



Case Study: City of Ventura Composting Scheme

Location: City of Ventura, California

Website: <https://www.cityofventura.ca.gov/2195/Ventura-Compost-Co-Op>

Organisation Background: This is a state project, in collaboration with a community based composting group.

Current status of composting project: The project kicked off in January 2022 and has yet to be marketed by the local authority, however 10 householders have currently registered their interest in taking part in the scheme once it is fully up and running, which should then grow with the addition of more householders.

Relevance to the Highlands: This is a low-cost scheme that is being driven by the local authority and supported by a community group. It will be open to a maximum of circa 80 householders and therefore of a scale that may be achievable within the Highlands.

Type of composting solution: This project uses open windrows within a community garden for its composting (which would not be permitted in Scotland, where food waste needs to be contained). Participating householders (members) are able to drop-off their vegetable peelings and garden waste into the locked drop-off containers. The collected materials will be added to the onsite composting piles by the site manager on a weekly basis.

Scale: Approximately 75- 80 households.

Input material: Garden waste and veg/fruit peelings

End use: Members are required to attend one volunteer event per year to maintain the compost piles and the site. In return, members can utilise some of the finished compost to take home.

Partners/ collaborators: The Ventura Compost Co-op at Cornucopia Community Gardens is a collaboration between the City of Ventura, Ojai Center for Regenerative Agriculture, and L.A. Compost.

Price and funding: This is a state project, however it has received a small amount of funding to kick-start the project (\$3,000 approximately funded through CalRecycle's Community Composting for Green Spaces Grant Program), however the City of Ventura has money available to continue to run the project and are committed to it in the long-term.

Rough overview of how the system works in practice (not the composting system, but how the community organises itself): This is a new project it is currently open to householders but the council believe that it will also be of interest to small organisations such as coffee shops, etc.

Householders place their green waste (garden and vegetable peelings) into 60 gallon lockable bins which are on carts, these are transferred to the windrows weekly by the site manager. Once operational, the project team will collate data on the number of staff hours required to run the project in order to determine long-term cost implications. This will help the authority to establish how much funding/ staff time will be required to take the project forward in the future.

Other projects within the state have used e-bikes to pick up waste from central locations such as farmers markets or householders which has been popular and a collection scheme may be considered in the future.

Main motivator: Utilising an empty space on a community garden and want to see the area re-energised. Also committed to it for environmental reasons.

Number of years the scheme has been running for: This is a new scheme coming off the back of older, less successful schemes which were run entirely on a voluntary basis, it is recognised that it is more likely to be successful with the support of the council. The council will be monitoring it over the course of the year.