

FULL PROJECT TITLE: Building Equity and Growing Sustainable Agriculture through Composting and Food Waste Recovery with the Greater Bay Area Conservation Hub

SHORT PROJECT TITLE: Equity & Sustainable Ag through Composting

SUBMITTED BY:

**Alameda County Resource Conservation District
On behalf of the
Greater Bay Area Conservation Hub (GBACH)**

PROJECT SUMMARY

The Greater Bay Area Conservation Hub (GBACH) represents five Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs) in 4 Bay Area counties: Alameda, Contra Costa, Solano, and Santa Clara (Loma Prieta and North Santa Clara). Together we seek funding to advance sustainable food waste reduction and composting initiatives. The project aims to address significant gaps in food waste management and composting practices and create more localized, circular food economies across diverse communities, with a focus on socially disadvantaged areas.

Statement of Need: Food waste is a major environmental concern, contributing significantly to greenhouse gas emissions. California’s Senate Bill (SB) 1383 mandates reductions in food waste and the enhancement of composting systems, but lacks implementation funding. The GBACH region faces unique challenges in meeting these requirements. Many areas, particularly our underserved communities, struggle with inadequate infrastructure and limited resources for effective food waste management. Further, local sources of competitively-priced compost are not available to many farms and gardens.

Beneficiaries and Area Impacted: This project will benefit communities within the following zip codes: 94612, 94509, 94589, 95116 and 95037. These areas include a mix of urban, suburban and rural communities. Primary beneficiaries include elementary and high school students, and farms located in disadvantaged census tracts or serving vulnerable and socially disadvantaged groups (e.g., farms that supply produce to food banks).

Approach and Project Activities: The project will address these needs by:

1. Alameda County RCD: Developing sustainable, closed-loop systems for urban farms and food recovery organizations, including providing technical assistance, funding for infrastructure, and creating educational resources for improved composting practices and food waste management.
2. Contra Costa RCD: Setting up composting systems at schools, developing a comprehensive composting curriculum, and organizing community compost giveaways.
3. Solano RCD: This project will focus on installing composting infrastructure and integrating compost education into school curriculums to support local gardens and reduce landfill waste.
4. Loma Prieta RCD: Expanding and “closing-the-loop” of FarmTECH’s sustainable food system by adding food dehydrators, composting infrastructure and educational materials to reduce food waste and enhance soil health in the Morgan Hill Unified School District.
5. North Santa Clara RCD: Building on the existing San Jose Community Composting Network by supporting local organizations with funding and technical assistance to expand compost production, public education and resource distribution.

Expansion and Collaboration: GBACH members will expand their collaboration by sharing best practices and engaging in regular meetings to integrate new strategies to scale up composting practices. Insights from this collaborative effort will be shared at the California Association of Resource Conservation Districts conference and through the GBACH website.

Relevance to CFWR Priorities: The project aligns with CFWR’s priorities by addressing climate change through food waste reduction, advancing racial equity by focusing on underserved communities, and promoting environmental justice by improving access of underserved communities to resources. By reducing greenhouse gas emissions and fostering sustainable practices, the project will contribute to a more equitable and environmentally resilient future.

Impact: The anticipated impact includes reductions in food waste, enhanced local composting capabilities, and increased awareness among underserved communities. This comprehensive approach will not only meet SB 1383 requirements but also serve as a model for other regions aiming to improve food waste management and sustainability practices.

PROJECT NARRATIVE

Introduction

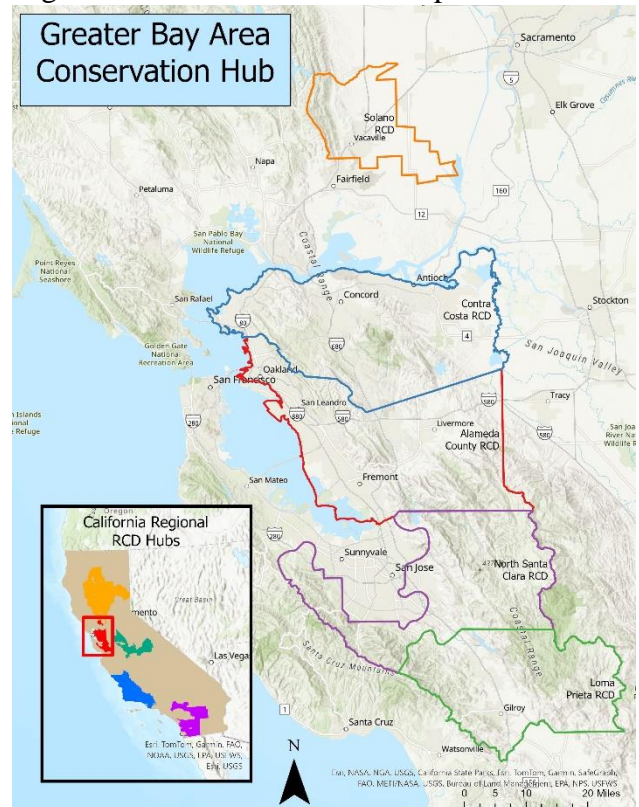
Location

Alameda County Resource Conservation District is submitting this application on behalf of members of the Greater Bay Area Conservation Hub (GBACH), with the following five Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs) participating in this proposed project: Alameda County RCD, Contra Costa RCD, Solano RCD, Loma Prieta RCD and North Santa Clara RCD.

