

## 'CompostFest' an organically good time

<http://www.willistonobserver.com/compostfest-an-organically-good-time/>

June 16, 2012

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'Earthgirl' Megan Kolbay of Earthgirl Composting offers curbside compost pickup. (Observer photo by Luke Baynes)



Though it lacked the gustatory appeal of the synchronous Vermont Maple Festival in St. Albans, Saturday's "CompostFest" in Williston taught attendees about a different kind of recipe.

"We use a very careful recipe," said Chittenden Solid Waste District Marketing Coordinator Clare Innes of the Green Mountain Compost mixture that fertilizes organic soils across the state. "It's the critters that are doing all the work – it's these microbes – and they need a specific mixture of food, just like us."

The six-hour event hosted by Green Mountain Compost – the CSWD-owned business that opened at its Redmond Road facility in July 2011 – taught locals about the environmental benefits of food composting and the ways that composting can improve one's own lawn and garden.

"(Compostable material) is one-third of your trash, and it's what makes your trash smell," Innes said. "Composting's time is here. People are so excited about knowing that they can keep even more out of the landfill."

Other "compost geek facts" revealed at the event are that Green Mountain Compost keeps an average of 8,000 tons of food scraps and yard debris out of landfills each year, and that one handful of soil contains more microbial life than there are people on the planet.

Also at the event were representatives from the Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont – an accredited certification agency for organic farming with the USDA's National Organic Program – and "Earthgirl" Megan Kolbay, owner of Earthgirl Composting, which offers curbside compost pickup services.

Kolbay said that while her business (located on the Web at [earthgirlcomposting.com](http://earthgirlcomposting.com)) has an established

presence in Montpelier and Burlington, she's hoping to expand her foothold in Williston.

From free wood-fired pizza to live music by local bands Loggerhead and Red Hot Juba, CompostFest offered organic fun for young and old.

While Green Mountain Compost Sales and Production Coordinator Jennifer Baer noted that CompostFest was a "grand opening," not a "first annual" event, she quickly added: "If we decide to do it next year, it will be our second annual!"