

# A Virtuous Cycle: Spotlight on Feeding Westchester

**Who:** Feeding Westchester, a food bank in Elmsford, NY  
**Request:** Recycling options for inedible produce  
**Solution:** A connection to CompostED, Valhalla, NY  
**Result:** 9 tons food scraps diverted from landfills annually

Feeding Westchester in Elmsford, NY has deeply rooted relationships with its 300 partners throughout the Westchester community with their mobile food pantry, nutrition education, and senior grocery program. The Center for EcoTechnology (CET) connected with Feeding Westchester as part of CET's Sustainable Partners initiative to find landfill alternatives for occasional spoiled or damaged foods.

Feeding Westchester had a previous program with a nearby farm that would pick up the food scraps and repurpose them for animal feed. Unfortunately, the farm closed, new staff came on board, and the program stopped. Part of CET's work entails matchmaking, so one of CET's Waste Reduction Consultants, Emma Sabella, began researching local food scrap haulers and recyclers in the region and provided several options including CompostED, a new facility located on the Grassland Campus in Valhalla and is the County's first small-scale food scrap composting demonstration and education site.

CompostED's purpose has been to serve as a demonstration site for municipalities and officials, showcasing cost-effective composting techniques. It's part of a multi-year, multi-pronged approach the Westchester County Department of Environmental Facilities has implemented to take food scraps out of the waste stream, and put them to a higher, better use.

Notably, CompostED donates all finished compost to projects that grow food for the food insecure, including DIG Farm, Our New Way Gardens, and Hilltop Hanover Farm. Since CET connected CompostED to Feeding Westchester, a mutually beneficial partnership has bloomed, one where neighbors are nourished, access to healthy local food is bolstered, and nutrients are returned to the soil from where it came. This partnership is expected to divert approximately 9 tons of food scraps annually.



**How might CET assist with matching your food bank or emergency food relief organization with similarly synergistic partners?**