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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New York City Ups the Ante with Residential Composting
Food Scrap Collection at Greenmarket Hits 2 MILLION POUNDS

November 6, 2013, NEW YORK, NY – Today GrowNYC announced the collection of two million pounds of food scraps dropped by residents via a free program at 30 select Greenmarkets in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Staten Island.

Download images of food scrap drop-off sites: <http://GrowNYC.dphoto.com/album/8f6ddv>

The initiative began as a resoundingly successful pilot program in March 2011, featuring seven collection sites funded by Speaker Quinn and the New York City Council. Driven by demand as shoppers at GrowNYC's farmers markets came out in droves to compost, in April 2012, GrowNYC expanded the program as a partnership with the NYC Department of Sanitation (DSNY).

The public-private partnership has now grown to 30 drop-off locations, diverting a whopping 2 million pounds of food scraps from disposal – enough to stretch the length of Manhattan from Inwood to Bowling Green when packed in collection bins used at the sites.

New Yorkers can drop off fruit and vegetable scraps for composting while shopping for healthy, local produce at the Greenmarket. At these 'Sustainability Centers' the public can deposit the week's food waste, such as apple cores and coffee grounds, into collection tubs. The scraps are then transported by GrowNYC or the Department of Sanitation to one of several local sites in the five boroughs where material is transformed into renewable energy or compost, a fertile soil amendment for use in urban farm and gardening programs.

Enthusiasm for the food scrap collection program is reflected in Local Law 77, signed by Mayor Bloomberg last month to codify DSNY's efforts to provide curbside organics collections in select residential areas and schools. "GrowNYC continues to build a foundation for a citywide curbside organics program by demonstrating the popularity of the Greenmarket drop off programs," said Ron Gonen, Deputy Director of Sustainability at NYC Department of Sanitation.

GrowNYC manages 30 sites which provide 33 collection opportunities each week, complementing existing, ongoing collections conducted by BIG! Compost and Lower East Side Ecology Center.



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The top performing collection site is Grand Army Plaza in Brooklyn which sees an average of over 4,100 pounds weekly, and in total has diverted over 400,000 pounds of food scraps.

“We’re so thankful to the New York City Department of Sanitation for being a true champion of the food scrap collection program. Our numbers have steadily climbed and the next level is already in motion: organics as part of DSNY’s curbside collection. Speaker Quinn and the New York City Council should be thrilled with how the program has grown thanks to their initial support. New York is walking the walk now with some 180,000 New Yorkers or “donors” coming from all parts of the city to participate,” said GrowNYC Executive Director Marcel Van Ooyen.

Food comprises about 17% of NYC’s waste stream. When this material is sent to a landfill it contributes to NYC’s disposal costs and creates greenhouse gas emissions. When composted, food scraps and other organic waste is transformed into a useful product that adds nutrients and improves the quality of soil for street trees, gardens and more.

GrowNYC expects the program to continue to grow as more New Yorkers learn about it.

For more information, including a full list of participating sites and FAQs, visit <http://www.grownyc.org/compost> or call 212.788.7900.

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GrowNYC improves New York City's quality of life through environmental programs that transform communities block by block and empower all New Yorkers to secure a clean and healthy environment for future generations. Programs: Greenmarket, Office of Recycling Outreach and Education, Open Space Greening, Environmental Education and Grow to Learn NYC: Citywide School Gardens Initiative. Learn more at www.grownyc.org

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