GBACH was formed in 2019 and represents the majority of Solano, Contra Costa, Alameda and Santa Clara counties. It was formed as part of a statewide effort to streamline technical assistance (TA) to producers implementing climate-beneficial agricultural practices. It is 1 of 7 Climate and Agriculture hubs in California. The area served by GBACH is incredibly diverse by nearly any metric: racially, socioeconomically, agriculturally, topographically, etc. Another unique aspect of the GBACH region is that while parts of it are highly urbanized, significant portions of its lands are maintained as working and agricultural lands, wildlands and open spaces. Many of these areas are owned by public agencies. Those lands that are open to the public for recreation and education bring the public closer to working landscapes and provide opportunities to inform people about the ecological benefits of those landscapes, and in particular, their ability to mitigate climate change through sustainable land management.

Interest in urban farms has grown steadily in our region and represents untapped potential to implement more sustainable farming practices. RCDs and University of California Extension office actively support urban farming in Alameda, Contra Costa and Santa Clara counties, and the USDA-NRCS is ramping up engagement with urban farms through its Oakland urban service center (currently based at the Alameda County RCD office). In this proposal, we are prioritizing work that takes place within socially disadvantaged zip codes and/or provides direct and indirect benefits to people living in socially disadvantaged communities. For example, Contra Costa RCD is working with schools in previously red-lined neighborhoods whereas Alameda County RCD is working with farms that grow fresh produce for local food banks.

- Alameda County RCD:** 94502, 94577, 94579, 94603, 94605, 94621, 94501, 94606, 94607, 94610, 94612, 94608, 94609, 94618, 94702, 94703, 94704, 94705, 94709, 94710, 94720, 94601, 94602, 94611, 94613, 94619, 94706, 94707, 94708, 94538, 94555, 94560, 94539, 94550, 94536, 94542, 94544, 94545, 94587, 94541, 94546, 94552, 94578, 94580, 94566, 94568, 94586, 94588,
- Contra Costa RCD:** 94565, 94803, 94806, 94509, 94523
- Solano RCD:** 94534, 94533, 94585, 94591, 94589, 94590, 94592
- Loma Prieta RCD:** 95037, 95020
- North Santa Clara RCD:** 95110, 95112, 95116, 95125, 95127



Experience

Alameda County RCD is submitting this application on behalf of five neighboring RCDs, all members of the Greater Bay Area Conservation Hub (GBACH). RCDs are non-regulatory special districts that exist to initiate and support resource conservation efforts in our respective communities, especially in the agricultural sector. All five RCDs have expertise in providing technical assistance (TA) and connecting our communities, especially socially disadvantaged communities, with state and federal conservation resources and funding. Each provides TA on soil health and compost and/or have executed related programs such as NRCS EQIP and California Department of Food and Ag's Healthy Soils Program. Every member of GBACH has also been involved with the execution of California Senate Bill (SB)1383 which mandates food waste reduction and diversion to compost in their respective service area. For example, Alameda County RCD operates a Compost for Agriculture program that incentivizes commercial compost use by farms. Furthermore, North Santa Clara RCD received a CFWR grant in 2022 and so is familiar with its administration.

Members of GBACH meet together monthly and representatives also meet monthly with a network of other hubs in California. At each meeting, members review statewide activities in regenerative agriculture and discuss opportunities to collaborate. Members share expertise and TA experience, particularly in the implementation of practices such as compost, cover cropping, rangeland management and carbon sequestration via vegetation. Regular interaction with colleagues across the region and the state offers a consistent opportunity to improve and streamline TA and work towards scaling up climate beneficial practices in California.

Need

According to Project Drawdown, nearly one-third of the world's food goes uneaten, making food waste a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. Reducing food waste is identified as a top intervention for mitigating climate change. In response, California passed SB 1383 in 2021, which mandates that every county reduce food waste and plan for composting remaining waste. However, this is an unfunded mandate. Each GBACH member, all of whom work closely with socially disadvantaged communities and farmers, has been developing localized solutions to meet SB 1383's requirements and enhance food waste reduction and composting programs. This grant proposal will establish sustainable systems that are tailored to each unique community, improving composting efficiency, engagement and access. Additionally, this grant provides an opportunity for us to learn from each other's experiences. GBACH members will meet regularly to share insights, best practices and refine our strategies collaboratively. We anticipate that these systems will not only benefit our communities but also serve broadly as models for food waste reduction, particularly in underserved areas and among socially disadvantaged groups.

