

Presented at the Organics Task Force Meeting  
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# Policies to Promote Composting

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# Obstacles to Expanding Composting

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- # Lack of collection infrastructure
  - # Lack of composting capacity
  - # Siting difficulties
  - # Lack of regs/permitting to facilitate compost operations
  - # Competition with cheap disposal
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# Outline

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- # Snapshot of existing local policies
  - # New policies needed to expand composting
    - Review of policies endorsed by Organics Task Force
    - Additional policies to consider
    - Process and next steps
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# Sample Regs in Region

Frederick County	County ordinance prohibits residential and commercial yard waste from being disposed in the Frederick County landfill.
City of Frederick	Yard waste must be placed in 35-gal containers, paper bags, or bundles; plastic bags not allowed.
Montgomery Co.	Grass and leaves in paper bags, reusable containers only. Plastic bags must not be used to contain any yard trim or Christmas trees. Christmas trees must have all ornaments and metal objects removed.
Fairfax Co.	Clear plastic bags okay. Recycling of yard waste required March 1-Dec. 24. Christmas trees first 2 wks in January.
Arlington Co.	No plastic. Yard waste is not required.

# More Sample Regs in Region

Prince George's County	Program is mandatory. Yard waste in heavy duty bags (paper or plastic) or cans. Leaves and grass collected year round.
Loudon Co.	Paper bags or cans, and set-out as directed by private haulers. Permitted haulers are required to collect yard waste as recyclable.
City of Manassas	Program is mandatory. Yard waste in bundles, can, or biodegradable bags. May issue fine of \$25 for mixing recyclables with trash.
City of Manassas of Park	Plastic bags okay for yard waste. (Mandatory via contract.)
City of Fairfax	Any bag or can okay in season. During April, Nov. and Dec., city vacuums leaves. Other mos., bagged leaves collected with other yard debris.

## Local Policies:

# Expand Yard Trimmings Diversion

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- # Region-wide ban on collection of yard debris in plastic bags
- # Require set-out in kraft bags or reusable container
- # Require weekly yard debris separation and set-out
- # Target a wide range of yard debris (grass, leaves, brush, garden trimmings)
- # Offer curbside collection service year-round, with option to not collect in/require off-season
- # Promote backyard composting and grasscycling

Supported by the Organics Task Force

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# Plastic Bags Cost Money



25% of operating costs at this facility



# Toronto



**SORRY. WE ONLY PICK UP  
LEAVES IN REUSABLE CONTAINERS  
OR KRAFT PAPER BAGS.**

*Remember, leaves and yard waste are recycled into  
compost. And while kraft paper bags break down into  
compost, sadly, plastic doesn't. So this season use*

*kraft paper bags, bushel baskets  
or other large, open-top containers.*

*For more environmentally-friendly suggestions,*

*visit [www.city.toronto.on.ca/compost](http://www.city.toronto.on.ca/compost)*

*or call 416-392-4546.*





# For better digestion, brown bag it



Starting in March 2001, only kraft paper bags and rigid open-top containers will be acceptable for use in Toronto's leaf and yard waste collection program.

Clear plastic bags will no longer be accepted (you can still use clear plastic bags this fall).

Plastic bags don't compost, they contaminate the finished compost and require us to open, empty and dispose of each bag. Talk about waste!

We encourage you to try the kraft paper bags designed for leaf and yard waste this fall. You'll find them at hardware and grocery stores.

These bags compost right along with the leaves and yard waste. A better choice:

Reusable rigid open-top containers such as bushel baskets. Cost: nil.  
(once you already have them, you can reuse for free)

## THE PAPER YARD WASTE BAG.

# The whole, degrading story.

The City of Toronto is now collecting yard waste in kraft paper bags. (Sorry, no more plastic). These bags are biodegradable, so they break down along with the yard waste, creating compost in the process. Better yet, put your leaves and twigs in rigid open containers, such as bushel baskets, or an extra garbage can. And bundle your brush.

You can buy kraft paper yard waste bags at hardware and grocery stores or garden centres.

For composting tips, or for a bin, call the Composting Helpline at 416-392-4689.



1. Fill the bag with leaves and other yard waste, close it up and bring it to the curb for pick-up. Pour yourself a glass of lemonade and relax.



