



Citywide Composting Program

Listening Tour 11/16/23 -2/6/24

Recording: <https://youtu.be/jFnfrF2QVj0>

Survey: Open November through the beginning of February

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Expert, Institutional, and Stakeholder Interviews

Summary

Prior to the first meeting and continuing throughout the listening tour, interviews were conducted with local experts, representatives of major institutions, division heads of other City and State programs, and other composting stakeholders. These interviews were to gather initial information on implementation constraints and to refine the plan as public feedback was collected. An initial meeting with Mayor Keller was also conducted.

Interview List

- Compost and Food Waste Collection Expert: 8
- City and County Employees and Representatives: 12
- Local Business: 15
- Local Major Institutions: 4
- Community, Food, and Environmental Nonprofits: 6
- Local Subject Matter Experts: 5

Listening Session Attendees (171 total, 111 in-person, 70 virtual)

Facilitator

Matthew Fien Gretton from the City’s Sustainability Office





Agenda

- Opening and introduction
 - Matthew introduced himself and provided a brief topic overview, including FUSE Corps background and project timeline.
- Design constraints and past public comment
 - Matthew identified experts and stakeholders who were consulted on program design, what those design constraints were identified to be, and how past public comment had shaped current design ideas.
- Current program design
 - Matthew explained the current plan for program implementation.
- Feedback and Q&A
 - Matt shared the survey link and YouTube video link, asked participants to fill out the survey after the meeting and share both links with anyone that they deemed would be interested. Then, he opened the floor to questions.
- Closing
 - Matt wrapped up the meeting, shared the survey link, and thanked attendees.

Listening Session Meeting List

Date	Time	Location	# Participants
11/16	9:00 AM	South Valley Economic Development Center	8
12/3	11:00 AM	First Unitarian Church (Drop-in)	15
12/5	5:00 PM	International District Library	6
12/8	10:00 AM	University of New Mexico	22
12/10	2:00 PM	Albuquerque Friends Meeting (Drop-in)	6
12/14	9:00 AM	South Valley Economic Development Center	11
12/18	6:00 PM	Westside Community Center	0
12/19	12:00 PM	Virtual Session (via Zoom)	0
12/19	5:00 PM	International District Library	0
1/3	5:00 PM	Cherry Hills Library	9
1/4	4:00 PM	Central and Unser Library	2
1/9	4:30 PM	Erna Fergusson Library	5
1/10	5:30 PM	Tony Hillerman Library	3





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1/18	10:00 AM	Main Public Library	2
1/18	5:00 PM	South Valley Library	2
1/23	5:00 PM	Lomas Tramway Public Library	5
1/25	5:00 PM	Rudolfo Anaya North Valley Library	2
1/29	3:00 PM	Open Space Visitors Center	4
1/31	17:00	Matt's Mushroom Farm	8
2/6	5:00 PM	International District Library	2
2/7	5:00 PM	Central and Unser Library	3
2/6	10:30	Castle Coffee	8
2/9	2:00 PM	Tamaya Hilton	7
2/11	12:15	First Unitarian Church	9





Comments

Verbal Comments

- Find community groups and tailor message based on the audience. You will need more than just goodwill and a bag of compost as incentive.
- I'm thrilled the city is considering a composting program! It's time Albuquerque joins the movement to reduce waste and improve our environment.
- It's good for the environment, our soil, and household budgets with food cost.
- As a lifelong Albuquerque resident, I'm excited about a program that makes our city more sustainable and helps us all be better stewards of the land.
- I'm interested in composting, but worried about space limitations in my apartment. Will there be smaller bin options available?
- How will the city educate residents about what can and cannot be composted? Clear guidelines are crucial.
- Composting can attract pests. I'm concerned about odor and proper collection methods to mitigate these issues.
- I'm a senior citizen and unsure I can manage composting physically. Will there be assistance programs for individuals like myself?
- What are the costs associated with the program? Will there be financial incentives for participation?
- How will the compost be used? I'd like to see it benefit community gardens and local agriculture.
- I'm concerned about equity and accessibility. Will the program be available in all neighborhoods, especially low-income areas?
- Offer workshops and educational resources in both English and Spanish.
- Partnering with community centers and schools to distribute bins and promote participation.
- Consider offering curbside compost collection alongside trash and recycling pickup for maximum convenience.
- Explore partnering with local businesses to accept food scraps for composting, reducing waste at its source.
- Implement a reward system for consistent participation, like discounts on city services or local businesses.
- Create a community composting hub where residents can drop off materials and learn more about the process.
- Invest in educational campaigns that highlight the environmental and economic benefits of composting.
- Develop a user-friendly app to track participation, provide composting tips, and report any issues.
- Pilot the program in select neighborhoods before citywide implementation to gather feedback and refine the system.
- Offer subsidies or discounts on composting bins to make them more affordable for everyone.
- It's important to consider cultural aspects and adapt the program to different communities' needs.
- Transparency. Communicate clearly about program costs, benefits, and timelines.





