

**Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation**

Waste Management & Prevention Division, Solid Waste Program

One National Life Drive, Davis 1 802-828-1138

Montpelier, VT 05620-3520 [VTrecycles.com](https://dec.vermont.gov/waste-management/solid)

Main Group Participants as Outlined in Act 170:

Michael Casella Casella Waste Systems

Steven Cash Vermont Department of Agriculture, Food & Markets

Billy Connelly Vanguard Renewables

Jenna Evans Ben and Jerry’s

Tom Gilbert Black Dirt Farm

Dan Goossen Chittenden Solid Waste District

Erin Sigrist VT Retailers and Grocers Association

Other Group Participants:

Christine Beling EPA

Peter Blair Just Zero

Pam Clapp Solid Waste Alliance Communities

Craig Coker Coker Composting and Consulting

Holden Cookson Agricycle

Kim Crosby Casella Waste Systems

Nick D’Agostino Vermont Compost Company

Natasha Duarte Compost Association of Vermont

Neil Edgar Edgar Inc.

Eric Fitch PurposeEnergy, Inc.

Ham Gillett Greater Upper Valley Solid Waste District

Caroline Gordon Rural VT and Protect Our Soils

Karl Hammer VT Compost Company

Paul Kervick Vital Living VT

Ethan Latour MMR

Sarah Lillibridge Lamoille Solid Waste Mgmt. District

Leora Mallach Vanguard Renewables

John Malter Mad River Resource Management Alliance

Trevor Mance Casella Waste Systems

Mark Shea Rutland County Solid Waste Management District

Emma Shouldice Shouldice and Associates

Heather Shouldice Shouldice and Associates

Ted Siegler DSM Environmental Services

Bob Spencer Windham Solid Waste District

Elly Ventura Veg Ware

 1(802)734-1090

ANR Participants:

Anne Bijur VT ANR – Solid Waste Management Program

Dennis Fekert VT ANR – Solid Waste Management Program

Ben Gauthier VT ANR – Solid Waste Management Program

Josh Kelly VT ANR – Solid Waste Management Program

Mia Roethlein VT ANR – Solid Waste Management Program

Josh Kelly, Solid Waste Program Manager, offered a review of what legislature has charged the group with and a discussion of goals and responsibilities of group members took place.

The Role of Depackagers in Managing Food Waste Stakeholder Group (group) is tasked with preparing a report for legislature with recommendations on the following items:

* + - *(1) recommendations on whether the organics management hierarchy in 10 V.S.A. § 6605k should apply to each generator of organic waste;*
		- *(2) whether the Agency of Natural Resources should modify its existing policy surrounding the source separation of organic wastes; and*
		- *(3) any recommendations on the proper use of depackagers in the management of organic waste.*

The group agreed that Solid Waste Program staff will draft report based upon recommendations from the stakeholder group. Draft Report to be prepared and circulated for stakeholder review mid-November 2022.

Final Report to be submitted on or before January 15, 2023 to the legislature.

DEC will also be responsible for taking minutes, meeting scheduling and distribution of minutes for approval. Minutes and all information pertinent to the meetings will be posted on the website.

DEC will also facilitate the meetings but will not be a chairperson. The group opted to not designate a chairperson. DEC staff will gather information, data and related literature as requested by the group.

There was discussion of DEC’s upcoming media campaign on clean compost and preventing contamination.

Ben Gauthier described the upcoming evaluation of food packaging and the food recycling system that will happen under an EPA P2 grant. The goal is to inform what levels of PFAS and microplastics are occurring in various materials statewide, capture background comparisons and offer more insight on best practices. The information gathered will be used to inform future regulations and will be included in a report to legislature in 2024. Sampling will occur in 2023.

DEC has a waste composition study out for RFP and there is a carve out in the study to ask generators for information on where food scraps are going since not all are going to certified facilities in VT.

The group decided on a process for consensus and decision making for meetings based on the dynamic governance framework and a vote of supermajority on any decision that can’t move forward. Supermajority would mean that for a decision to carry forward about 70% or 5 participants must be in favor with 2 not in favor out of the 7 people listed as participants. The group all agreed on this process.

There was significant discussion about whether other parties should be invited to participate in this group especially toxicologists or others with a scientific background on microplastics and/or emerging chemicals of concern. The group decided that other parties should definitely be invited to present on their areas of expertise, but that they would not be added as one of the main participants that the legislature had outlined in statute. Tom Gilbert voiced that the group is lacking in scientific expertise (particularly toxicology and soil health) and proposed adding an 8th stakeholder. The group declined the motion to add another stakeholder at this time. Tom wanted to formally register the point that over half of the stakeholders were pro-depackaging and adding an additional scientific stakeholder could help to balance that.

The next meeting in September will be a planning meeting and setting up a framework and understanding issues and background on the topic of depackaging. The group agreed to attempt to schedule 6 meetings by the end of November and to make the meetings 2 hours in length. The group proposed taking 1 meeting to implement decision making framework, up to 3 meeting after that to invite specific interested parties, scientific experts and/or toxicologists to present and 2 to 3 meetings after that to digest, deliberate and conclude. Tom recommended the group adopt a framework for making recommendations when we don’t have adequate data and suggested the precautionary principle of “do no harm.” Some in the group objected that that approach may be too broad. Tom agreed to help draft the next agenda which could include more on a potential framework for the group.