




Compost Initiative Eastham

Presented by Climate Action and Recycling
Committees



Opinion and feedback surveys of town residents

2 surveys were distributed by various methods.

11 question digital survey by Survey Monkey rolled out in May 2022. As of Sept. 10 received 178 responses.

Saturday of Windmill Weekend, a 5 question paper survey was handed out and there were 80 respondents.

Total of 258 respondents, equals approximately 2.2% of residents

Gives us a 90% confidence level for sample size



Demographics;

93% of digital responses owned a home,

6% owned rental property

70% lived here 10+ months a year on the paper surveys

77% were over 55 years old, population 65-74 was the highest, 35%. 12% were 35-44.

No responses from restaurant owners

What percentage of greenhouse gas emissions come from food waste in trash?

65% of respondents answered “I don’t know”

19% got it correct- 21-30%

Does Eastham pay for trash disposal by weight?

Only 10% answered NO.





What do you currently do with food waste

Throw it in the trash- digital survey 37%, paper 55%

Compost at home- digital survey 55%, paper 44%

Comments:

9 out of 14 do both compost and throw some in trash

Compost via Black Earth

Permaculture, or LOMI machine



What concerns do you have about composting?

51% of digital surveys respondents have no concerns

29% of paper surveys showed no concerns

Largest percentage of concern about composting was Rats/rodents/pests at 37% and 40%, respectively.

Odors was 19%

Comments; bringing noxious seeds and weeds into garden, no space, worry I am not doing it right, would like to do it but don't know about programs, Apartment complex does not have food composting



What would be helpful to know to participate

How the composting program would work-83% digital, 67% paper

How much it costs-58% and 44%

Benefits-28% and 34%

Out of 258 responses ONLY 8 responded not interested

Comments; Resident education, what goes in what doesn't, we're ready hope this starts soon, assistance with cost, no concerns, let's do it, would like to understand entire process, concerned about contaminants entering compost stream, I would LOVE a place to take my compost, will we get material back for our gardens?

Which would you most likely partake in?

At home-68% digital, 43% paper

Drop off at TS- 60% and 49%

Pick up with trash service- 19% and 12.5%

Town provided pick up-10% paper

Composting education - 35% digital

Would not participate- 2%

**Comments;
From digital
survey, open
ended section,
71 total
comments.**

-we really miss composting when we are here, we notice a significant increase in the weight of our trash and miss eco friendly practices

-we'd like a facility that can deal with compostable packaging

-provide pest proof containers and education

-glad the town is looking into this, thank you for doing this

-keep organic matter on the ground!

-Project Drawdown has listed food waste elimination as the 3rd most effective way to mitigate climate change.

Eastham should look at building a regional composting facility to handle food waste and compostable green ware

Comments cont'd;

Encouraging and educating composting at home

-it would be great to learn how to do it

-it's about time we do this

-I was a Brewster resident for 20 years and really benefited from the compost program

-Everyone should compost

-More education on how to. ...other options available, other than a non-recyclable plastic container....education is key

-had one in Salem MA, food waste pick up at the door...it was fantastic

I am concerned that any composting plan involving collection would use more energy and create more greenhouse gases.

Analysis

A total of 258 respondents equaling approximately 2% of population, resulting in a statistically significant cohort.

Demographics shows more than 70% of population is above 55 years old which creates some unique barriers for some composting activities.

Respondents were enthusiastically in favor of a compost program at the transfer station as a drop off with trash and recyclables.

Education is key. Residents state they need standards on best practices and practical know how.

It is evident that most residents do not know about food waste contribution to greenhouse gas emissions.

Greatest concern is the attraction of pests and rodents to compost piles or bins.

Conclusion

Eastham residents are ready for a town compost program. Many already compost at home but would like the option of a town compost at the Transfer station. Drop off food scraps and receive soil in the spring.

Education is key. Debunk the myths of pests over running compost bins, piles and heaps by instructing proper use.

Climate change is on everyone's mind, while composting will not eliminate it, this is one of many ways to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions. Our citizens want to do something about it.

Eastham is vulnerable to coastal erosion, and more biomass on the ground could help mitigate land loss.

Let's do it, it's easy we have space at the transfer station!