



New Jersey Agricultural  
Experiment Station

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## NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **FOOD WASTE RECYCLING SERIES AIMS TO EDUCATE SCHOOLS AT ROWAN UNIVERSITY EVENT**

New Brunswick, NJ--On April 11, 2008, Rowan University and Sodexo Campus Services will host "Teach Today, Save Tomorrow," a forum focused on establishing recycling programs at educational institutions, with special emphasis on food waste recycling. The event, which is the fourth in a series of food waste recycling forums being planned around the state by the Solid Waste Resource Renewal Group (SWRRG) at Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, will be held in Rowan Hall, First Floor Lecture Hall, Rowan University 201 Mullica Hill Road, Glassboro, New Jersey. Registration will begin at 8:00 a.m. and the program will commence sharply at 9:00 a.m.

New Jersey is faced with an unparalleled opportunity to utilize the waste it creates to power our electricity and fuels needs, and reduce our dependence on fossil fuels. In order to make this opportunity a reality and create a new industry that will bring jobs, capital investment and innovation into the state, the entities which generate waste need to demonstrate a commitment to recycling their food waste into new products. The goal of the forum series is to educate generators about planning for the future savings they can enjoy from recycling their food waste and the impact this can have on the environment.

For schools and higher education institutions, food waste recycling—and indeed, recycling in general—present special teaching opportunities, as well as cost saving opportunities. Recycling underscores what the students learn in science, that matter is not created nor destroyed, and that on a finite planet we need to practice resource management to avoid having

our resources ending up in the messy stew of landfills. Recycling programs offer the opportunity for real life data collection, scientific demonstration, and real life mathematics word problems and calculations.

“Many schools throughout New Jersey either have no recycling program, or have only a cursory one,” says Priscilla Hayes, director of SWRRG. “This not only puts them in violation of state laws, but potentially puts the lessons being taught by this failure to steward resources at odds with what students learn in class. If schools do not recycle, they are missing an opportunity to reinforce environmental warnings the students hear about running out of resources and creating global warming.”

Highlights of the day’s events include:

- ⇒ Seventh graders from Lavallette Elementary School will present a power point they created to train the students, staff, administration and teachers at their school about the exemplary recycling system they instituted there with the help of the custodians, teachers and principal. The students are now creating a pilot food waste recycling program, which will utilize an on-site composter.
- ⇒ Dr. Nicholas Smith-Sebasto of Montclair State University, the state’s second largest higher education institution, will describe an in-vessel food residuals composting project at Montclair State University that was developed in collaboration with Sodexo, one of the largest food service companies in the state. The connection between food residuals composting and global climate change will be discussed.
- ⇒ In a presentation titled “Transforming a University Culture to Recycling with Students,” students from Rowan University will describe their experiences in improving recycling on campus.

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- ⇒ Priscilla Hayes of SWRRG will present lessons learned from successful K-12 school food waste recycling programs in Vermont, Massachusetts, Minnesota, California, and the Pacific Northwest. A primary focus will be the incorporation of the recycling systems with curriculum requirements.
- ⇒ Linda Geren of Sodexo Campus Services will discuss the challenges in reducing waste—food and other waste—in food service programs.

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