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- Ensure the program is sustainable in the long run, both financially and environmentally.
- Prioritize education and outreach to ensure widespread understanding and compliance.
- Partner with existing composting initiatives already operating in Albuquerque to leverage their expertise.
- Regularly evaluate and adapt the program based on community feedback and data collected.
- Celebrate successes and highlight the positive impact of the program to encourage continued participation.
- Composting is just one piece of the puzzle. Promote other sustainability initiatives alongside it.

Comments From Online Survey

- How would this compost be tested? If I have an organic garden, how will I know it's safe to use?
- I think cost is the major thing with buy-in. I am lucky enough to be able to afford Little Green Bucket. But I would not give money to this if I had less income. So the lower the cost, the better. I started by bringing scraps to farmers' market for free. Great way to see it's easy to do at home and not smelly.
- It seems like it would be useful to study how San Francisco and other cities have successfully implemented composting programs. I don't know what the costs should be, but there are models to look at. I would love to see ABQ do curbside pick up. Composting is the right thing to do for the environment. I think the city should collect it as part of the waste collection program (if not for all households then at least for restaurants and food service businesses) and then compost could be made available for free to households and others who want to pick some up.
- I already compost vegetable matter and paper. I'd like to see educational material encouraging home composting to be developed.
- I currently compost at home, but more industrial composting would be nice for items that aren't suitable for at-home composting (bones, meat, compostable food containers, textiles). I am so hopeful for this program, it can benefit our community in SO many ways!
- I already compost at home, with both a big outdoor composter and a small electric one in the house. The latter is truly amazing and so much easier to use that anything involving shoveling or lugging heavy quantities of composted material. You should find a way to make these affordable for people. Right now, they're only for those of us with \$\$\$.
- It would be WONDERFUL if composting were associated with community gardens all over the city, to allow people to grow gardens with the compost. I had a garden at the Rio Grande Community Gardens in the past, but it was too far for me to travel, and the flood irrigation in furrows did not work for seeds or seedlings.
- Absolutely essential to involve Albuquerque Public Schools.
- Trainings in home composting, esp. for Multi-Family senior and public housing.
- Bad news to me that this is handed off to NMDA and Farm and Livestock Bureau. I am hard pressed to think of stronger anti-environmentalist agencies in our state. Work with NMED, they will have better understanding.





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- It would be wonderful if the city could sponsor workshops on how to make inexpensive and durable shade structures for gardens. Thank you for asking!
- Free or people will not participate or will not be able to participate.
- I indicated that I believe curbside composting should be free. However, I understand if that is not possible. It would be reasonable to have a sliding scale of cost depending on the type of service (e.g., a curbside tote similar in size to current recycling/trash bins could be up to \$30/mo, but a 5-gallon bucket should be much less.
- I would really like a year around yard waste drop off/collection
- Offer smaller size trash bins & quit collecting those that are overflowing

Written Comments Submitted Before or After the Meeting

Prior to the Meeting: None.

After the Meeting: None.

Survey Results

Seventy responses were collected using the English form. In this section, you will find a summary of the outreach, survey results by program, demographics, and survey feedback on the engagement program.