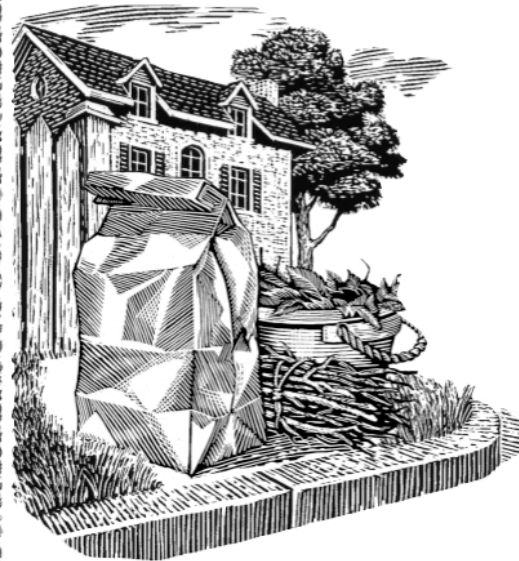
2. The bag's taken to a composting site. Paper's biodegradable, so the contents don't have to be separated from the bag. Yard waste is first shredded and then left outdoors in windrows, long rows of leaf and yard waste. Leaves go directly to the windrow.



3. About 6 months later, the materials have turned into compost, rich with plant nutrients, and microbes and organic fibre for healthier soil. Unlike chemical fertilizers, compost has a built-in time release mechanism.



4. This compost is distributed free of charge at sites across Toronto during the summer. Pick some up and begin the process all over again.



We no longer pick up grass clippings. Instead, leave them on your lawn, use them for mulch around trees, in your garden or put them in your composter.



For more info call 416-392-4546 or visit [www.city.toronto.on.ca/compost/faq.htm](http://www.city.toronto.on.ca/compost/faq.htm)



## Master Composter/Soil Builder Program

The Master Composter/Soil Builder (MC/SB) volunteer program is a key partner in Seattle's waste reduction and recycling efforts. We help and city residents to recycle organic wastes in their own backyards, to build healthy urban soils and to create thriving landscapes throughout the city.



Many people know that reducing the use of fossil fuels is essential to reducing climate change. But there's something closer to home that we can all do. Soil building with compost and mulch is an easy way to take



# State Policy

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- # State ban on disposing yard debris in landfills and incinerators

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# Delaware findings on state bans

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- # Definition of “yard waste” varies by state
- # Scope and enforcement vary by state
- # States with bans receive significantly less yard materials than those without
- # Bans increase on-site handling of yard debris
- # For DE, disposal would decrease from 234 lbs/cap to 76 lbs/cap (with about 30% of material reduced treated on-site)

Source: *Analysis of the Impact of a Yard Waste Ban On Landfill Quantities and Household Costs*, DSM Environmental Service for the DE SWM Authority, Sept. 14, 2004

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# New Policies to Consider

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Additional Local Policies:

# Yard Trimmings Diversion

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- # Require landscapers to recover yard debris
    - New York City
  - # Ban yard trimmings from disposal facilities
    - Sonoma County, CA; Nova Scotia
    - Frederick Co., MD; Northern New Castle Co., DE
  - # Set up drop-off sites for materials not collected at curbside
    - Boulder, CO; Fargo, ND; Kitsap Co., WA
  - # Give purchasing preference to local compost
    - Duke University
    - King County, WA
  - # Require all public agencies adopt yard debris reduction practices
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# What NYC Residents and Landscapers Need to Know About Yard Waste Removal Regulations

including NYC's Yard Waste Composting Law  
(Local Law 40 of 2006/Introduction 431-A)