Goals and Objectives

The overarching goal of our project is to significantly reduce food waste and enhance composting practices through collaborative efforts with urban schools, gardens and farms, particularly those serving under-resourced populations. This proposal specifically focuses on addressing 3 of the 5 key tasks on the EPA's Wasted Food Scale: preventing wasted food, increasing efficiencies around donated food and composting. Our key objectives include:

- Building ties with institutions to enhance and promote effective waste management practices;
- Educating communities on reducing food waste and the benefits of composting, including its production and application;

- Creating infrastructure for local, closed-loop food systems that create and use compost to improve soil health, boost local food production, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and
- Connecting regional composting efforts to ensure equitable access to compost.

Impact

This project is poised to make a substantial impact on key Executive Priorities by addressing climate change, advancing racial equity and promoting environmental justice. By focusing on food waste reduction and creating closed-loop composting, we tackle the climate crisis through the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions associated with food waste and decreased hauling, while increasing access to fresh local produce. Our initiative prioritizes engagement with disadvantaged and underserved communities, including schools and community gardens in economically disadvantaged areas and farms providing produce to food pantries. By providing education and resources for successful food waste reduction and composting, we are developing more resilient and sustainable communities. This approach promotes environmental justice by addressing systemic inequities in waste management and resource access, thereby contributing to a more equitable and sustainable future for all communities.

Procedures and Work Plan

While the participating organizations share the common goals of reducing food waste and promoting composting, each GBACH member will undertake an individual project tailored to their specific community needs and current food system context. Although each project has its own set of tasks and deliverables, as outlined below, this grant also presents a valuable opportunity for cross-organizational learning. GBACH will leverage this chance to exchange insights and experiences by meeting monthly to review progress. Additionally, we will actively participate in each other’s events, and share resources, lessons learned and best practices both within GBACH and more broadly. In the first year of the grant, we plan to meet in person for a field day (a school project site in the morning and a farm - food waste recovery organization site in the afternoon). This field day will facilitate idea exchange and learning. In the second year of the grant, we plan to present the results and best practices resources from our work to our colleagues at the California Association of Resource Conservation Districts conference and also on our GBACH website (to be developed as part of this grant), further contributing to the broader community's knowledge and fostering collaboration potential.

Task	Deliverable	Timing
1	General administration	June 2025 - June 2027
2	Monthly GBACH meetings	June 2025 - June 2027
3	GBACH field day	April 2026
4	Development of best practices resources	January 2026 - May 2027
5	Creation of website repository for resource documents	January 2026 - May 2027
6	CARCD presentation	December 2026

Alameda Resource Conservation District’s (ACRCD) project

Activities: This project leverages and improves the growing food recovery and composting landscape that already exists. Alameda County has a number of thriving urban farms and gardens, many of which use or want to use compost and also provide fresh produce to local food banks and pantries. The goal of this project is to facilitate the development of sustainable, closed-loop systems where farms provide food to food recovery organizations (FROs), like food banks, and then receive appropriate waste streams for on-farm composting which can then be used to enrich the soil to grow more bountiful and nutritious harvests in the future. We will work in close collaboration with StopWaste, a public agency in the county with the mission of reducing waste and proper disposal of resources including recycling and composting, as well as our local NRCS Urban Ag Service Center. Completing this project requires: (1) research on local ordinances regarding food waste movement, (2) education and technical assistance (TA) for FROs about what and how food waste can be collected for composting, (3) education and TA for urban farms about composting techniques and crop production with compost, (4) providing funding to farms to bolster on-farm composting systems, and (5) providing funding for farms and FROs to build, upgrade and/or test different methods to maximize system sustainability.

Food Waste Reduction Strategies: In order to meet SB 1383’s edible food recovery goals, FROs have needed to rapidly expand their capacity for accepting food donations. Many FROs across California have noticed the increased volume of donated food is accompanied with an increase in spoiled, inedible food requiring disposal that can often exceed their normal waste collection service. In response, we want to help develop small, closed-loop compost systems that supply local urban farms with high quality compost feedstock while offering food waste solutions for FRO’s as they adapt to SB 1383. That compost can be used on-farm or it could be offered through a compost hub to the local community. In either case, greenhouse gasses are reduced due to reduced hauling of the waste and compost; there is a reduction in food going to the landfill; there is a reduction in the use of exogenous fertilizers; and local soils are healthier with increased rainwater absorption and carbon sequestration potential from compost amendment.

