



LOW CARBON LIVING
CRC

Urban Composting Research Symposium Outcomes Report



Authors	Vivienne Waller
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The Urban composting research symposium was held in the Chandelier Room of the Hawthorn Arts Centre on Monday 27 August 2018 to showcase the research undertaken as part of the CRCLCL funded project, RP2019 “Enabling carbon reductions through composting food waste for use in growing food”.

It was advertised widely and the venue and catering was organised with a target of 75 participants in mind. This was met as 72 people were in attendance on the day. The attendees were mainly drawn from local government and industries relevant to composting food waste. The gender breakdown of attendees was as follows: 38 female, 25 male, 9 unknown. The speakers comprised equal numbers of female and males.

Three companies set up stalls showcasing their products (WormLovers, City Harvest and Compost Matters).

Craig Reucassel of ABC’s War on Waste series was MC of the event and the opening speaker. The symposium also included presentations from government (Sustainability Victoria, Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery Group), industry (Veolia, Elmore Organics, City Harvest, Wormlovers) and the community (Compost Depot). Professor Peter Graham, head of the Swinburne node of the CRCLCL closed the event.

The event was very successful and had a real buzz to it. The program was organised into four thematic segments with time for discussion at the end of each segment (see Program on next page). Audience members participated enthusiastically in the discussion. In each case, the MC had to stop the discussion to keep the program to time.

A Zero Waste lunch was held at the close of the symposium, followed by optional tours of the On-site composting apparatus (OSCA) machine and the Cylibox (designed by PhD student, Alex Jaimes Castillo). Approximately thirty of the attendees participated in these tours.

The symposium received positive social media coverage from the organisations involved. Feedback from attendees was also positive, with particular appreciation for the spread of speakers (academia, government, industry (including a farmer), community).

Following the event, there were several written requests for the presentations from people who had been unable to attend, as well as from attendees. The PowerPoint slides as well as a video of proceedings have been made available online. The slides are available at foodcompostfood.org and the video, which is too large to upload, is available on Youtube in two parts:

Part 1 - <https://bit.ly/2MVsTdm>

Part 2 – <https://bit.ly/2DjIHXL>



The spokesperson for Waste (Victorian Government) from one of the three major political parties attended the forum. This Victorian MP has since requested, and received, expert advice from Dr Waller on their party's food waste policy.

As a result of the symposium, several organisations have approached Dr Waller to discuss possibilities for further collaboration. These are being pursued.

Urban Composting Research Symposium

Monday 27 August, 2018, 9.30-2pm, Chandelier room, Hawthorn Arts Centre

Program:

Craig Reucassal, (War on Waste) will chair the event and facilitate questions from the audience

9.30am Why compost food waste for growing food

Craig Reucassal (War on Waste)

9.45am Overview of the (CRCLCL) research project on composting food waste for growing food

Dr Viv Waller, (CRCLCL researcher, Centre for Urban Transitions, Swinburne)

9.50am Kerbside organics collection (FOGO) and the vexed issue of compostable bags

Dr Viv Waller, (CRCLCL researcher, Centre for Urban Transitions, Swinburne)

Gayle Seddon (MWRRG)

Steve Marshall (Veolia/Australian Organics Recycling Association)

10.30am On-site food waste management – cafes, restaurants, MUDs and offices

Dr Belinda Christie, CRCLCL researcher, Centre for Urban Transitions, Swinburne)

Sam Trowse (Sustainability Victoria)

11.05 Morning tea

11.20am Quality of compost from food waste

Alex Jaimes Castillo, (CRCLCL researcher, Swinburne)

Emma Mountjoy, (Environmental Protection Authority, Victoria)

Majella Hamilton (City Harvest),

Frank Harney (Victorian farmer and proprietor of Elmore organics)

Linda Blackall, (Professor of microbial ecology, Melbourne University)

12.05pm Food waste management and sustainability

Charles Ling, (CRCLCL researcher, UniSA)

Richard Thomas (Wormlovers)

Kirsteen Macleod (Compost Depot)

12.50pm Close

Professor Peter Graham, Deputy Director of the Centre for Urban Transitions, Swinburne

Zero Waste Lunch - 1pm

*From 1.30pm, you may participate in a short explanatory tour of
OSCA (on-site composting apparatus) and Cylibox*

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