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## USDA Announces Cooperative Agreements for Community Compost and Food Waste Reduction

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**WASHINGTON, May 11** – The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced the availability of \$900,000 for local governments to host a Community Compost and Food Waste Reduction (CCFWR) pilot project for fiscal year (FY) 2020. The cooperative agreements will support projects that develop and test strategies for planning and implementing municipal compost plans and food waste reduction plans. The agreements are offered through USDA’s Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production.

“Food waste shouldn’t end up in landfills when options like food recovery and composting are available,” Under Secretary for Farm Production and Conservation Bill Northey said. “Such options not only benefit communities and the environment, they can also provide farmers and urban gardeners with exceptional, nutrient dense planting material.”

“We are tapping into the creativity of communities across the nation to rethink the lifecycle of food in ways that minimize waste and maximize use.” said Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs Greg Ibach. “We look forward to highlighting the innovative practices of selected pilot projects.”

### **Key Dates**

USDA will accept applications on Grants.gov until midnight June 26, 2020.

Projects should span two years with a start date of October 1, 2020 and completion date of September 29, 2022.

### **Details**

Cooperative agreements support projects led by local governments that: 1) generate compost; 2) increase access to compost for agricultural producers; 3) reduce reliance on, and limit the use of, fertilizer; 4) improve soil quality; 5) encourage waste management and permaculture business

development; 6) increase rainwater absorption; 7) reduce municipal food waste; and 8) divert food waste from landfills. USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service will provide assistance for conservation related activities.

Priority will be given to projects that anticipate or demonstrate economic benefits; incorporate plans to make compost easily accessible to farmers, including community gardeners; integrate other food waste strategies, including food recovery efforts; and collaborate with multiple partners.

## **Webinar**

A webinar, which will be held on June 4, 2020, from 2 to 4 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time, will provide an overview of the cooperative agreements' purpose, project types, eligibility and basic requirements for submitting an application. Information on how to register and participate in the webinar, or listen to the recording, will be posted at [farmers.gov/urban](https://farmers.gov/urban).

## **More Information**

Comments can be sent to [UrbanAgriculture@usda.gov](mailto:UrbanAgriculture@usda.gov) within 90 days, with the subject line "Community Compost and Food Waste Reduction Project."

Questions about this cooperative agreement opportunity can be sent to [UrbanAgriculture@usda.gov](mailto:UrbanAgriculture@usda.gov).

The Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production was established through the 2018 Farm Bill. It includes representatives from many USDA agencies, including Farm Service Agency and Agricultural Marketing Service, and is led by the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Its mission is to encourage and promote urban, indoor, and other emerging agricultural practices, including community composting and food waste reduction. More information is available at [farmers.gov/urban](https://farmers.gov/urban).

Additional resources that may be of interest to urban agriculture entities include AMS grants to improve domestic and international opportunities for U.S. growers and producers and FSA loans.

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