Task	Deliverable	Timing
1	Administration - setting up budgets and agreements with subcontractors, writing and submitting all required reporting, scheduling monthly GBACH and Hub meetings, etc.	June 2025 - June 2027 (entire grant term)
2	Develop handout on local ordinances outlining any restrictions or concerns around food waste movement.	July - Dec 2025
3	Work with StopWaste to coordinate consistent TA and develop durable educational materials about composting for FROs and urban farms.	July - Dec 2025
4	Make 2 presentations to FROs that have or are interested in having reciprocal relationships with farms. Presentations will cover topics such as what food can be composted, possible legal restrictions and solutions for transporting food waste to farms. Presentations will also be available to GBACH members and their clients.	Jan - Dec 2026

5	Hold 2 field days bringing FROs and farms that have or are interested in having reciprocal relationships at demonstration farms/FROs. As above, GBACH members and their clients will also be invited.	Apr - Oct 2026
6	Distribute three \$5,000 catalyst awards and TA for farms that can be used for time to design or expand systems, or to purchase materials to build/upgrade infrastructure.	June - Nov 2026
7	Alameda County RCD will provide over 665 hours of TA to farms or FROs that are designing and implementing composting or circular food systems, or with farms that are seeking advice on compost use or compost hub development.	June 2026 - June 2027

Contra Costa Resource Conservation District’s (CCRCD) project

Activities: This project aims to boost urban agriculture and reduce food waste through compost generation and distribution. By offering easy and free access to compost, we support urban farmers, especially in communities serving marginalized groups like transition-age foster youth and low-income residents of color. This not only enhances access to fresh produce but also addresses disparities in resources and opportunities while also mitigating climate change.

In tandem, we plan to implement a curriculum across five school sites to educate students about composting and its environmental benefits. This curriculum will cover broader topics like climate change and the role of food waste, introducing composting as the "5th R" of waste reduction. Students will engage in hands-on activities, such as soil sampling and the NRCS’s “Soil Your Undies” Challenge, to learn about soil health and composting. We will adapt the dissemination of information to each site, potentially involving Compost Ambassadors or Monitors to reinforce the learning experience.

Food Waste Reduction Strategies: The goal of this project is to reduce food waste from schools and establish a community compost infrastructure to enhance urban agricultural producers' access to compost in Contra Costa County. To achieve this, we will partner with urban school sites across the county to divert food waste by generating compost on-site from cafeteria food scraps which they can then use to enhance soil health on their gardens. This effort will be complemented by educating students about the benefits of composting and best practices for its creation through a range of educational materials and lesson plans. Additionally, we will coordinate Compost Giveaway Days with several urban agriculture partners, who will act as distribution centers for excess school-created compost, which allows community members to collect free compost for their urban farms/garden sites.

Task	Deliverable	Timing
1	Construct compost bins and develop food waste management plans for the 5 school sites.	July 2025 - Jan 2027
2	Develop a food waste reduction and compost curriculum; provide 4 lessons per school site.	July 2025 - May 2026
3	Hauling excess school-generated compost to farms who will serve as compost hub sites.	Jan 2026 - June 2027

4	Host 3-4 community Compost Giveaway days at school and partnering urban farm/garden sites.	July 2026 - June 2027
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Solano Resource Conservation District’s (SRCD) project

Activities: Solano RCD will collaborate closely with Green Valley Middle School and Loma Vista Elementary School (and perhaps others) to establish a comprehensive food waste diversion and composting program on their campuses. This involves procuring and adapting existing curriculum to fit local conditions and state science standards, and distributing it to science teachers. The curriculum will cover nutrient cycling in food systems, the greenhouse gas benefits of diverting food waste from landfills, the importance of minimizing food waste, and the uses and benefits of compost in school, home, and agriculture for climate change mitigation. We will present assemblies to introduce students to the program and new infrastructure at their schools. Additionally, we will work with school staff and parent groups to launch the program and provide necessary support. To facilitate this, we will purchase and install all required supplies and infrastructure, including waste bins, composting facilities, and vermicomposting systems.

Food Waste Reduction Strategies: We aim to expand existing relationships and programming at local schools involved in Solano RCD’s environmental education programs. This initiative will focus on reducing organic waste input to landfills, thereby lowering waste management costs and mitigating greenhouse gas emissions associated with transport and landfill decomposition. By diverting organic waste to on-site composting facilities, we will produce usable compost for school gardens and community members. Additionally, we will integrate regional efforts to distribute compost to local farms and ranches with smaller-scale projects that use compost in school and community gardens. This approach will leverage the expertise of farmers and technical assistance providers to enhance urban and community-based composting efforts.

Task	Deliverable	Timing
1	Curriculum procurement, development	July - Sept 2025
2	1 assembly for each grade at each of the 2 participating schools	Oct 2025 & Oct 2026
3	Install waste diversion and compost infrastructure at each of the 2 participating schools	Sept - Dec 2025
4	Support school staff with program implementation as needed	July 2025 - June 2027
5	Integrate school compost efforts with regional ag compost efforts via press releases, social media posts and e-newsletter articles.	July 2025 - June 2027
6	Evaluate projects and what is needed to scale up to other schools. Write a white paper for GBACH, CARCD and Hub network.	Jan - June 2027