## Yard Waste Set-Out Requirements for NYC Residents

- NYC residents living in districts designated for seasonal yard-waste collection must set out their yard waste for Department of Sanitation collection on the dates specified through official DSNY notification in either **paper lawn & leaf bags** (two-ply; 30–50 gallon capacity) or **unlined rigid containers** (18–32 gallon capacity). Residents can also set out tree limbs and branches in securely tied bundles no more than 2 feet high and 4 feet long. *Note special Asian Longhorned Beetle control measures below.*
- **Fines** for lack of compliance: \$25 for the first violation, \$50 for the second violation, \$100 for the third and each subsequent violation.
- **For info on the Department of Sanitation's yard waste collection programs**, call 311 or visit [www.nyc.gov/sanitation](http://www.nyc.gov/sanitation) or [www.nyc.gov/nycwasteless](http://www.nyc.gov/nycwasteless).
- **Special Asian Longhorned Beetle Control Measures:** to prevent further infestation, all wood from trees in quarantined areas is subject to special handling. **Before discarding tree prunings or firewood, residents in Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Queens must schedule an appointment for special Parks and Recreation pickup.** For more info on the Asian Longhorned Beetle or to schedule an appointment for wood debris collection, call 311 or visit [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org).



## Landscaper Generated Waste

Yard waste generated by landscapers cannot be set out for Department of Sanitation collection nor dispersed in or around the curb or street.



- **Landscapers must collect and dispose of any yard waste that they generate at a permitted composting facility.** Exception: if the DSNY Commissioner gives written notice that there isn't sufficient capacity at permitted composting facilities within NYC (or within 10 miles of the borough where yard waste was generated), landscapers may dispose of yard waste at any permitted solid waste facility.
- **Fines** for lack of compliance: \$250 for the first violation, \$1,000 for the second violation within a twelve-month period after the first violation, \$2,500 for the third or subsequent violation within a twelve-month period after the first violation.
- **For info on how to dispose of yard waste at the Fresh Kills Compost Site**, contact: David Fianko at the NYC Department of Sanitation, Bureau of Waste Disposal, 917-237-5992, [dfianko@dsny.nyc.gov](mailto:dfianko@dsny.nyc.gov).



City of New York, Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor  
Department of Sanitation, John J. Doherty, Commissioner



Additional State Policies:

# Yard Trimmings Diversion

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- # Ban use of plastic bags for yard trimmings
    - MN's compostable bag law forbids use of conventional plastic bags for yard trimmings collection in the Twin Cities area
  - # Allow tax deductions on state income tax
    - Compostable bags
    - Backyard composting bins
  - # Give purchasing preference to local compost
  - # Require yard debris collection and composting
    - Oregon, Iowa, Maine, West Virginia
  - # Require all public agencies adopt yard debris reduction practices
    - The California Integrated Waste Management Board
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Additional Local Policies:

# Food Scraps Diversion

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- # Publicize food donation programs
  - # Start a pilot food recovery program
    - Curbside
    - Drop-off
    - Public events
    - Government cafeterias
  - # Add food scrap recovery to solid waste plans
  - # Release RFP for food recovery services
  - # Maintain web site on food scraps diversion
  - # Work with other jurisdictions on facility siting
  - # Advocate for improved state policies
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Additional State Policies:

# Composting Infrastructure

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- # Develop model zoning ordinances
  - # Streamline regulations/permitting
    - Adopt performance based permitting regs
    - Allow small on-farm food scrap composting
    - Require permitted facilities to have trained operators
  - # Train all regulators
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# Performance-Based Regs

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## # Oregon

- Defines 3 tiers of feedstocks
    - Tier 1: yard trimmings, wood wastes, ag crop residues, vegetative food wastes
    - Tier 2: Tier 1 + manure + animal beddings
    - Tier 3: Tiers 1, 2 + dead animals, mixed food waste
  - Achieve pathogen reduction
  - No unsafe discharge of leachate or stormwater
  - Prevent odors
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# Performance-Based Regs

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## # Washington

- Defines 4 tiers of feedstock
- All composters must adhere to specific performance stds

## # California

- Additional requirements for selling more than 1,000 cubic yards/year of compost
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# Promoting Small-Scale Composting

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## # Oregon permit exemptions:

- 20 tons per year of meat and source separated post-consumer scraps in aerated static pile or windrow
  - 40 tons per year of meat and source separated post-consumer scraps in-vessel
  - Up to 100 tons per year of yard trimmings, industrially produced vegetative food scraps
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# Promoting Small-Scale Composting

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## # Washington permit exemptions:

- Substrate for growing mushrooms on-site
  - On-site vermicomposting
  - 40 cubic yds or less of yard trimmings, pre-consumer food scraps, and manure and animal bedding from herbivorous animals (on-site) OR less than 250 cubic yds on-site at any time
  - Agricultural composting when all ag wastes are generated on-site and all finished compost is used on-site
  - When ag waste generated off-site, compost used on-site, volume is limited to 1,000 cubic yards on-site at any time
  - For agricultural composting, if compost is sold off-site, than a farm management plan meeting conservation practice stds is required.
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# Promoting Small-Scale Composting

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## # California permit exemptions:

- Mushroom farming
  - Vermicomposting
  - Agricultural material derived on-site of which no more than 1,000 cubic yards is sold or given away per year
  - Green material, compost, or chipped and ground material if 500 cubic yds or less is on-site at any one time, the compostable materials are generated on-site, and if no more than 1,000 cubic yds of materials are sold or given away per year. Compostable material may also include up to 10% food material by volume.
  - In-vessel composting with a capacity less than 50 cubic yds
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# Promoting Small-Scale Composting

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- Maine: permit exemptions if in a 30-day period the facility accepts less than:
    - 10 cubic yds of leaf, vegetative, or other residuals with a C:N ratio greater than 25:1
    - 5 cubic yds of food and other residuals with a C:N ratio between 25:1 and 15:1
    - 5 cubic yds of fish or other residuals with a C:N ratio of less than 15:1
  - Maine: Agricultural composters that compost between 5 and 30 cubic yds of food and other residuals with a C:N ration between 25:1 and 15:1, but must submit a compost management plan and gain approval from the Dept. of Ag, Food & Rural Resources.
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# Promoting Small-Scale Composting

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- ✦ Iowa: permit exemptions for composters accepting up to 2 tons per week of food scraps from off-site
  - ✦ Rhode Island: Registration and approval, but not full permit, is required for agricultural composters if they accept:
    - Not more than 10 days per day of pre-sorted produce or vegetative scraps
    - Not more than 1 ton per day of pre-sorted kitchen, restaurant, or municipal food scraps
    - Not more than ½ ton per day of unprocessed meat and fish wastes
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# Promoting Small-Scale Composting

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## ■ Pennsylvania

- Makes a general permit available for on-farm composting
  - Farmer can sell or distribute compost
  - Compost facility cannot exceed 5 acres
  - Cannot accept more than 500 tons or 1,000 cubic yds per year source separated food waste and cannot accept more than 3,000 cubic yds of total material
  - Must submit names and locations of off-site waste generators and amounts and types of waste received
  - Need a site plan and procedures to assure compost quality
  - Windrows must maintain a temperature of 55 deg C for 15 days; aerated static piles and in-vessel systems must have a temperature of 55 deg C for 72 consecutive hours
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# Promoting Small-Scale Composting

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- Massachusetts permit exemptions for:
    - Leaf composters with less than 10,000 tons on-site at one time
    - Many types of on-farm composters such as up to 20 cubic yds per day of vegetative scraps, or up to 10 cubic yds or 5 tons per day of food material (registration required as well as meeting performance stds)
    - Agricultural composters may accept materials from off-site
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Additional State Policies:

## Building Markets for Compost

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- # Develop compost benefit and usage education programs
  - # Require state agencies procure soil amendments by specifying composts certified by the Seal of Testing Assurance
  - # Give preference in purchasing to in-state-produced compost
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Additional State Policies:

## Miscellaneous

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- # Require “pay-as-you-throw” or SMART
  - # Promote Industrial Revenue Bond programs for composting facility construction capital
  - # Monetize climate benefits of composting
  - # Build and maintain comprehensive web site
  - # Target large generators by providing resources and technical assistance
  - # Provide compost use training, and compost use specs and guidance
  - # Implement purchasing specs for compostable food service ware
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## Office of Compliance Assistance and Pollution Prevention Food Scrap Management

## Topic Links

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## Food Scrap Management

Did you know that each American throws away an average of 1.3 pounds of food scraps every day? Each year, residents in Ohio generate enough food scraps to pile on a football field over a half mile high! Food scrap waste generated by all households in the United States could be piled on a football field more than 15 miles high.

