford (declined)
- Must be student run. Must use the compost system as an outdoor classroom, supporting place and project based education.
- Must include Food Service and Facilities Maintenance team in the design process.
- Must commit to reinvest a good percentage of current organics hauling fees into the school composting program, to include an ongoing stipend for leadership. Suggested \$1000 stipend annually.

TIMELINE

YEAR 1: August 2022 - June 2023

Identify participating schools, define individual school needs, develop a menu of options for schools to choose from. Determine site design, recruit builder and develop initial plans. Secure project staff. Develop an advisory team. Secure fiscal sponsor. Develop basic marketing assets and fundraising plan for years 2-4. Placeholder website. Crowdfunding campaign.

YEAR 2: July 2023 - June 2024

Fundraising for year 2 and 3. Launch Advisory Team. Build Technical Support Provider (TSP) team of experts to guide each participating school for 2 years.

First 12 schools: Finalize school contracts and staff stipends from cost-savings. Finalize site design, logistics, and permitting needs. Complete site building and implementation. TSP and school staff site leads and educators identified. Schools begin to source feedstocks and refine source separation and collection systems. Schools begin to assess waste reduction and diversion opportunities. Integrate Regeneration Corps into school program needs. Year 1 TSP begins.

Second 12 schools: Develop school contracts and staff stipends from cost-savings. Develop site design, logistics, and permitting needs. Identify school staff site leads and educators, and TSP match.

YEAR 3: July 2024 -June 2025

Complete site building and site implementation for remaining 12 schools. Refine/assess program rollout. Transition fiscal sponsorship and project ownership to the right organization. Draft Regional Composting for Schools Project Toolkit.

First 12 schools: TSP continues. Create a community of practice for each school and among neighboring schools, drawing in student-initiated connectivity and collaboration among local communities and schools. Begin compost data collection and curriculum integration. Implement/measure waste reduction and waste diversion. Begin project assessment.

Second 12 schools: Year 1 TSP begins. Finalize site design and logistics, and any permitting and contracts for the remaining schools. TSP and school staff site leads and educators identified. Schools begin to source feedstocks and refine source separation and collection systems. Assess waste reduction and diversion opportunities. Integrate Regeneration Corps into school program needs.

YEAR 4: July 2025 -June 2026

Curriculum integration complete. Super Compost Project regional community of practice, website and Regional Composting for Schools Project Toolkit are developed. Complete project assessment and project transition. Technical Support Provider (TSP) team of experts to guide participating schools and implement the skills and human systems of a functioning, student-run hot composting system.

First 12 schools: School compost system is well-integrated into the school social and academic culture and can operate independently. School staff lead is competent. School community of practice is

established. Recipe and feedstocks are solid. TSP completes sometime this year. Regeneration Corps school relationship is established.

Second 12 schools: TSP continues. Create a community of practice for each school and among neighboring schools, drawing in student-initiated connectivity and collaboration among local communities and schools. Begin compost data collection and curriculum integration. Implement/measure waste reduction and waste diversion. Begin project assessment.

YEAR 5: July 2026 - June 2027

Complete project transition. Super Compost Project regional community of practice, website and toolkit are available to the public as an online resource. Curriculum integration is complete at all 24 schools. Project assessment for all 24 schools is complete. All 24 participating schools are using outdoor classrooms to transform food waste into high-quality compost in well-managed, on-site, student-run, hot composting systems that are functioning as outdoor classrooms.

Second 12 schools: School compost system is well-integrated into the school social and academic culture. School staff lead is competent. Recipe and feedstocks are solid. TSP completes sometime this year. Regeneration Corps school relationship is established.