

Composting Champions Project – A Summary

The project for the Benalla Compost Champions may be coming to a close, but the actions of the majority of participants continues, leading to a 17% reduction to waste going to landfill.

The objective of the Compost Champions Project was to test the effectiveness of home composting as a method to divert organics from the municipal waste stream. The project was a joint venture between NevRwaste and Benalla Rural City Council (BRCC) with the Benalla Garden Club taking on the 'champions' role.

Participants comprised of 230 BRCC householders who opted to take part in this project. These participants received highly subsidized compost bins and attended educational workshops to learn about the science of composting and the most effective ways to compost. They were also asked to complete a questionnaire a month after their workshops, and then partake in another survey a year later in order to evaluate sustainable behaviour change. The success of the project was also measured by weighing a sample of participant bins and comparing these with non-participants.

It was extremely pleasing to receive the feedback from a very high percentage of participants, as, apart from the weighing of bins, this project relied on anecdotal evidence of practices. There were also no other similar completed projects with which to compare these results.

The important lessons that have been learned from this project are that home composting can have huge environmental impact. There was a reduction of 17% of green waste to landfill. This means that there is more space in the landfill and less CO² emissions. Good education is a vital component of any community project and the survey resulted showed that the education rated highly in the reasons for success.

Highlights of Project

- 230 households participated
- 70 students from 7 schools attended specific school workshops
- There was a 17% reduction in the amount of organic waste to landfill
- More space and less CO₂ emissions at the landfill
- 87% of participants are still composting a year after the project began