The Eagle Has Landed

A Partnership with Laurens County SWMA & Georgia Southern

Michael Snipes and Madison Crockett, RDN

Laurens County SWMA Operational History

1996 Agreement

Laurens County SWMA entered into an intergovernmental agreement with the City of Dublin.

- City disposes biosolids at Old Macon Rd landfill for free.
- In return, city processes leachate from landfill for free.

The Outcome

"SWMA got the smelly end of the stick, literally!"

The imbalance in trade created severe operational strain for SWMA over time.

The Pivot

SWMA needed to look at other options for handling the biosolids as they had become an operational nightmare so…









In 2008 we added composting to our operation!

The Reasons We Chose Composting

01. Operational Issues

To reduce operational issues associated with the disposal of biosolids in the landfill.

02. Conserve Airspace

To conserve critical landfill airspace and extend facility capacity over time.

03. Generate Revenue

To generate revenue streams through the strategic sale of finished compost.

04. Facility Closure

We were a "dirt-poor" site and the compost would directly aid in the final closure of the facility.

What have we accomplished so far?

Since starting our program in 2008, we have diverted the following from landfills across Georgia:

26,670
TONS
Yard Waste

25,662
TONS
Biosolids

8,864
TONS
Food Residuals

930
TONS
Animal Mortalities

43
TONS
Sawdust

~$5,000,000
TOTAL FINANCIAL IMPACT

Saved Air Space Value

This diversion has resulted in approximately $5,000,000 worth of saved air space across Georgia landfills.

Challenges in a Rural Community

Effective Communication

Reaching spread-out rural populations effectively with critical program messaging and education.

Logistics

Managing efficient collections across wide routes and connecting to viable end markets.

Citizen Buy-in

Building public participation, enthusiasm, and long-term community commitment.

Elected Official Support

Securing leadership backing, policy alignment, and sustainable funding resources.

What brought us to this point?

To Waste or Not to Waste?

Food waste diversion in the Dublin City Schools...

a 6th grader's perspective.

By Shelby Lyn Snipes



COMPOSTING AT EAGLE DINING

Madison Crockett, RDN
AD of Nutrition & Sustainability



THE PROBLEM: FOOD WASTE



1,000–2,000 LBS.

of plate waste generated weekly at Dining Commons alone

And that's just Dining Commons.

This does not include Lakeside, retail locations, or prep waste.

Wasted Food Scale

How to reduce the environmental impacts of wasted food



www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/wasted-food-scale

WHAT IS COMPOSTING?

The natural process of recycling organic matter into nutrient-dense fertilizer that enriches the soil.

BENEFITS

- Improves soil health
- Increases nutrient-density of food
- Diverts waste from landfills
- Conserves water
- Reduces methane emissions
- Reduces erosion
- Supports our local farmers!



TURNING FOOD WASTE INTO SOMETHING GOOD.

COMPOSTING PARTNERSHIP



Michael, Ralph & David at LCSWMA

Laurens County Solid Waste Management

LCSWMA • Dublin, GA

Composting Infrastructure

Has existing, fully-equipped infrastructure for composting.

Gasketed Carts

Provides sealed, odor-free storage carts (200 lbs capacity).

Weekly Logistics

Picks up food waste weekly from both dining halls to convert it into Class A Compost.

Perks

- Fewer dumpster emptying cycles
- Diverts waste from landfills
- Helps reduce pests on the back dock
- Potentially reduces the number of dumpsters needed

THE COMPOSTING PROCESS

01. Collect Food Residuals



02. Pick Up & Transport



03. Combine with Windrow Turner



04. Let Cure



05. Screen Out Debris



06. Final Product for Farms



Dining Team's Tasks



REDUCE Overproduction

Minimize excess food generation during daily dining service and preparation.

REDUCE Post-Consumer Waste

Implement strategies and diner awareness to lower uneaten plate waste.

ELIMINATE Single-Use Disposables

Transition dining halls to reusables or compostables completely by Fall 2026.

Dining Hall

Dish Room Responsibilities

Small Actions Make a Big Impact!

CLEAN DISHES • LESS WASTE • A GREENER CAMPUS

Dish Room
GUIDELINES

- Make sure only compostable items go through pulper.
- Put not approved items in a trash bin.
- When cart is 60% full, close and seal it.
- Transport to designated area and replace with empty cart and new compostable liner.



Pulp & Compost
APPROVED ITEMS


Bones


Fat trimmings


Fruit and vegetable peels


Other food residues


Paper napkins

FOOD WASTE TODAY, A HEALTHIER TOMORROW.

Keep Out of Pulper
NOT ALLOWED


Plastics


Styrofoam


Metal (silverware)


Reusable Dining Hall dishes

KEEP IT CLEAN, KEEP IT GREEN.

THANK YOU FOR DOING YOUR PART!

TOGETHER FOR A MORE SUSTAINABLE GEORGIA SOUTHERN

PEOPLE FOOD PLANET

GEORGIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

Sustainability Starts Here

Sustainability Team's Tasks



Create Policies & Procedures
Establish operational guidelines and standards for sustainability.

Train Staff
Conduct comprehensive training for all involved personnel.

Apply for Grants
Secure external funding to help cover ongoing composting costs.

Department Collaboration
Partner with GS departments for in-house composting (long-term goal).

Student Participation



Sustainability Graduate Assistant

Dedicated graduate leadership supporting campus sustainability initiatives and project coordination.

Sustain Southern Student Volunteers

Active student network driving peer engagement and hands-on programs.

Global Sustainability Class Project

Academic course integration with BIOL 3115 SA (Fall 2026), guided by Dr. Lissa Leege.

YOUR FOOD IS NOT TRASH

"The average college student wastes about 142 pounds of food a year, and in total this translates to about 144 billion dollars of food waste a year."

-Thomas Vu ('16)

What is food waste?

Food waste is food fit for human consumption but ends up discarded

How do we prevent it:

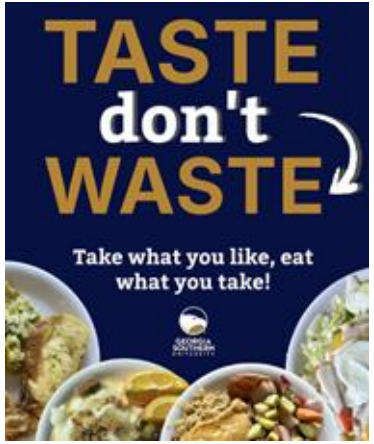
- Take what you like, and eat what you take
- Start with a small portion of food, then get seconds if you want more
- Plan your meals before coming to the dining hall

georgiasouthern.nutrislice.com

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Every little bit helps save the planet



Thank You!

Questions?



