



OCRRA Wins Top Environmental Award in North America

2017 SWANA Gold Excellence Award Bestowed upon OCRRA for Compost Program

The Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) awarded the Onondaga County Resource Recovery Agency (OCRRA) the SWANA Gold Excellence Award in the Composting category at WASTE-CON® in Baltimore, Maryland.

OCRRA's compost program is recognized for:

- engaging 7,000 school students each day in separating their food scraps for composting at the Amboy Compost Facility,
- composting 15,000 tons of food scraps and generating 30,000 cubic yards of certified compost since 2013,
- helping 450,000 Onondaga County residents achieve a nearly 60% recycling rate,
- having the largest municipally managed food recovery program in New York State, and
- being one of a handful of municipal operations in NY producing compost certified by the US Composting Council's Seal of Testing Assurance Program.

Using compost has many environmental benefits; smart gardeners understand how vital it is to achieving beautiful landscapes. Compost maximizes nutrients in the soil so plants thrive; retains moisture so plants do not need as much water; suppresses the spread of plant disease so gardens stay healthy; and reduces the need for chemicals and pesticides, which keeps pollutants out of our water supply.

SWANA's Excellence Awards Program recognizes outstanding solid waste programs and facilities that advance the practice of environmentally and economically sound solid waste management through their commitment to utilizing effective technologies and processes in system design and operations, advancing worker and community health and safety, and implementing successful public education and outreach programs. Programs also must demonstrate that they are fiscally and environmentally responsible through their compliance with all applicable federal, state and local regulations.

The winning entry can be viewed here: <https://swana.org/Awards/Excellence.aspx>

"Through education and engaging businesses and residents in our community, we are able to reduce the amount of waste produced in Onondaga County," said Greg Gelewski, OCRRA operations manager. "In addition, our community's efforts are reaching farther than our borders as OCRRA's composting program is being used as a model for replication in other New York communities and beyond."

You can buy OCRRA's locally made compost by the bag at more than 30 retailers in Central New York. Visit www.tinyurl.com/Compost-2017 for a list of locations.