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DE BLASIO ADMINISTRATION PROPOSES ORGANICS RECYCLING REQUIREMENTS FOR LARGE-SCALE FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS, VENDORS, MANUFACTURERS, WHOLESALERS

The proposal – expected to divert 50,000 tons per year of food waste – builds on the administration’s commitment laid out in OneNYC to achieve Zero Waste by 2030

NEW YORK—The de Blasio administration today announced a proposal to require commercial large-scale commercial food establishments to separate organic waste. Food scraps and other organic material makes up one-third of all commercial waste, and diverting this material from landfills – to be used as a soil amendment through composting or as feedstock for clean, renewable energy through anaerobic digestion – will be a critical opportunity for New York City. The City laid out an ambitious plan to send zero waste to landfills and reduce waste disposal by 90 percent relative to 2005 levels, by 2030 in “One New York: The Plan for a Strong and Just City,” the administration’s comprehensive plan for a sustainable and resilient city.

The City is proposing the following subset of facilities to participate in this program:

- All food service establishments in hotels with 150 or more rooms
- All food service vendors in arenas and stadiums with seating capacity of at least 15,000 people
- Food manufacturers with a floor area of at least 25,000 square feet
- Food wholesalers with a floor area of at least 20,000 square feet

Businesses covered by this proposal would be given the option to arrange for collection by a private carter, transport organic waste themselves, or compost on-site in an in-vessel composting or aerobic or anaerobic digestion system, subject to compliance with the City’s sewer discharge regulations.

The proposed rules will be subject to a public hearing and comment period and would take effect six months after they are adopted. From that point, there will be a six-month grace period before any fines can be imposed.

The first wave of the proposed designation will not include restaurants, grocery stores, fast food establishments, or caterers, but the administration will propose adding these businesses under future rulemaking as regional processing capacity expands.

“Building an environmentally just, sustainable New York City that’s resilient for generations to come will require participation from all New Yorkers,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “The commercial establishments in today’s proposal are already recycling plastics and metals, and by additionally recycling organic material, they will significantly contribute to reducing our City’s waste stream – leading the path to send Zero Waste to landfills by 2030.”

“New York City’s restaurants, hotels, and other food service establishments send more than a million tons of organic material per year to landfills. This proposal represents the first step toward achieving our Zero Waste goals for businesses by identifying those establishments who are best able to separate a clean organics stream

suitable for composting or conversion into clean, renewable fuel,” said **Sanitation Commissioner Kathryn Garcia**.

“Food waste has for too long been an untapped resource – by turning it into compost, by using it to fuel digesters that create energy, it’s no longer waste that is decomposing and off-gassing greenhouse gases but taking its rightful place as part of a sustainability cycle. This is a great stepping stone towards meeting our Zero Waste by 2030 goal,” said **Nilda Mesa, Director of the Mayor’s Office of Sustainability**.

“Zero waste going to landfills in fifteen years is an ambitious goal, and the only way we’ll get there is by making composting and organics collection the new normal,” said **Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer**. “These new requirements are a meaningful early step on the way to that goal.”

“The organics recycling proposal will help our City reach its goal of reducing carbon emissions by 2050 and to achieve zero waste by 2030. We will reduce the amount of waste that hits our landfills and build environmentally-friendly practices that last. This proposal would make a beneficial and sustainable impact in our city's efforts to combat climate change. I commend Mayor de Blasio for his bold vision to make our city more sustainable by reducing waste,” said **Council Member Costa Constantinides, Chair of the Committee on Environmental Protection**.

“This is an encouraging first step in a law that will create major advances towards our city’s waste diversion goal, will make a positive environmental impact on the entire New York metropolitan region and is an awesome cost-efficient plan to combat the rodent problem,” said **Council Member Andy King**.

“I’m excited to see the administration acting quickly towards achieving the impressive goal of zero waste to landfills laid out in the Mayor’s One NYC Plan. Organics make up a large portion of our waste stream, particularly in the commercial sector. This proposal will ensure this material is not wasted, but recycled as compost or energy. I look forward to these requirements being expanded to more commercial businesses, moving us closer to becoming a zero waste city,” said **Council Member Antonio Reynoso**.

“New York City currently pays more than \$100 million per year to landfill organics waste; organics make up 35 percent of the overall New York City waste stream. As a Staten Islander, I know only too well what a huge waste output means; we were burdened with a temporary dump that existed for 50 years. With this in mind, I have sponsored bills to pilot residential composting in the hope that we can one day create full-bodied composting program – reducing the city’s carbon footprint, creating jobs and saving money. The effort announced today by the mayor is another step toward reducing our waste and making New York City more sustainable for future generations. I commend the administration's leadership as we all work together to make our city a pioneer in green practices,” said **Council Member Debi Rose**.

“Citi Field and the Mets are strongly committed to a sustainable future and partnering with the City of New York in addressing the food waste issue that clogs our landfills,” said **Sue Lucchi, Vice President of Ballpark Operations**. “Together with Rock and Wrap it up! we have helped feed over 20,000 New Yorkers over the last two years. With an on-site anaerobic digester and working with Action Carting on composting services, we are proud to be part of this important initiative for the City.”

“We encourage further implementation of this law. We know time will be needed to educate and drive compliance, but the private carting industry is ready and willing to continue working with various City agencies and its customers to address the practical implications of implementing this law,” said **Steve Changaris, Chapter Manager for the National Waste and Recycling Association’s New York City chapter**.

"The NYC Environmental Justice Alliance applauds Mayor de Blasio's push to initiate food waste recycling requirements. For decades, a handful of NYC's low income communities of color have borne the brunt - over 75 percent - of the entire City's waste handling burden. Recycling food waste is a significant step to reducing these burdens - a promise these communities have awaited since the passage of the 2006 Solid Waste Management Plan. The de Blasio Administration has set an ambitious and overdue marker of Zero Waste for our town – and

this initiative shows that the Mayor and his team are committed to walking the walk," said **Eddie Bautista, Executive Director of the NYC Environmental Justice Alliance.**

“This proposal jumpstarts what could be the most significant program in city history to dispose of New York’s food scraps more sustainably. It sensibly proposes to phase in implementation of the composting requirements as additional regional capacity to handle these organics comes on line. Successful implementation of this program could bring New York City much closer to achieving the de Blasio administration’s worthy goal of slashing the amount of waste sent to methane-generating landfills,” said **Eric A. Goldstein, NYC Environment Director at the Natural Resources Defense Council.**

“SWANA applauds New York City's commitment to increased diversion through organics management and DSNY's recognition that the success of the program requires the participation of carters and the availability of facilities to receive and process the recovered materials. SWANA believes communities must develop strategies to manage organic materials from business and industry in order to increase overall waste diversion,” said **David Biderman, Executive Director and CEO of Solid Waste Association of North America.**

“The InterContinental New York Barclay Hotel is committed to being a leader in sustainable hospitality, and we welcome the City's proposal to require large hotels to separate organic waste. We were the first hotel in New York to install an on-site digester, and we donate whatever food we cannot use to City Harvest. Our approach is about offering the best experience to our guests while taking care of the environment and the communities surrounding us, and we applaud efforts to improve the sustainability of our partners in the hospitality industry,” said **Herve Houdre, General Manager of the InterContinental New York Barclay Hotel.**

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