



## SGA consults on compost pilot program at Lake Co. jail

SGA is providing consulting services for a compost pilot program at the Lake County Adult Corrections Facility (jail). This is part of a larger sustainability project - spearheaded by Quercus Consulting - for Illinois' northeasternmost county, Lake County.

The project's main goal is to develop environmentally and economically sound practices for jail operations while engaging inmates directly with responsibility for these activities. It also aims to educate decision-makers on the benefits of composting and food recovery.

[Read more](#)

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## PlantGreen Solar Team moves forward in initiative with U.S. Dept. of Energy

The Oak Park-River Forest Solar Team was selected by the U.S. Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) to participate in a collaborative peer and tech expert learning initiative effort to explore new ways solar energy can improve the affordability, reliability, and resiliency of the nation's electric grid.

The team's goal is to advance rooftop and community solar projects and develop plans for moving toward 100 percent renewable electricity procurement. The Oak Park-River Forest Solar Team is one of just nine teams selected to join the program, which is known as the Solar Energy Innovation Network.

"Oak Park and River Forest have less than a megawatt of photovoltaic capacity between them at present," said solar consultant Mark Burger, renewable energy consultant with Seven Generations Ahead. "Working with NREL's Solar Energy Innovation Network will enable PlantGreen to integrate Oak Park and River Forest's indigenous solar assets with municipal aggregation power purchase agreements and community solar procurements from outside the villages."

NREL is operating the Solar Energy Innovation Network with funding from the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Energy Technologies Office. NREL pursues fundamental research and development of renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies to transform energy usage.

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## Food scrap composting in IL: Legislative highlights from the past year

Only a few years ago, Illinois had one municipal food scrap composting program. Today, there are nearly 25 municipal programs, ranking the state number four in the nation for

communities with curbside collection. According to the Illinois EPA, the state is also now home to 45 permitted composting facilities, over a dozen of which process food scraps with yard waste. Getting to this point required many hours of dedicated work from committed environmental stewards across nonprofit, legislative, institutional and other sectors, and the work is ongoing.

SGA and its partner environmental organizations are raising awareness on the viability of composting and building key connections with policy makers to drive future legislation.



[Read more](#)

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## Southside Occupational Academy Honored as a Green Ribbon School

In May, the U.S. Department of Education honored 58 schools across the country as Green Ribbon Schools. The award recognizes schools, districts, and institutions of higher education that reduce environmental impact and costs; improve the health and wellness of schools, students, and staff; and provide environmental education. This year Southside Occupational Academy High School (SOA), a Chicago Public Schools (CPS) vocational school of 270 special needs students between the ages of 16-22 in the West Englewood community, received the award.

Seven Generations Ahead congratulates SOA, knowing first-hand how committed the school is to empowering students to make a positive environmental impact and improve their overall health and wellness.

[Read more](#)

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## Meet Marlie Wilson: New IL Farm to School Network Coordinator

**Marlie Wilson**, the new Illinois Farm to School Network Coordinator at SGA, brings a wealth of experience in garden programming, food justice, and grants management to her role. At SGA, she will be responsible for engaging Illinois Farm to School Network members across the state, developing new resources for the network's key programs, and building capacity for farm to school at the state level.

Marlie got her start in community food systems as an intern for Just Food, a non-profit focused on food justice and sustainable agriculture in New York City, where she supported their "City Chicken Project"-helping with workshops on keeping chickens and building chicken coops in community gardens.

The Boston-area native then spent a year as a FoodCorps service member at The Food Project, providing garden-based education for two elementary schools out of the organization's 10,000-square-foot greenhouse in Roxbury, Mass.

## Campus Sustainability Webinar Series focuses on waste

In collaboration with the Illinois Green Economy Network (IGEN), SGA created a two-part webinar series on campus sustainability geared toward Illinois colleges and universities.

The first, on April 26, focused on "Conducting a Waste Audit on Campus." That session looked at state-funded colleges and universities and discussed Illinois mandates for recycling and diversion in higher education institutions. **Adrian Fisher** from Triton College and **David Husemoller** from the College of Lake County shared their experiences and best practices.

The second webinar on May 22, "Reducing Wasted Food through Campus Composting and Food Recovery," included presentations addressing composting, reducing wasted food, and food recovery for donation.

Husemoller joined us again to share CLC's composting streams and practices including education, and chef **Christopher Clem** shared Triton College's experience composting and recovering food through its culinary program and food service department.

[Read more & view the webinar presentations](#)

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## IL FARM TO SCHOOL NETWORK

IFSN program registrations now open

Registration for Harvest of the Month for the 2018-19 school year is now [open](#). Celebrate locally-grown, healthy food each month with delicious recipes for the cafeteria, classroom and families, and get free materials and resources.



Registration is also [open](#) for Apple Crunch. The Illinois Great Apple Crunch 2018 will be on **Oct. 11**. Last year, Illinois had a total of 463,981 students and 2,555 adults crunching at 919 sites. Help us reach half a million this year by registering to 'Crunch'!

## SGA's F2S staff provided valuable training in Kane Co.

On May 15, SGA's Illinois Farm to School Network (IFSN) Coordinators led a day of trainings and workshops in Kane County at the Northern Illinois Food Bank: "Connecting Kane County Farms to Your Cafeteria."

The event was developed in collaboration with the Growing for Kane Program and featured a locally-sourced lunch, a live recipe demonstration, and a meet-and-greet with the operators of Kane County's brand new food hub.



[Read more](#)

## COMING UP



Tickets are now on sale for the 11th Annual Oak Park Micro Brew Review. Enjoy a great beer festival and help raise vital funds for Seven Generations Ahead in its work to promote and support healthy and sustainable communities.

Featuring inventive brews from 80+ of the Midwest's finest craft breweries, live music and small plates from popular local restaurants, Micro Brew is one

of Chicagoland's top craft beer festivals of the summer. And with nothing from the event going to landfill, everyone who attends will be doing a good thing for the planet, too.

Purchase tickets [here](#).

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