A regional compost facility owned and operated by Republic Services

About Pacific Region Compost (PRC)

- Just across the street from the landfill
- Operates on about 27 acres
- Mulching yard debris since the 90s
- Started food waste composting in 2010
  - 1st facility in Oregon to become permitted to accept type III materials (food-proteins and dairy)
- PRC processes more than 100,000 tons of residential yard debris, residential organics and commercial food waste into compost each year.
- Material comes mainly from Linn, Benton and Marion Counties; coast

Residential

Key Components:
Moisture * Air * Heat

- Hand sorting on the front end
- Grinder for anything bigger than 8”
- Compost in laid in windrows (see bottom right)
- Aeration by turning the piles, checking temp and moisture
- Screening process at the end
- Commercial and residential materials are initially composted separately. After about 3 weeks, comm is mixed with resi

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Commercial

Key Components:
Moisture * Air * Heat

Aerated Static Pile (ASP)

- The main difference here is that we are not physically moving the piles to aerate
- Also we collect liquid that comes off these piles since they contain so much food material
- After about 3 weeks, these piles are mixed in with yd. debris-heavy windrows

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Quick Composting Facts

- 130-150 degrees F (pathogens, weed seeds)
- Moisture added as needed (aka never)
- 3rd party soil control lab for testing
  - Nutrients, metals, pathogens, Germination
- ~ 90 day process
- The whole process is very weather-dependent
- OMRI certified

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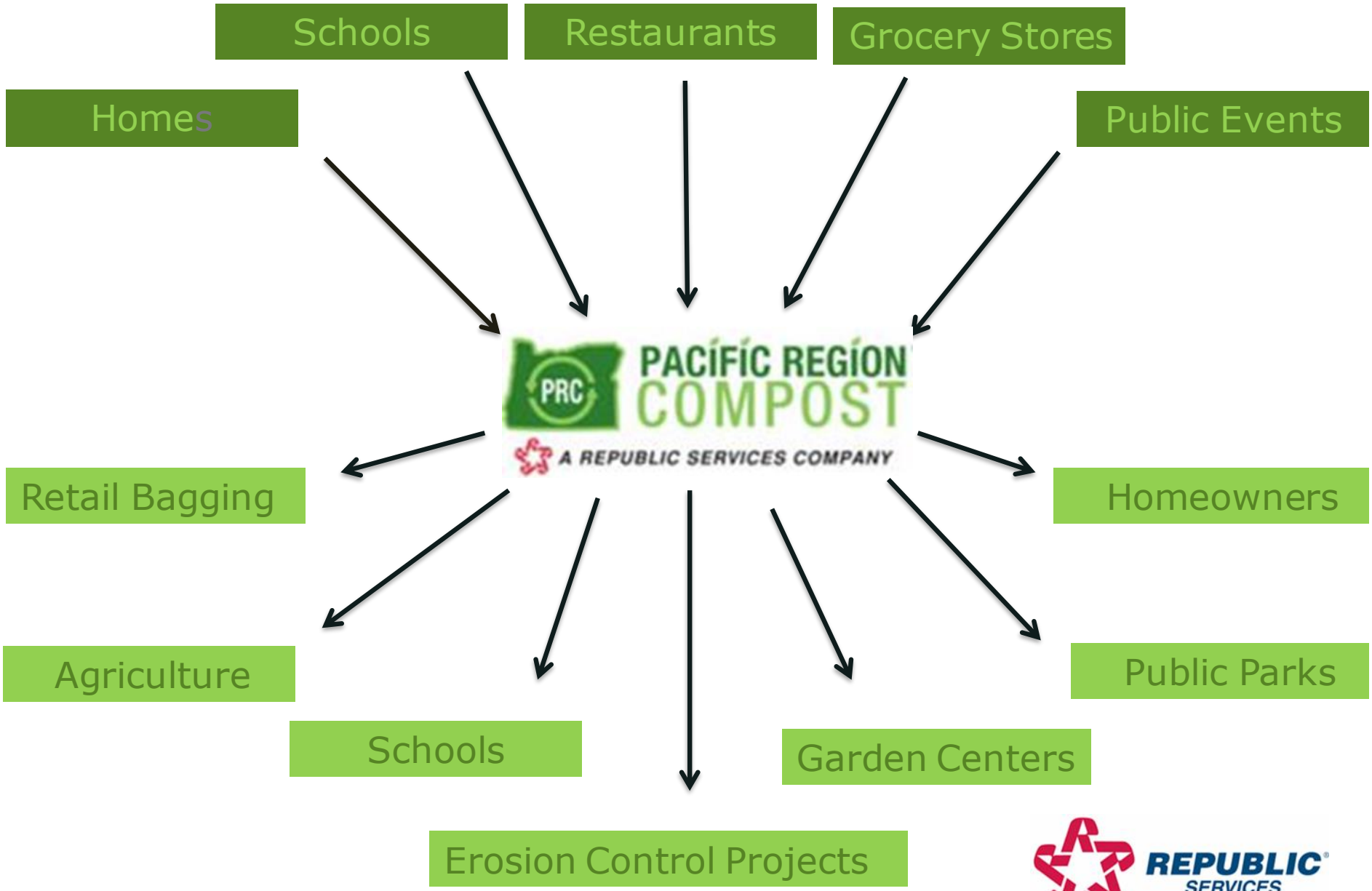