The top two portions of the U.S. waste stream (paper and yard waste) have been successfully diverted from landfills through recycling and composting efforts, with recovery rates of 50 percent and 62 percent, respectively. Palling in comparison, the food scrap recovery rate is less than three percent.

Across the nation states are exploring ways to reduce pollution and encourage alternative methods of waste management such as recycling. Although some food scrap management programs are being implemented at the local level (universities, business locations, etc.), more can be done to help reduce the need for food scrap disposal.

Ohio EPA has developed this Web site and accompanying brochure to identify resources that you might find helpful when deciding whether to implement programs to address food scraps. There are several options to help address food scraps, including:

- Preventing the generation of food scraps.

## U.S. Waste Generation by Category



OCAPP Hotline  
 (800) 329-7518  
 Weekdays, 8  
 AM - 5 PM

Brownfield  
 Redevelopment  
 Environmental  
 Insurance  
 Program

MUNICIPAL  
 STORM  
 WATER - MS4  
 COMMUNITIES

Ohio's Food  
 Scrap  
 Management  
 Initiative

Tox-Minus  
 Initiative

Ohio Awards  
 for Outstanding  
 Achievement in  
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- [Regulatory Information](#)

[Waste & Recycling: Composting & Organics](#)  
[Composting at Home](#)

[A Guide to Composting Yard & Food Waste](#)  
| [Web page](#)

[Composting Workshops & Demonstrations](#)  
| [Web page](#)

[Don't Trash Grass](#)  
| [Web page](#)

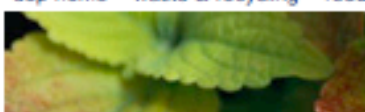
[Get a Low-Cost, Rodent-Resistant Compost Bin](#)  
| [Web page](#)

[Materials for Teaching Residents About Composting](#)  
| [Outline and talking points](#)  
| [MS Word 23 KB](#)  
  
| [Poster: Composting is Easy](#)  
| [PDF 293 KB](#)

[Vermicomposting: Indoor Composting with Worms](#)  
| [Web page](#)

[Open Burning \(of certain organic materials when composting is not practical\)](#)  
| [Web page](#)





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- Waste & Recycling**
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## WASTE & RECYCLING

### Supermarket Recycling in Massachusetts

- [Introduction](#)
- [Supermarket Recycling Program Certification](#)
- [Recycling & Reuse Assistance for Supermarkets](#)
- [Background Information & News](#)

Waste & Recycling: Supermarket Recycling in Massachusetts

#### Introduction

Recycling and composting organics and other waste materials is good both for the environment and for business.

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) and the [Massachusetts Food Association \(MFA\)](#), through a [Memorandum of Understanding](#), have partnered to establish a voluntary [Supermarket Recycling Program Certification](#) that encourages supermarkets to develop sustainable programs for recycling and reusing organics and other materials.

Participating stores not only save money, but also improve their compliance with existing Massachusetts [waste disposal bans](#) (rules that prohibit disposal of certain materials that can be recycled). MassDEP developed this page to help supermarkets establish and grow sustainable recycling programs.

[Back to Supermarket Recycling index](#)

Waste & Recycling: Supermarket Recycling in Massachusetts  
[Supermarket Recycling Program Certification](#)

By obtaining Supermarket Recycling Program Certification (SRPC) status, a full-service grocery store can qualify for relief from some regulatory requirements. To participate in the voluntary program, a supermarket needs to set up and maintain a comprehensive recycling and reuse program, and document its efforts by submitting a certification to MassDEP. The benefit: truckloads of trash from that store will not be subject to comprehensive inspection when they arrive at transfer stations or disposal facilities.



Additional State Policies:

## Miscellaneous, cont.

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- # Prohibit the use of claims such as “biodegradable” unless these claims are verified
  - # Ban disposal of commercial food residuals once an adequate processing infrastructure has been established
  - # Require each county develop and adopt a recycling plan that includes recycling of yard trimmings and food residuals
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## Contact

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[www.ilsr.org](http://www.ilsr.org)

[www.sustainableplastics.org](http://www.sustainableplastics.org)

[bplatt@ilsr.org](mailto:bplatt@ilsr.org)

[www.COOL2012.org](http://www.COOL2012.org)

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