

**Town of Bedford**

# Composting is next step in waste plan

By JESS FASANO

Bedford residents will now be able to partake in a simple solution for waste reduction — composting.

Bedford 2020, in partnership with the town, is now offering residents the opportunity to dispose of their organic food waste at the town's Recycling Center on Railroad Avenue. The new Community Compost program, which launched last week, aims to "further reduce Bedford's waste and carbon footprint," according to Bedford 2020.

The organization states the new composting initiative provides residents with a convenient method to remove food organics from the waste stream, where they make up 15 to 25 percent of municipal solid waste that ends up in landfills or incinerators.

According to Bedford 2020 Executive Director Midge Iorio, the program officially launched Monday, June 26. Participants could start dropping off their compost materials at the Recycling Center on Saturday, July 1.

"We have gotten such great feedback from the community," Ms. Iorio said.

In order to participate in the program, residents must pay a one-time fee of \$25 to receive information about composting practices and a compost kit, which includes a small, 1.6-gallon bucket, and a large, 6-gallon bucket. Compostable bag liners will also be available to pick up at the Bedford 2020 office, along with the compost kit. The office is located in St. Luke's Parish House at 68 Bedford Road in Katonah, and will be open for pickups Monday through Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Once filled, the large bucket, which is sealable and animal resistant, can be emptied at the town's Recycling Center. The center is currently accepting compost drop-offs only on Saturdays between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. Ms. Iorio explained that as the program expands, the drop-offs will likely extend to additional days.

She noted that volunteers from Bedford 2020 would be at the Recycling Center during drop-offs for the next few weeks to assist composting participants.

According to Ms. Iorio, the program set up by Bedford 2020 allows residents to compost more than they could in their own backyards. She explained since the compost materials from the town's Recycling Center will ultimately be processed at a commercial recycling facility, the program accepts a large number of items including fruit, vegetables, chicken, fish, meat, bones and dairy products. Com-



MIDGE IORIO PHOTO

**A Bedford resident drops off compost materials at the town's Recycling Center on Saturday, the first day of the new town program.**

*'Clearly residents of Bedford want to compost, and this is a really great solution'*

— MIDGE IORIO, BEDFORD 2020 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

postable paper products, such as soiled paper napkins, paper towels and plates, and used tea bags, also are accepted.

Ms. Iorio said she is pleased at how "enthusiastic and interested" residents are in the program. As of Monday, approximately 60 people had already indicated interest on the Bedford 2020 website. Forty signed up for the program prior to its launch.

"Clearly residents of Bedford want to compost, and this is a really great solution," Ms. Iorio said.

Town Supervisor Chris Burdick called the new Community Compost program "terrific," adding that it was unanimously supported by town board members.

"We're always looking for additional programs that make sense to the town, and this one certainly does," he said.

The supervisor noted the composting program is only the latest initiative the town has partnered with Bedford 2020 in

an effort to reduce waste. Several years ago, the town implemented single-stream recycling, allowing for a higher percentage of materials to be recycled.

To find out more about what materials can be recycled and where, visit Bedford 2020's online resource, called "Recyclopedia," at [Bedford2020.org/recyclopedia](http://Bedford2020.org/recyclopedia).

Last year, Bedford 2020 partnered with town officials to place several different models of recycling bins around Bedford's three downtown business areas. The goal was to determine which model is most effective in encouraging people to recycle.

According to Bedford 2020, two bin designs have since been identified and will be installed in the town's commercial areas in the near future.

For more information about the Community Compost program, or to sign up, visit [Bedford2020.org/communitycompost/](http://Bedford2020.org/communitycompost/) or call 620-2411.