

Organics Summit Offers a Range of Topics

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Around 165 people gathered for the Organics Summit at Casa Larga Vineyards in Fairport on March 26-27. A well-suited venue and beautiful view added to a day and half packed with panel discussions, presentations and networking. Attendees heard from experts in many aspects of organics management, such as organics haulers in different stages of operation, landscapers, a compostable packaging and product certifier, government entities, county resource recovery agency, university extension, and food bank.

Since the summit was held in the Rochester area, local stakeholders presented their approach to reducing food waste, donating leftover and excess food, and recycling inedible food.

In addition, attendees broke into regional groups to discuss who was present and absent at the conference, the barriers and successes they encounter at different levels of EPA's Food Recovery Hierarchy, as well as ways each can bring stakeholders together to advance organics recycling in their respective regions.

Notable absences were restaurants, farmers, school districts, and politicians, and more colleges and non-profits could always be seated at the table. Also, as conversation continues, the industry must ensure all ethnicities and minority groups are being represented and information is shared among stakeholders. Each region brainstormed about how they



could facilitate sharing of information.

The second day delved into specific topics including handling compostable products, increasing the market for compost, educating youth about composting and its importance and families about strategies to reduce food waste at home.

Furthermore, both days included visiting with vendors at their booths. The exchange of information, stories, and insight was invaluable as attendees at all stages in their careers talked and learned from one another. Before attendees parted for the final time, many took a tour of nearby High Acres Composting Facility.



Photos, clockwise from top:

Attendees network with vendors during a break at the event in Fairport.

Normajean Albright from MorganEagle Falconry, displays a bird of prey used for vector control at the vineyards.

A tour of High Acres Composting Facility showed some windrows in the operation.

NYSAR³ President Kelli Timbrook addresses attendees at the Summit.

Chair of the NYSAR³ Organics Committee, Jesse Kerns opens the two-day event.