Loma Prieta Resource Conservation District’s (LPRCD) project

Activities: Loma Prieta RCD will provide TA and funding for FarmTECH, the student nutrition program for Morgan Hill Unified School District as FarmTECH aims to create a sustainable, closed-loop food system within the community. The program already maintains a 2-acre farm, which is growing to 20 acres over the next year, supplying fruits and vegetables for student

lunches. The farm also acts as a demonstration farm for educational purposes. This grant will fund the purchase of additional food dehydrators for each school in the district, infrastructure for the installation of an industrial composter located on-farm, as well as an investment in educational materials. Food dehydrators make it easier for schools to transport waste to the farm. **Food Waste Reduction Strategies:** Loma Prieta RCD and FarmTECH have the shared goal of reducing food waste at schools and transforming what waste is created into valuable compost to enhance soil health. The project begins with capturing food scraps from 13 schools and utilizing compact, efficient dehydrators. The result will be composted and then used as a soil amendment at the FarmTECH district farm. Expansion plans include acquiring 11 additional Mill dehydrator units for elementary and middle schools and investing in an industrial composting machine from Ecovim for the central kitchen located at one of the high schools. In alignment with Loma Prieta RCD’s and FarmTECH’s educational missions, the project also includes developing educational materials and signage to promote composting practices and celebrating these efforts.

Task	Deliverable	Timing
1	Purchase and install food dehydrators at 11 school sites.	July - Sept 2025
2	Purchase and install an industrial composter at the school district’s central kitchen / farm site (also shared with Sobrato High School).	July - Nov 2025
3	Assist with development and implementation of waste reduction and compost related educational materials.	July - May 2027

North Santa Clara Resource Conservation District’s (NSCRCD) project

Activities: NSCRCD (formerly the Guadalupe-Coyote RCD) will build on the success of the San Jose Community Composting Network (“Network”), which was implemented as part of a previous CFWR grant. NSCRCD will increase Network membership and expand food scrap collection, compost creation and public education within the San Francisco South Bay region.

Food Waste Reduction Strategies: NSCRCD will build capacity of organizations already working on food waste reduction and/or composting by providing funding and TA.

- **Veggielution:** incorporate food scrap drop off capacity at 1st Saturday events; expand the Eastside Grown program (an initiative that fosters local food systems that serve their communities by providing resources and infrastructure for local food entrepreneurs); and integrate food waste management into Eastside Grown training and Cocina (seasonal-produce centered, culturally relevant) cooking classes.
- **Valley Verde:** Increase capacity of their existing Compost Hub; increase workshop offerings; and incorporate locally and sustainably obtained biochar into their compost.
- **Garden to Table SV (G2T):** Build capacity; enhance onsite compost production with locally sourced biochar; and offer community training on compost and food waste reduction.

Task	Deliverable	Timing
1	Provide funding and TA for infrastructure and increase staff/volunteer time to build and enhance food waste reduction and compost facilities for Network members Veggielution, Valley Verde and G2T.	July 2025 - June 2027

2	Provide coordination and funding to increase public education, workshops and training among Network members, including Valley Verde (3 workshops); G2T (2x 3-session training tracts and 1 intro training); Veggielution (4 Cocina classes; 4x 1st Saturday workshops; and a new module for Eastside Grown curriculum).	July 2025 - June 2027
3	Purchase biochar as amendment for Valley Verde and G2T compost.	July - Dec 2025
4	Launch a new business through Veggielution's Eastside Grown program.	Jan 2026

Key Personnel and their Tasks

Alameda County Resource Conservation District (APPLICANT)

Ian Howell: As Senior Project manager, Ian will serve as this project's Program Director; he oversees the implementation of ACCRCD's compost incentives and education programming.

Marilyn Harvey: As interim CEO, serves as the Administrative Contact and Signatory Official.

Courtney Coon: Courtney is a Resource Conservationist III and will serve as the Program Contact for this project, responsible for day to day program implementation and administration.

Colleen Hotchkiss: As the Urban Ag Specialist and a project manager for ACCRCD's conservation mini-grants program, Colleen will lead farm and compost TA and education.

Subcontractors

Ben Weise: As ACCRCD's Ag Program Director, Ben will manage the implementation of ACCRCD's school garden compost program and perform administrative duties as necessary.

Nat Gafney: As Ag Conservation Coordinator, Nat will assist with ACCRCD's project execution.

Marianne Butler: Marianne is SRCD's Education Program Director and will oversee all aspects of SRCD's project administration and implementation.

Dina Iden: As LPRCDs Executive Director, Dina will oversee all aspects of project administration and on-site implementation.

Stephanie Moreno: As NSCRCD's Executive Director, Stephanie works on project administration, network management, and onsite implementation.

Andrew Lopez: As NSCRCD's Conservation Program Coordinator, Andrew manages network coordination and onsite implementation.

Collaborators

Org	Address	Contact	Role
CCRCD	5552 Clayton Rd, Concord, CA 94521 925-672-4577 x4	Ben Weise	Manage school composting and education and compost hub programs in Contra Costa County.
SRCD	1170 N. Lincoln, Ste 110, Dixon, CA 95620 707-678-1655 x3	Marianne Butler	Manage school composting and education programs in Solano County.
LPRCD	8010 Wayland Lane, Ste 1D, Gilroy, CA 95020 408-847-4171	Dina Iden	Manage expansion of FarmTECH's Farm-to-School-to-Farm program.

