

Message from the Chairman

What started in 2012 with a small group of motivated people has grown beyond my wildest dreams. I am talking about the Illinois Food Scrap Coalition (IFSC) which is now registered as a non-profit with 101 members and 7 partners, and a 15-member board of directors, which I am honored to be chairperson of for the next year. This is IFSC's first newsletter which is in response to a survey of the members who asked that we provide a newsletter to augment the general membership calls. We plan on doing two newsletters a year to share what we are doing and to expand the outreach and message of the IFSC.

Essential to IFSC's success in growing food scrap diversion programs has been the hard work and collaboration of the members who represent a broad spectrum of public and private sector entities. We must continue to expand our network and to have members take an active role in the Coalition. The newsletter contains updates from IFSC's seven standing sub-committees, please consider joining one, and further strengthen the Coalition.

The IFSC Board has entered strategic alliances that we believe will enhance our mission, including alliances with Illinois' community colleges via their IL Green Economy Network (IGEN), and the IL Restaurant Association. The Board also has agreed to begin the process of forming an IL Chapter under the U.S. Composting Council, which will be of great benefit to our private sector composting partners and for increasing demand for high quality final compost product in IL. Several Board members are also active with Chicago food recovery organizations and working jointly with them to increase food recovery programs and food scrap diversion. Awareness of the amount of food that is wasted is increasing, and given the impact wasted food has on Earth's resources, it must be reduced.

Our successes since 2012 are too numerous to count, but include the:

- We Compost program,
- growing web, social media and print presence of the IFSC,
- great work being done by Seven Generations Ahead with the Chicago Community Trust grants in 2016 and ongoing in 2017,
- formation of a formal board of directors and the development of a three-year strategic plan,
- outstanding work of the 7 sub-committees, and
- hiring of excellent administrative coordinators these past 2 years (Jennifer Jarland in 2016 and now Liz Schmidt) to do the day to day work of keeping the Coalition organized and run professionally.

My final thought is to be sure to circle November 3, 2017 on your calendar and attend the Soil, Food, Water, and Composting Summit. The summit is part of the Chicago Community Trust grant and provides IFSC members a great chance to spend time with one another, and learn about the interconnection our efforts have with food recovery, healthy soil and clean water. See you there!