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Iowa Waste Reduction Center Newsletter, October 2021

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Iowa Waste Reduction Center



A Successful IRA Conference

The IWRC enjoyed a successful Iowa Recycling and Solid Waste Management Conference earlier this month in Cedar Rapids, IA. It was great to reconnect and visit with our industry peers in an in-person and safe capacity! The IWRC was able to help coordinate multiple educational sessions this year. We held an open discussion about the current state of composting in Iowa and where we can go from here with the Iowa Composting Council leaders. We also led an open panel discussion with sustainability leaders on the successes and setbacks of sustainable implementation projects throughout Iowa.

We want to thank our panelists who were able to join us and give a more in-depth look into their sustainability projects in their respective workplaces. Panelists included:

- Eric Rosburg, Associate Director of Instructional Services, Cedar Falls Community School District
- Meg Kayko, Sustainability Specialist, Kum and Go
- Dave Moore, Director of Operations, Big Grove Brewery

Eric Rosburg spent time discussing the vital aspect of educating students about the importance of food waste diversion and composting within their school district. Rosburg highlighted efforts happening within the district's junior high schools to both cut down on food waste in the lunchrooms, and then seeing that food waste through to proper composting operations.

Meg Kayko dove into projects that Kum and Go has experimented with in some of their select locations and new implementation ideas that the company is continuing to generate. One project that Kum and Go had faced some difficulty with in the past was their effort to allow consumer composting at the source. Meg cited lack of consumer education leading to contamination of improper items into the compost stream. It was encouraging to hear from a company that is continuing to find innovative solutions to lower their environmental impact and learning what works and what doesn't along the way.

Dave Moore discussed a centrifuge system that Big Grove Brewery has invested in to help increase their yield of beer by 310 gallons per batch. This ultimately generates a more usable product from the same amount of input material. This efficiency leads to less environmental impact. Moore also mentioned the importance of finding sustainability champions within your organization that know the

“why” and are invested in the same values as your organization is.

We value hearing real world experiences from professionals that are invested in making a difference through their organization. Thank you again to our panelists for this session and thank you as well to all who were able to join us in reconnecting and learning at this year’s Iowa Recycling and Solid Waste Management Conference!

Saving Scraps: A Culinary Competition

“Chefs, you have arrived at the Chopping Block!”

This fall the Iowa Waste Reduction Center teamed up with Indian Hills Community College’s Culinary Arts Program to bring a live demonstration to the Iowa Recycling and Solid Waste Management Conference. The demonstration was similar to the Food Network Show, Chopped. The students split into two teams and were presented with mystery ingredients that they had to turn into a 3 course meal. The catch, all the ingredients were leftovers provided by the conference hotel kitchen!

The students set up temporary cooking stations at the conference expo and had to cook all the food in front of a crowded room. Conference attendees were able to mingle and watch the chefs cook. Two judging seats were auctioned off giving the teams a total of four judges to wow.

“So who’s dish is on the chopping block?” Well each team took home a prize! The judges determined that one was better tasting but the other was more inventive, so everyone walked away winners!

Do you want ideas on how to eliminate food waste? Visit iwrc.uni.edu/food-waste



National Recycling Congress | November 3-4 | [Virtual](#)

i-BEST Brewers Education Seminar and Tippling | November 6 | [Des Moines](#)

IWRC NEWS

Welcomes Jordan Burrows!

Recently here at the IWRC, we were able to welcome Jordan Burrows to our team as our newest Environmental Intern. Jordan is a UNI Junior graduating in May 2023, studying to get her degree in Environmental Science. She also has minors in Air Quality and Earth Science.

“I look forward to working with the IWRC and helping the community with pollution prevention, energy efficiency and food sustainability,” Jordan said. “I also look forward to gaining real world knowledge and experience regarding environmental concerns and how we can mitigate those concerns.”

Outside of work, Jordan enjoys fishing, kayaking, baking cookies and playing cards with her grandma. We are so excited to have added her to the team! Welcome Jordan Burrows!



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