NSCRCD	888 N. 1st St, Ste 204, San Jose CA 95112 831-235-1799	Stephanie Moreno	Manage network, build partner capacity, and foster collaboration among composting orgs.
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Secondary Partners

Partner	Contact	Organization type and role in project
Working with Alameda County Resource Conservation District (ACRCD)		
StopWaste	Kelly Schoonmaker KSchoonmaker@stopwaste.org 1537 Webster St, Oakland, CA 94612 510-891-6500	StopWaste is a public agency that educates about waste and recycling. They are a close partner with ACRCD and run farmer composting training. They also facilitate the Alameda County Food Recovery Network.
Fremont LEAF	Elaine elaine@fremontleaf.org 55 Mowry Ave, Fremont, CA 94536 408-205-8581	Catalyst award recipient farm. They donate produce to: Tri-City Volunteers, Centro de Servicios and Daily Bowl.
Fertile Ground-works	Brenda Kusler brenda.kusler@fertilegroundworks.org 4743 East Ave, Livermore, CA 94550 925-344-9090	Catalyst award recipient farm. They donate produce to: Tri-Valley Haven, One Nation, Interfaith Sharing Pantry, Livermore Homeless Refuge, Culinary Angels and Open Heart Kitchen.
University Village Community Garden	Tim Cumagun timcumagun@berkeley.edu 735 W End Wy, Albany, CA 94705 510-526-8505	Catalyst award recipient farm. They donate produce to Bear Pantry, a food pantry for UC Berkeley students.
Working with Contra Costa Resource Conservation District (CCRCD)		
Family Harvest Farms	Mary Cherry mary@familyharvestfarm.org 1300 Power Ave, Pittsburg, CA 94565	Compost Giveaway Site
Healthy Hearts Institute	Ray Harts rharts@healthyhearts.com 875 El Pueblo Ave, Pittsburg, CA 94565	Compost Giveaway Site
Riverview Middle School (MS)	Kathy Davis daviska@mdusd.org 205 Pacifica Ave, Bay Point, CA 94565	Compost Giveaway Site, Education Site, School Garden and Compost Creation
Growing Together - Betty Reid Soskin MS	Matthew Linzner matthew@growingtogetherprojects.org 1121 Allview Ave, El Sobrante, CA 94803	Compost Giveaway Site, Education Site, School Garden and Compost Creation

Antioch Charter Academy	Allen Stahler AllenStahler@antiochcharteracademy.org 3325 Hacienda Wy, Antioch, CA 94509	Compost Giveaway Site, Education Site, School Garden and Compost Creation
Valley View MS/ College Park HS	Bethallyn Black BBlack@dvc.edu 321 Golf Club Rd, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523	Compost Giveaway Site, Education Site, School Garden and Compost Creation
Working with Solano Resource Conservation District (SRCD)		
Solano Local Food System Alliance	Allison Nagel allison@sustainablesolano.org PO Box 1215, Benicia, CA 94510	Non-profit, advisor to pilot program on food waste diversion and connection with local schools.
Loma Vista Elementary	Rita Leroy rkleroy@yahoo.com 146 Rainier Ave, Vallejo, CA 94589	Public school, new composting site and educational program recipient.
Working with North Santa Clara Resource Conservation District (NSCRCD)		
Veggielution	Macky Avila macky@veggielution.org 647 S. King Rd, San Jose, CA 95116 408-753-6705	This nonprofit operates a 6-acre farm and gathering place, and offers a farm box program for low income families.
Garden to Table SV (G2T)	Trinity Tomsic team@garden2tables.org 200 W. Taylor St, San Jose, CA 95110 301-312-7601	This nonprofit operates a 1-acre farm and education center.
Valley Verde	Lovepreet Kaur lovepreet@valleyverde.org 691 W San Carlos St, San Jose, CA, 95126 (408)-831-1481	This nonprofit operates a composting hub, and provides food access and micro-entrepreneurship training.
University of California Cooperative Extension, Santa Clara	Michael Cohen mfscohen@ucanr.edu 1553 Berger Drive, Bldg 1, 2nd Floor, San Jose, CA 95112 408-282-3132	This research-focused org works with community leaders, gov't agencies, private organizations and individuals to address local ag and food security issues.
Working with Loma Prieta Resource Conservation District (LPRCD)		
FarmTech (Morgan Hill USD)	Michael Jochner jochnerm@mhusd.org 1505 W. Main Street, Morgan Hill, CA 95037 408-201-6000	FarmTECH is a farm program with a mission of growing school food, educating students and community members about farming practices, and working with local farm partners.

Evaluation

1. Food Access and Security

Our joint initiative focuses on improving food access and security by enhancing the availability and utilization of nutritious food in the region. We aim to build resilient, ecologically, and economically sustainable local food systems. This includes creating healthier, more productive soil to help farmers and gardeners better feed the most vulnerable in our communities.

