

# Make Your Own Compost

## Seminar for Landscapers and Small-scale Farmers

Learn what it takes to make compost from locally sourced waste products

Wednesday June 8<sup>th</sup> 9:00 am to 2:30 pm  
SRJC Shone Farm Pavilion  
7450 Steve Olson Lane, Forestville, CA 95436

\$25 advanced registration by June 6th  
\$40 after June 6<sup>th</sup> or at-the-door - **Includes lunch**

**With Sonoma Compost closed, there is an opportunity for small-scale compost facilities to fill the local demand for high quality compost**



8:00 to 8:45: Registration and coffee + snacks

9:00 to 9:05: Welcome - Introduction - Feasibility of making compost in Sonoma County.

*Paul Vossen, University of California Cooperative Extension Farm Advisor for Sonoma and Marin Counties*

9:10 to 10:15: The Benefits of Compost and Following the Regulations for Making Compost On-site.

*David Crohn, University of California Compost Specialist, Riverside, California*

10:15 BREAK

10:30 to 11:30: The Specific Ins-And-Outs of Making Compost on a Medium Scale. *Will Bakx, Sonoma Compost*

11:30 to Noon: CAFF and NRCS Programs for Helping Small-scale Farmers & Landscapers. *Paul Kaiser, CAFF State Board of Directors, and Drew Loganbill, USDA/NRCS Soil Conservationist.*

Noon-12:30 Lunch

12:30 to 1:30: Experiences in making compost: Panel of Farmers: *Paul Kaiser, Singing Frogs Farm, Michael Scott, Live Oak Farm, Paul Bernier,*

1:30 to 2:30: Field Demonstration at Shone Farm: Sourcing Materials, Chipping, Turning, Balancing Nutrients, Moisture Control, and Screening Compost. *Will Bakx, Sonoma Compost, Leonard Diggs, SRJC – Shone Farm Manager, and Josh Beniston, SRJC Sustainable Ag Instructor.*



## Speakers



**Leonard Diggs:** Leonard has been the farm manager for the Santa Rosa Junior College, Shone Farm for 17 years. Beyond managing the entire farm, Leonard oversees the production and marketing of many different specialty crops on the Sustainable Agriculture fields. Leonard came to Sonoma County in 1991 and worked at the Farmery for 6 years managing 45 acres of berries, cut flowers, salad mix greens, heirloom tomatoes, peppers, and herbs. He has also farmed organically in Sonoma and Lake Counties. As an SRJC instructor he has taught: Specialty Crops, Organic Crops Planning, Warm Season and Cool Season Vegetables, and Tractor driving.

**Paul Vossen:** Paul has experience working with local specialty crops farmers as the University of California Cooperative Extension Farm Advisor for Sonoma and Marin Counties for 35 years. He farmed 3 acres of mixed specialty vegetables, cut flowers, and berries in Windsor for 10 years. He has written UC publications on growing Apples and Olives organically.



**David Crohn:** David is the UC, Statewide Extension Resource Conservation Specialist located in Riverside California. He works on environmental optimization; compost production and use; erosion control; and soil nitrogen management.

**Paul Kaiser:** Paul and his wife Elizabeth have a unique, intensive vegetable farm that relies on heavy applications of compost for no-till soil management. Their methods have quadrupled the OM content of their Sebastopol soils, while significantly increasing production. This ecological farm uses no sprays, has few weed problems, and is a model for small-scale local agriculture. Paul makes compost on-site and has many years of experience making compost.





**Paul Bernier:** Started farming in Dry Creek in early 70's. He got into sharecropping in 1976. The only land available was worn out, which led to composting to increase fertility. Forty years later, he is still at it, and the land and plants thrive. He makes a couple of thousand yards of compost every year from various feedstock with good success. It goes onto six acres of row crops and 35 acres of dry farmed vineyards. He also invented a unique compost turner.

**Will Bakx:** In 1985, Will launched Bennett Valley Farm Compost, processing various agricultural and fish industry discards. In 1993 he started the Sonoma county-wide yard debris composting program as Sonoma Compost Company (SCC). He is the adjunct compost instructor at the Santa Rosa Junior College (SRJC) and serves as chair of the SRJC Sustainable Agriculture Advisory Committee. He also serves on the US Compost Council Compost Training committee and is a co-instructor for its Compost Training week. Will earned an MS in Soil Science from U.C. Berkeley. He is the co-founder and chair of the California Organic Recycling Council (CORC) and the executive board member of the California Compost Coalition (CCC).



**Andrew Loganbill:** NRCS provides America's farmers and ranchers with financial and technical assistance to voluntarily put conservation on the ground, not only helping the environment but agricultural operations too. I have been working for the NRCS in Petaluma for 4 ½ years as a Soil Conservationist doing conservation planning on a variety of land uses. I have a BS in Forestry and Natural Resources and MS in Forestry Sciences with concentration in watershed management and hydrology from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. I spent 3 years in the Peace Corps in the South Pacific primarily doing environmental education.

**Josh Beniston:** SRJC's Sustainable Agriculture instructor gives students a foundation in plant and soil science, integrated pest management, diverse crop production, and direct marketing strategies while focusing on the ecological underpinnings of agriculture. Courses emphasize the "how-to" aspects of organic farming and gardening, including tillage, compost production, crop planning and production. Specialty areas include: organic viticulture, specialty crops for the culinary market, organic apple and olive production, sustainable landscapes, and direct farm-marketing. Students also have the unique opportunity to gain experience setting up and managing a community-supported agriculture (CSA) system. Most Sustainable Agriculture courses are held at [Shone Farm](#).

**Michael Scott:** Farming 3-4 acres of vegetables & herbs on a 30 acre property, growing a wide variety of crops including, tomatoes, potatoes, eggplants, peppers, and greens, as well as tulsi, chamomile, and angelica. Located in the West side of Petaluma and are developing a sustainable community (agrihood) in a rural area, conveniently located just a couple of miles from downtown Petaluma.