Outreach Overview

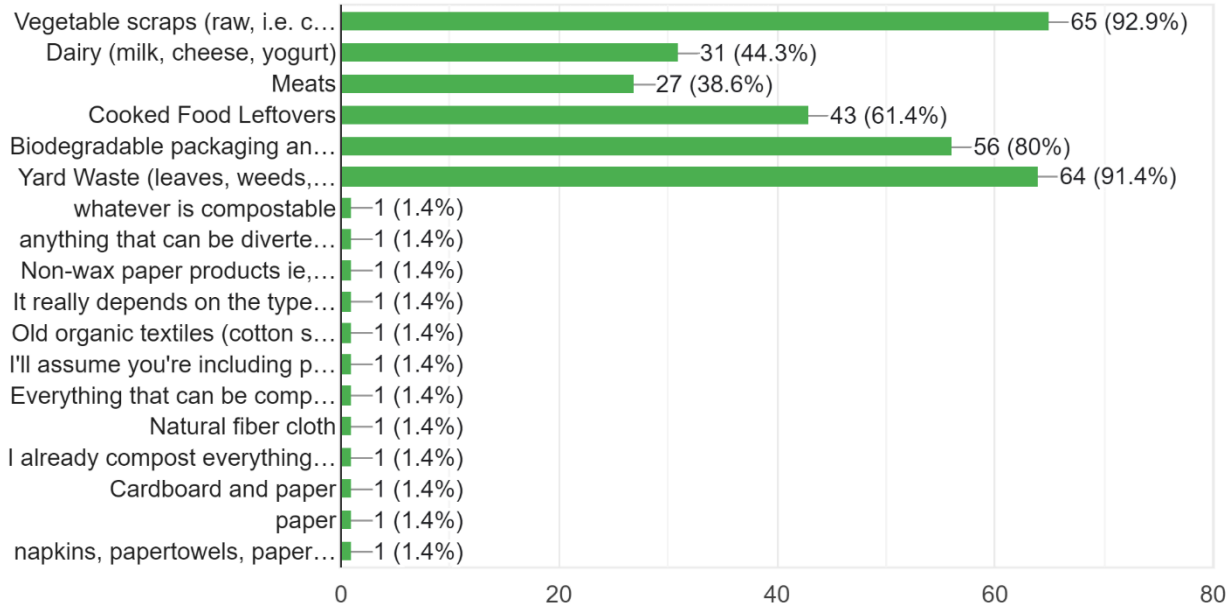
The survey was shared with listening session attendees, linked from the Sustainability Office Waste web page, and spoken about during meetings.





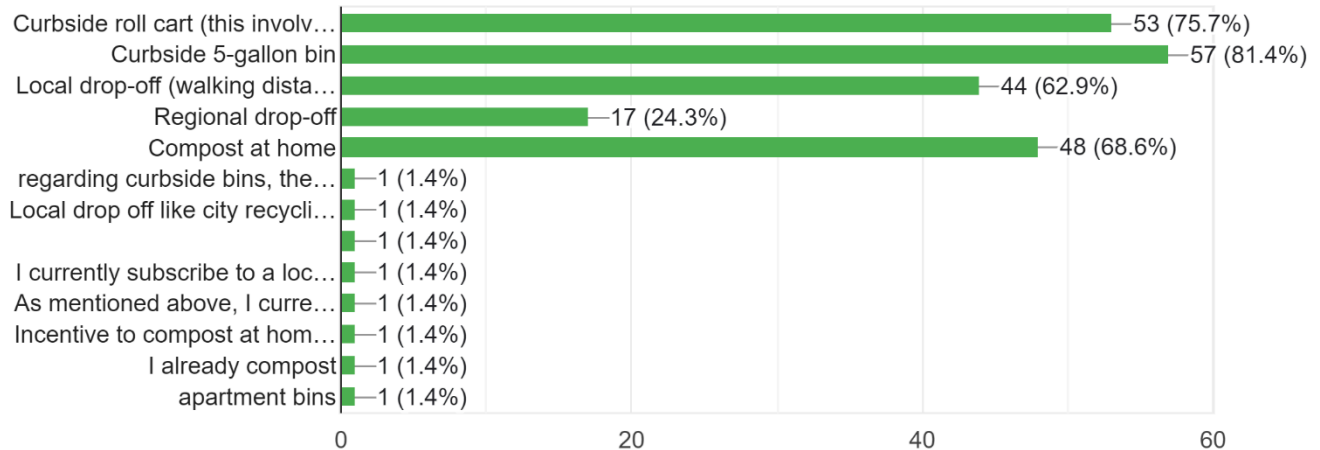
Many different types of home waste items can be composted. Which of the following types of items would you like to regularly divert from the landfill to be composted?