Metric	How to measure	Who will measure	Expected result
1.1. Number of individuals with improved food access and security (1.1.1.)	Increased receipt (volume/weight) of fresh produce by food recovery organizations (FROs).	Farmers that work with FROs already monitor food production and donation continuously. (ACRCD)	It will take time after compost application to see increased yields, but properly applied compost can increase yields which means more produce for FROs and improved food access for their clients.
1.2. Number farmers supported or assisted (1.2.1.-1.2.4.)	To be counted, farmers must receive 1+ hour of TA, compost or >\$100 for infrastructure.	Partners will report hours of TA, farms receiving compost and amount of money distributed. (ACRCD, CCRCD, NSCRCD)	We expect to serve at least 9 farms. All serving socially disadvantaged communities.
1.5. Number of individuals benefiting from food waste reduction initiatives (1.5.1.)	Number of individuals receiving education about food reduction techniques.	Partners will estimate headcounts at all educational events and the number of people receiving paper materials. (CCRCD, SRCD, NSCRCD)	CCRCD and SRCD will be providing waste reduction education to 6 schools. NSCRCD will facilitate the production of educational pamphlets and complete 15 community trainings.

2. Economic Impact and Resilience

Several of our projects are designed to address and mitigate economic challenges. We have particularly focused on reducing the costs associated with food waste disposal while also creating opportunities for cost reduction from bringing in outside, commercial compost. Our initiatives aim to ensure a more sustainable economic future for the communities we serve.

Metric	How to measure	Who will measure it	Expected result
2.5 Number of businesses supported.	A business will be counted if it goes through a training program and becomes a stable venture by the completion of this grant.	Veggielution will report the number of ventures that complete their program and NSCRCD will confirm status near the completion of this grant.	We expect 1+ new venture that goes through the training will be scaled up to a stable business.

2.6. Cost savings resulting from project activities + 2.12. Cost savings from local generation of compost	We will compare costs associated with purchase of commercial compost for the 6 months before and after TA and new infrastructure is installed.	Estimated costs will be requested from orgs receiving infrastructure before and after project implementation. (All projects)	We expect that the amount spent will decrease.
2.8. Number of volunteers engaged with project activities + 2.9. Number of volunteer hours per year.	Partners will be asked to log additional volunteers and/or volunteer hours used after implementing changing waste reduction and composting efforts.	Recipient organizations should provide data on volunteer engagement for the 3 months before and after implementation. (All projects)	We expect a minimum of 15 new volunteers serving 405 hours.

3. Community Engagement

RCDs are focused on fostering meaningful relationships and community engagement to enhance participatory involvement in all of our project activities. By building strategic partnerships with local and public organizations, we aim to collaborate effectively on initiatives related to community food security, waste reduction and soil health. Our efforts include facilitating positive behavior changes to ensure that our community-driven approaches yield lasting benefits.

Metric	How it will be measured	Who will measure it	Expected result
3.1. Number of individuals participating in project activities	Counts are based on the number of people who showed up to an event funded by the grant (e.g., school assembly or training).	Counts will be determined by the partner administering the event. (ACRCD, CCRC, SRCD, NSCRCD)	We expect ~20 participants at 25 events for a minimum of 500 individuals.
3.3. Number of schools participating in project activities.	Partners will count the number of schools that participated in trainings or educational events and/or received new or updated infrastructure.	Counts will be determined by the project partner administering the training or funding. (CCRC, SRCD, LPRCD)	A minimum of 21 schools will participate in project activities.
3.5 Number of waste surveys completed.	Project partners will conduct surveys pre- and post-compost generation to assess food waste reduction.	Counts will be measured by the project partner administering the surveys. (CCRC)	At least 140 waste surveys will be completed.
3.7. Number of partnerships developed due to project activities	The partnership must be new (the organizations have not worked together in >5 years) and there must be some kind of official transfer (funding, agreements, etc.)	The number of partnerships will be recorded by the project partner and reported to Alameda County RCD. (All projects)	At least 5 new partnerships will be developed due to project activities.

3.11. Number of community gardens supported	We will count any (non-school) community garden or urban farm that receives TA, funding and/or free compost from this proposal.	Each partner will report the number of community gardens that they support. (ACRCD, CCRC, NSCRCD)	We will support 8 farms and 1 nursery.
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4. Food Resource Management

The majority of our projects focus on creating more localized food systems that reduce food waste and increase compost production to enhance sustainability and resource efficiency.

