



Farm Service Agency  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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## [USDA Invests Approximately \\$11.5 Million in Composting and Food Waste Reduction Projects in 23 States, Including Indiana](#)

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**INDIANAPOLIS, Jan. 31, 2024** – The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is investing approximately \$11.5 million in 38 cooperative agreements that support innovative, scalable waste management plans to reduce and divert food waste from landfills. This includes one project in Indiana.

The [Composting and Food Waste Reduction](#) cooperative agreements are part of USDA's broad support for urban agriculture. The program is jointly administered by USDA's Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). The recommended projects will be implemented between now and 2026.

"These Composting and Food Waste Reduction projects help communities reduce food waste and greenhouse gas emissions," said Damarys Mortenson, State Conservationist of USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), which houses the Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production.

Added Julia Wickard, State Executive Director for Farm Service Agency: "Local strategies and tools like these are important environmental solutions and also contribute to food security at the community level here in Indiana."

USDA prioritized 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. The collaboration between NIFA and the Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production is part of [USDA's framework](#) to transform the U.S. food system to benefit consumers, producers and rural communities by providing more options, increasing access, and creating new and better markets for small and mid-size producers.

Recipients include projects in 23 states. Indiana's project aims to establish a comprehensive residential waste management program in Gary, Indiana. The project focuses on promoting sustainable household waste practices, reducing landfill waste, and fostering community engagement. Collaboratively, project partners seek to address the environmental, social, and economic challenges associated with residential waste management by implementing a holistic approach that includes waste reduction, recycling, composting, and community outreach.

For a complete list of these recommended cooperative agreement recipients and project summaries, visit [usda.gov/urban](https://usda.gov/urban). These new agreements build on USDA's \$12 million investment in 82 agreements since 2020.

Learn more at [usda.gov/urban](https://usda.gov/urban). For additional resources available to producers, download the [Urban Agriculture at a Glance brochure](#) or visit [farmers.gov/urban](https://farmers.gov/urban).? Additional resources on food loss and waste prevention are available at [www.usda.gov/foodlossandwaste](https://www.usda.gov/foodlossandwaste).

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