70 responses



Which of the following diversion options would you be willing to do? Please select all that apply

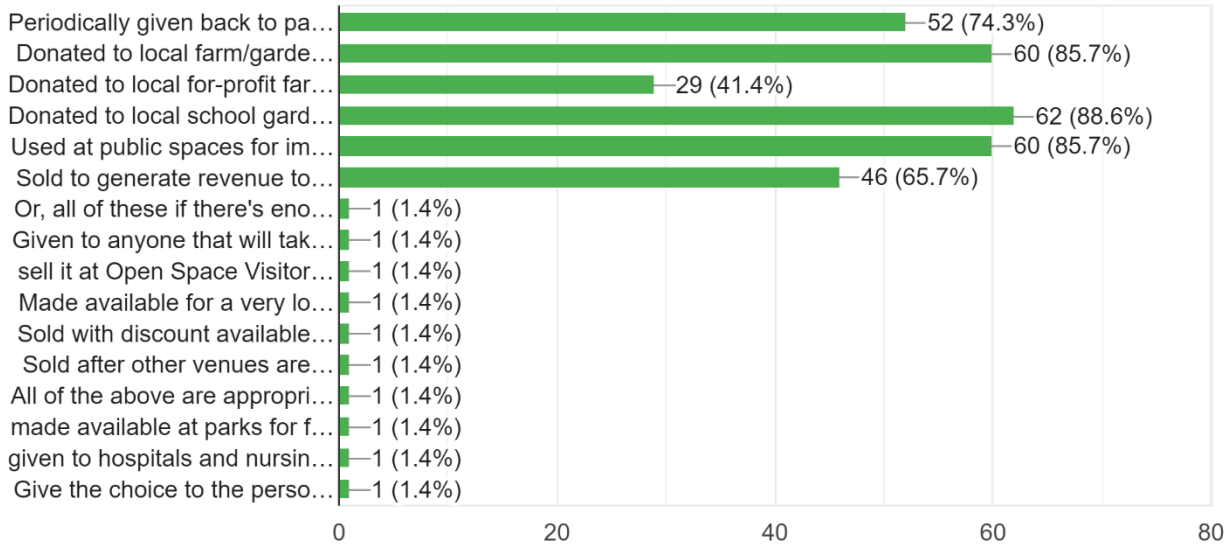
70 responses





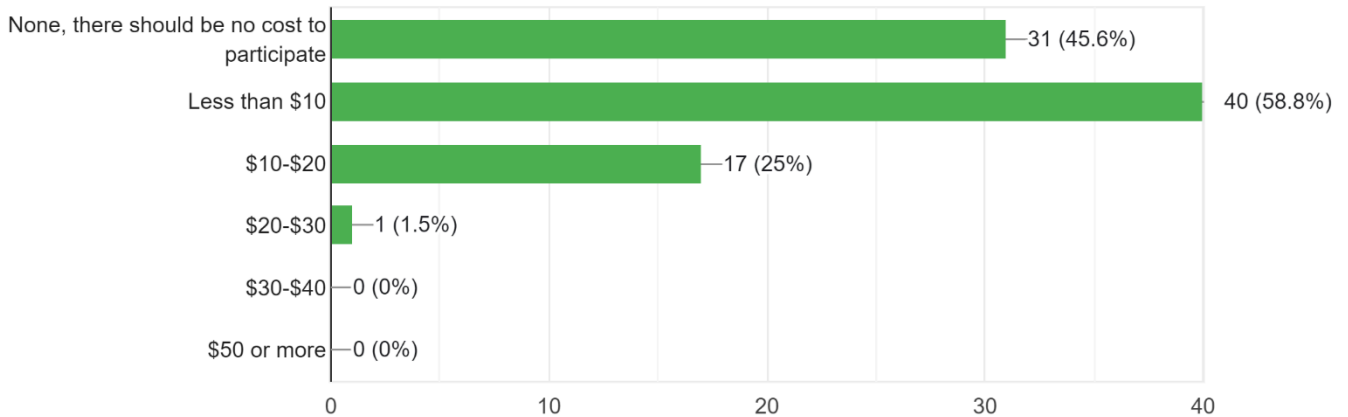
What should be done with the finished compost created by collecting food scraps?

70 responses



What do you feel would be an appropriate cost per month for a household to participate?