Metric	How it will be measured	Who will measure it	Expected result
4.5. Amount of food waste used for composting (lbs.)	The amount of food waste will be measured or estimated as it is added to a composter.	Each partner will log or estimate the amount of food waste added to composters. (All projects)	>5M lbs of food waste per year for composting.
4.7 Number of new individuals that have adopted composting as a household practice.	Post-training surveys.	Veggielution will complete the survey (NSCRCD)	>120 households will adopt composting.
4.9. Amount of compost produced (lbs.)	The amount of compost produced will be monitored by a compost log.	Project partners managing compost generation will monitor the amount produced. (All projects)	We expect ~1.7M lbs of compost per year.
4.11. Number of producers receiving compost	The number of (non-school) farms or gardens that receive >1500 lbs of compost at least once during the project.	Each partner will record the number of producers receiving compost. (ACRCD, CCRC, NSCRCD)	At least 7 farms and 1 nursery will receive compost.
4.12 Number of businesses participating in food waste prevention measures.	A business will be counted if it participates in educational programs and a survey indicates they intend to adopt at least one new practice.	NSCRCD will be responsible for recording the number of businesses.	At least 2 new participating businesses.
4.13. Number of schools participating in food waste prevention measures	A participating school will be counted if it receives TA, funding or educational materials related to food waste reduction.	Each partner will record the number of participating schools. (CCRC, SRC, LPRCD)	We expect a minimum of 19 schools.

5. Conservation and Climate

GBACH is committed to environmental conservation and advancing climate resilience. Our projects are designed to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, improve soil health and

employ innovative technologies to boost crop productivity. By integrating these efforts, we aim to promote regenerative practices that support local food systems as well as climate adaptation.

Metric	How it will be measured	Who will measure it	Expected result
5.4. Number of farms that adopted at least one conservation practice	The farm adopts at least 1 NRCS conservation practice (e.g., Soil carbon amendment [code 336] or Composting Facility [code 317]).	Each partner will record the farms that adopt an NRCS conservation practice. (NSCRCD, CCRCD, ACRC)	At least 8 farms and 1 nursery will receive TA and funding.
5.6. Number of acres with applied compost	This will be a count of the number of acres on which compost is applied at any farms or gardens.	Each partner should record the number of acres that apply compost. (All projects)	We expect a minimum of 40 acres to have compost applied at least once.
5.8. Estimated greenhouse gas emissions reduced from project activities (CO ₂ e)	This will be calculated with estimates of waste diverted, the amount of compost produced and used, and reductions in vehicle miles traveled due to more local food systems using EPA’s WARM model.	Each partner will report measures or estimates of each metric. The final calculation will be completed by ACRC. (All projects)	TBD

6. Training and Education

Several of our projects aim to enhance knowledge, awareness and education related to food waste reduction, composting practices and sustainable agriculture. The activities will focus on providing students, farmers, community members and other stakeholders with a deeper understanding of urban agriculture and innovative production techniques. By fostering education and awareness, we seek to empower diverse audiences with the tools and insights needed to contribute to more local, sustainable and effective food systems.

Metric	How it will be measured	Who will measure it	Expected result
6.1 Number of individuals receiving job training or mentorship	Each graduate of Veggielution’s Eastside Grown 2026 cohort will be counted.	Veggielution will report the number. (NSCRCD)	At least 15 individuals will participate in job training opportunities.
6.2. Number of individuals educated on food waste reduction	Project partners will count the number of individuals that participated in trainings, were present at educational events and/or received educational materials.	Counts will be determined by the project partner administering the training or funding. (All Projects)	We expect 900 individuals will be educated.
6.3. Number of students	To count, students must receive info about ag or ag	Each project partner will be responsible for recording	We expect >10K students to gain

educated on agricultural knowledge and skills	skills from a teacher or other professional and/or they must practice ag skills for a minimum of 30 minutes.	the number of students participating. (CCRCD, SRCD, LPRCD)	ag skills and knowledge during this project.
6.6. Number of urban producers educated on agricultural knowledge and skills	Urban producers will be counted if they receive a minimum of 1 hour of TA or participate in a training series where agricultural methods are discussed.	Each project partner will report the number of unique producers that meet the criteria. (ACRCD, CCRCD, NSCRCD)	A minimum of 30 urban producers will be educated on agricultural knowledge and skills.
6.9. Number of educational materials created	Educational materials will include daily curriculums for students or trainees, pamphlets, posters and signs.	We will share copies of materials at GBACH meetings and make them available on the GBACH website. (All Projects)	We expect a minimum of 12 educational products will be created.
6.10. Number of education materials distributed	Materials (curriculum, pamphlet, poster or sign) will count as being distributed if it is shared with >1 student, producer or resident.	Each project partner will report on the distribution of educational materials. (All Projects)	We expect a minimum of 12 products will be distributed.

Self-Sustainability

While each RCD project is tailored to their community’s current needs, members of GBACH are united in their commitment to developing more resilient, local food waste systems. Each of these projects invests in community education and infrastructure to promote food waste reduction efforts and foster sustainability for long after federal funding ends. More specifically, we expect the composting facilities set up through these projects will provide ongoing resources for school gardens, urban farms and community members, while educational programs will empower participants with the knowledge to maintain, expand or upgrade these systems independently.

The collaborative approach among the five RCDs further enhances the potential for long-term success. By sharing insights and developing best practices together, we can refine our methods and strategies for food waste management and composting, especially as we all continue to facilitate the implementation of SB 1383. This collective learning will ensure that each project benefits from the experiences and successes of the others, creating a network of expertise. The initial federal funding will act as a catalyst, establishing essential infrastructure and educational frameworks.