

**Should Brown Compost More of its Organic Waste Stream?**

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### Abstract

I looked into the possibility of composting more of Brown's organic waste. I began by examining Brown's current waste stream and comparing the environmental effects and impacts of the waste management practices of pig farming, landfilling, incinerating, and composting. I then investigated various composting options, such as on-site, off-site, in-vessel and open systems, and assessed which could be feasible for Brown. I found that the current system, financially, leaves little incentive for changing the food waste disposal methods. However, there are economically feasible options for composting other organic waste streams which could presently be implemented. These include composting the yard/leaf waste and potentially the paper waste at Earth Care Farm. There is also a composting site, proposed by the South Providence Development Corporation, which could compost Brown's animal bedding waste at costs equal to landfilling. There are also several environmental and ethical reasons to consider changing the current food waste disposal system, such as nitrates contaminating groundwater from pig manure and the questionable business practices of the pig farmer. Composting also provides other environmental benefits, from creating a soil amendment, to diverting the waste stream from landfills and incinerators, which could provide incentives for Brown to compost. If the pig farming situation changed even slightly, such as the pig farmer charging a tipping fee, it would create a positive economic incentive to compost Brown's food waste at Earth Care Farm. Although currently composting is not the best economic option for food waste, it is a feasible option for animal bedding waste, leaf/yard waste, and paper waste. Besides this, it has many environmental benefits which make it a good option.