

Verbal submission on food waste to City of Yarra Council

Organic waste, in particular food waste is an important issue. When food waste is sent to landfill it decomposes anaerobically and produces methane. Carbon dioxide is not the only green house gas. Methane has a global warming potential 28 times that of CO<sub>2</sub>.

Programs such as the Food Know-How Program are important to inform people about the issue and educate them in ways to reduce food waste and must be expanded to reach a wider audience. But this alone is not enough.

From Council's own information, only 36% of food waste is avoidable, the rest must be disposed of. 50% of Yarra households do not have the space to compost. There will be other people who don't have either the physical capability or the inclination to compost. It is essential that Council provides a municipality-wide organic waste collection service to divert food waste from landfill and dispose of it in a way that does not harm our atmosphere and accelerate climate change.

Many councils and cities in Australia and around the world have found sustainable ways of dealing with the problem.

City of Yarra spends more than \$1.5 million taking 7000 tonnes of food waste to landfill each year. Council needs to urgently undertake research to find the food waste solution that best suits our municipality, so that food waste can be diverted from land fill, those funds can be diverted to other more productive projects and Council can move towards its stated goal in the *City of Yarra Waste Strategy 2014-18* — to eliminate organic waste from the waste stream. We believe that if you give the people of Yarra the means they will become enthusiastic recyclers of food waste.