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What Goes in the Cart?*

- Yard debris

- Food waste
- Food soiled paper (napkins, coffee filters, pizza boxes)

**the answer to this question depends on where you live*

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What *Doesn't* Go in the Cart?

- Trash
- Plastic
- Unacceptable wood products
- Dead animals
- Animal waste
- Restroom materials

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“Compostable” Products

- Do not always break down (in the same time frame
- Microplastics are introduced to the compost
- Many contain harmful chemicals used for protection against temperature and moisture.
- Cannot easily be discerned from non-compostable products
- From a sustainability standpoint, most of these products actually carry a high environmental cost.

REXIUS COMPOST & ORGANICS
Dirt Hugger
Recology ORGANICS OREGON
REPUBLIC SERVICES Pacific Region Compost
LANE FOREST PRODUCTS The company to grow with
DR RECYCLING Compost Facility
Pendleton Sanitary Services, Inc.
ROGUE COMPOST EST. 2002
WASTE PRO

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“Compostable” Plastics at PRC

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Bioplastics

An Idea Not Even a Compost Heap Can Love

By Shirley Perez West

As VP for Environmental Services at Rexius, part of Jack Hoeck's job includes turning food waste into a contaminant-free, marketable soil product. For a city that throws away up to 30,000 tons of food each year, it's also a valuable public service. And converting mountains of leftover table scraps into rich garden compost, it turns out, is no picnic.

Nearly five years into their program, partners in Love Food Not Waste (LFNW) have reaped a few insights about collecting and composting food waste. First, it's critical that what's being collected doesn't contain items that aren't compostable. Second, not all supposedly compostable bioplastics are created equal. Third, and perhaps most importantly, compostable plastics of any kind don't add value to the end product.

"We thought it was a good thing," says Hoeck of Rexius' initial reaction to so-called compostable serviceware – cups, plates, containers and utensils made of plant-based plastics. "We promoted

Bioplastic manufacturers sold their product on the promise that it could take the place of plastic in food service settings and be processed at commercial composters or biomethane plants. The biodegradable materials would supposedly break down along with the organic matter and produce energy or rich garden compost. Even bags lining food waste bins could be biodegradable. Brilliant!

Early on, home composters learned that bioplastic containers – supposedly an earth-friendly solution to the need for disposable takeout containers – remain mostly intact in even the healthiest compost pile. Wisth and other LFNW

Want to support businesses doing the right thing when it comes to food waste? Find a full list of LFNW participants at: www.eugene-or.gov/759/Commercial-Food-Waste-Collection

Rexius' Jack Hoeck inspects a maturing compost pile at its Coburg Road facility. It's challenging to tell which plastic scraps are contaminants, and which are plant-based bioplastics. Bioplastics break down slowly and add no nutrients to the finished product.

of commercial food waste to Rexius' Highway 99 site. Each load first lands on a bed of wood chips, called a food pad, which absorbs liquid oozing from decomposing fruits and vegetables. Next, Rexius Retail Yard Supervisor Kevin Roemer and his team move the pile around with a tractor to look for contaminants. A staff member fills out a monitor form for each load, noting the number and description of picks – non-compostable items that must be removed.

"The big thing is waxed or plastic-coated cardboard," says Roemer of common food waste contaminants including milk cartons, to-go containers, and coffee cups.

