

Composting Project at Central CSD

Student, designed and operated

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Project Timeline

- May 2014
 - Compost Feasibility Study
- March 2015
 - Student designed, built and run compost project begins on school grounds.
 - Aluminum cans from kitchen are recycled
 - School board approved switch from paper to plastic milk cartons so they can be recycled.
- December 2015
 - Students discover compost pile is not heating up as it should
 - Students begin investigating methods of improving compost



Project Timeline

- Spring 2016
 - Met with Jennifer Trent from IWRC
 - Tour Maharishi School of Management in Fairfield
 - move piles off school grounds
 - and away from the Turkey River.
 - Get DNR permit for new school compost site
- Fall 2017
 - Improve sorting method to decrease silverware and plastic in compost
 - Develop sifting mechanism to produce usable compost



Project Timeline

- Spring 2017
 - Serving changes to reduce waste
 - Reduce plastic used in cafeteria by eliminating condiment packets
 - Investigated eliminating milk cartons
 - Purchased worms to speed compost project.
- Fall 2017 (goals)
 - Improve pad to reduce weeds
 - Increase temperature of compost



Our Current System

Students in grades K-12 separate their own trays at lunch. Sorting trash, meat and dairy, milk cartons and compost.



Members of the Compost Team empties the compost into a manure spreader and add locally donated carbon source.



When
spreader is
full it is
dumped by
the City of
Elkader at
the student
designed
Compost
Facility.



In the fall the
compost is
sifted and
used in
school and
community
gardens.
Extra is given
to those who
request it.



Our Successes

- Reduced cafeteria waste from approximately 218 pounds daily to less than 10 pounds on most days.



Our Successes

- Students are more aware of the importance of composting and not wasting food.



Our Successes

- Iowa Governor's Environmental Excellence Award in 2016



Our Successes

- 21 students volunteered for Compost Team for 2017-18 school year.
- Students are still actively researching and improving compost pile.
- Students have moved on and applied their knowledge to projects beyond high school
- Students are still investigating ways to reduce the food that is composted through menu and serving changes