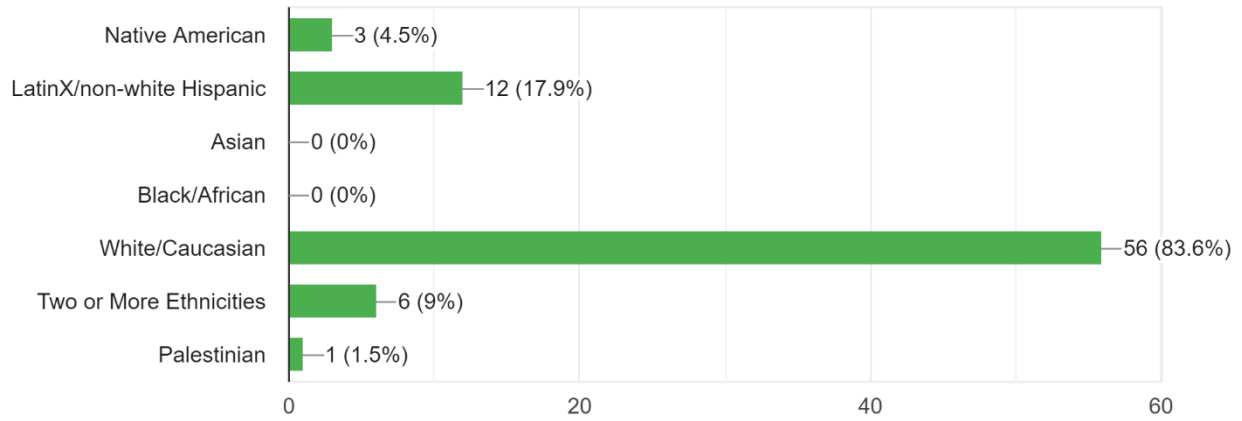
68 responses





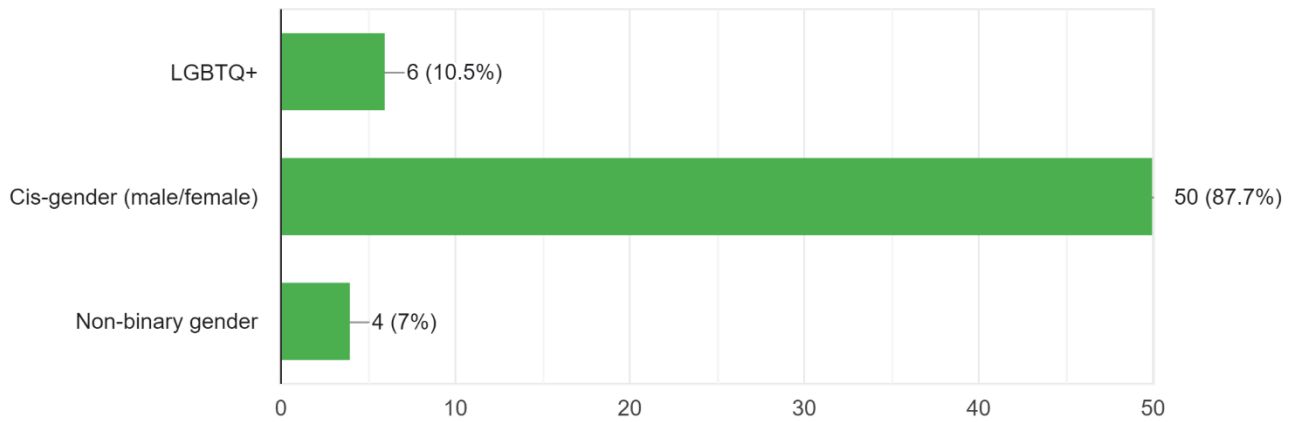
Please select all that apply to you:

67 responses



Please select all that match how you self-identify:

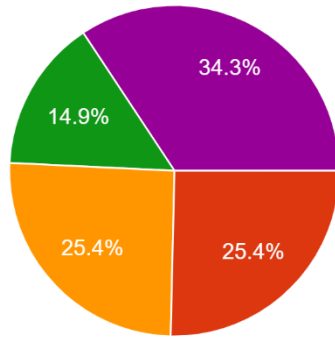
57 responses





Age

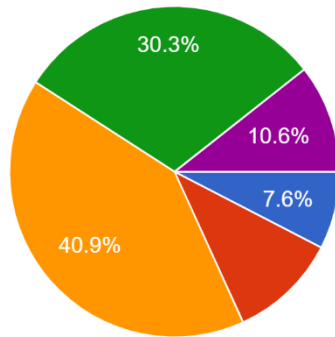
67 responses



- Less than 25 years
- 25 to 39 years
- 40 to 49
- 50 to 64
- 65 or more years

Household Income

66 responses



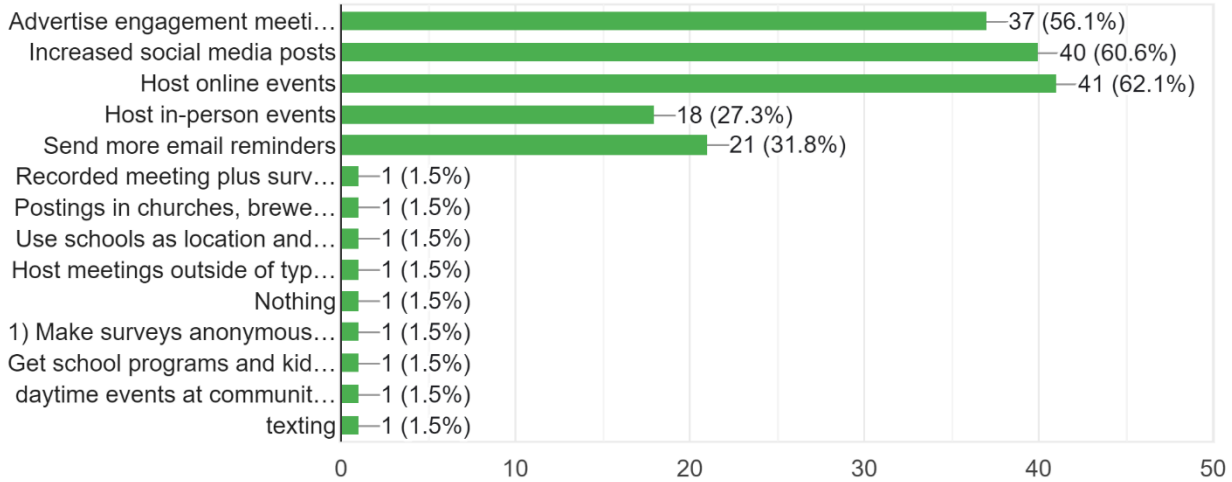
- Less than \$25,000
- \$25,000-\$49,999
- \$50,000-\$99,999
- \$100,000-\$149,999
- More than \$150,000





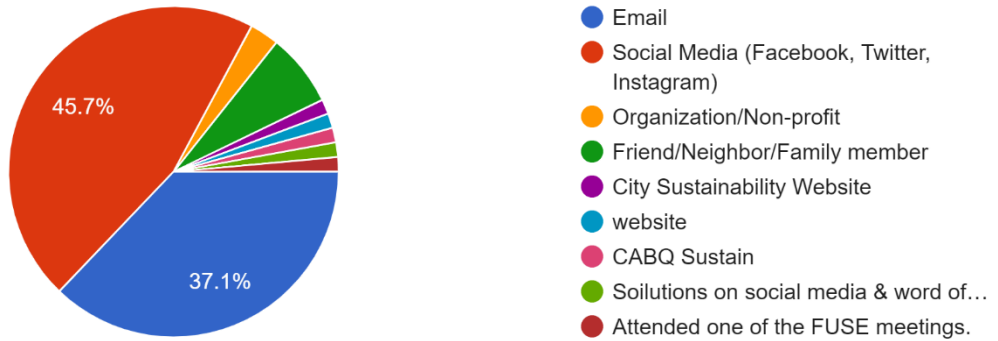
What would make it easier for you and others in Albuquerque to be more involved with listening sessions for the Citywide Composting program design?

66 responses



How did you hear about this feedback opportunity?

70 responses





Who else should be invited to future meetings? Please let us know in the comment box below or by emailing mfiengretton@cabq.gov.

13 responses

- I will send email.
- all school garden coordinators/teachers, landscape architects, city planners
- Neighborhood Associations, School gardening teachers,
- Rio grande community gardens and any other community gardening programs
- Albuquerque Public Schools - massive amounts of food thrown out
- garden club members
- environmental groups
- Ellefoley5@gmail.com
- Little Green Bucket. Also: the State Fair administration - we SHOULD have compost bins in the Ag area at least if not also in the food area.
- local farmers and supporting groups including those who harvest/redistribute food that may otherwise go to waste (e.g, Rio Grande Community Farm, Food Is Free ABQ); large restaurant groups if they could participate in the program too (e.g., why does Sawmill Market encourage vendors to use compostable packaging but only offer a trash option?),
- City Council members
- APS, RRPS
- I think the meetings should include those already involved in compost projects.