Other contaminants range from pop cans and water bottles to foil and silverware. If a load contains more than 20 picks, the hauler receives a $25 fine. The amount grows with the number of contaminants, topping out at $200. A load containing more than 200 gallons or 150 picks must be rejected and sent to the landfill, costing the hauler an additional $75 load fee.

In the early days of LFNW, says Roemer, haulers and their commercial clients were on a learning curve and, consequently, loads contained more unwanted items. Now most loads have

Continued on Page 3

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Closing the Loop!

This service enables many of our customers to close the loop with organics material, going from kitchen to garden, and back again.

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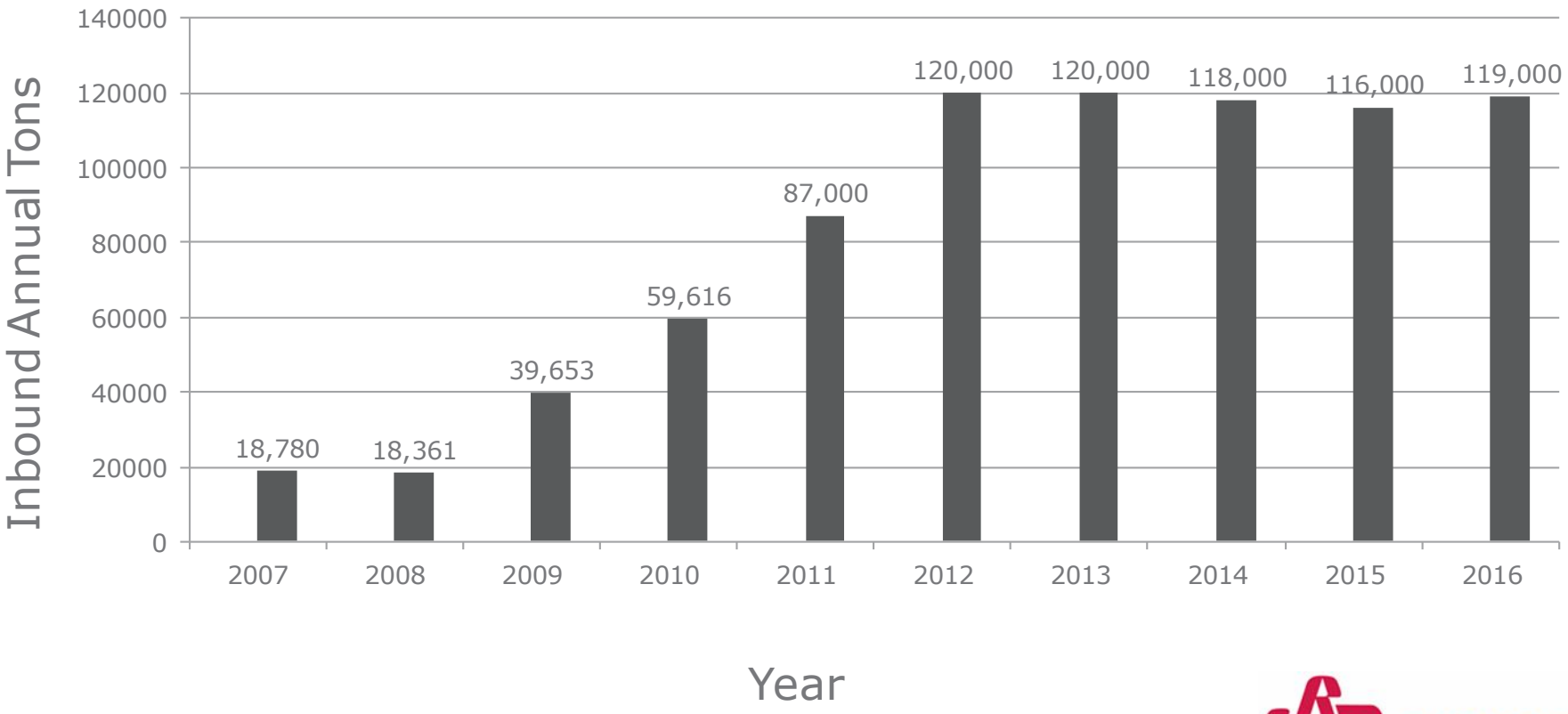
Growth at PRC



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