

In 2016 and 2017, Island Food Rescue (IFR), a program of Island Grown Initiative (IGI), collected food waste from the Martha's Vineyard Agricultural Society Fair. This 4-day event attracts over 20,000 tourists, islanders and seasonal residents and is the highlight of the Vineyard summer. Each year, food waste collection services from IFR kept 3,000 pounds of compostable material out of the waste stream. Food vendors were given buckets so that they could separate out their prep materials. Buckets were also placed throughout the picnic table area so people could separate their food waste rather than put it in the trash.

Over the two years that IFR offered these services, they noticed there was no recycling system in place at the Agricultural Fair. Recyclable materials such as water bottles, plastic cups and cardboard were all being put into the trash. In response, IGI partnered with Vineyard Conservation Society (VCS) and Sail MV to create a solution. Funding from CARE for the Cape and Islands enabled IGI to enact a solution.

After careful research and consultation with Sail MV and VCS, IGI decided to purchase and outfit four pop-up tents to capture and sort fairgoers waste into compostables, recycling and landfill. In order for this new method to be successful, no other trash cans would be placed around the fairgrounds. In the process of designing this new system, the Martha's Vineyard Agricultural Society (MVAS) contracted with IGI to take over all trash handling and disposal for the 4-day event. After this happened, we discovered that 25,000 pounds of trash is generated from this 4-day event, so just 4 waste stations would not be enough to handle this volume.

This year with the new system, only 17,220 pounds of trash went to the landfill, a 31% reduction over last year's numbers. According to the MVAS, there was record breaking attendance, with over 40,000 people recorded in attendance for the 4-day event. Three full single-stream recycling dumpsters were collected, as well as two full cardboard dumpsters.

The waste station system was widely successful. It provided an educational opportunity for fairgoers and captured a large percentage of the trash and recycling. In the past, 130 barrels were placed around the fairgrounds, and this year we only had 75. Many of the barrels were used for the carnival people and the draft animal people who camped on the property. Some more of the barrels were used at the waste stations to recycling and trash into as the small barrels filled up. We were able to put out some of the barrels to capture recycling, and although it was contaminated and often dirty, it was easier to sort through this than a completely co-mingled barrel of dirty trash.

Next year, we hope to increase our signage efforts, purchase one or two more manned waste stations, put out more un-manned waste stations, and have more food vendor compliance.



Set-up of waste stations:

We put two tables in each waste station with a complete set of compost, recycling and landfill containers on each table. Signage was affixed to the table and to bins where appropriate. Banners were affixed to the front of the tables.

Trash barrels were placed behind the tables, turned upside down to keep unwanted trash out, ready to receive overflow from the bins. As 4 gallon compost buckets filled up, they were capped with a lid and put off to the side.

Each table also had a rinse bucket, with a drop of bleach in it, which were used for cleaning recycling. Sponges and soap were sometimes necessary for really soiled smoothie cups.

Patrons would approach the table, sort their food waste into the bucket, pull out their recycling and then lastly throw away any trash in the landfill bucket.

There was a lot of confusion about what was recyclable. Be really clear with your waste management company about what they accept. For example, plastic lids are technically recyclable, but our company did not take them. Make sure volunteers and people working at the waste station tents are all trained and versed in what is accepted for recycling so there is no confusion.

Filled trash containers were brought by golf cart back to the dumpster area, which was removed from the fair area.

Materials list & sources:

10'x10' EZ Up tents

- We chose the custom tent option from EZ Up <https://www.ezup.com/custom/custom-graphics>
- You can choose the size of your tent with this option as well. Their sales person will work with you to get the artwork right before you place your order.

Sand bags to weight the legs – 4 per tent

<https://www.ezup.com/weight-bags-g3.html>

18 gallon recycling bins to put on the tables – 2 per tent

https://www.uline.com/BL_518/Tote-Bin-Recycling-Containers?keywords=xyzrubbermaidrecycling

14 gallon black totes for the tables – purchased at our local hardware store – 2 per tent

6 foot long, plastic folding table – 2 per tent

4 gallon compost buckets with lids – obtained for free from local restaurant

32 gallon food waste toter to empty compost buckets into

- We typically purchase these from Home Depot, but they were recently out of stock. Amazon sells them <https://www.amazon.com/Toter-025532-R1GRS-Residential-2-Wheeled-Greenstone/dp/B007KRU3F8>
- Each day, we collected about 1,500 pounds of food waste, and filled 11 toters.

Trash bins – these are useful for emptying small recycling buckets into and consolidated trash.

Long dish washing gloves – these are useful for rinsing recycling

Plastic disposable gloves – these are useful for handling the trash, and will need to be changed frequently.

Each tent also had a kit with spray bottles, bleach, soap, hand sanitizer, paper towels, cleaning rags and sponges. Tape, Velcro, rope, staple gun and scissor kit was also necessary.

Table tents to put on picnic tables <https://www.vistaprint.com/marketing-materials/table-tents?couponAutoload=1&GP=09%2f10%2f2018+11%3a20%3a56&GPS=5163702653&GNF=0>

Vinyl, outdoor banners for tables – 2 per tent - <https://www.vistaprint.com/signs-posters/vinyl-banners>

Trash, recycling and compost signage printed on 10 mL Synaps Paper, done by our local printer, Tisbury Printer.