



Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System
Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education
1536 Wynkoop St., Suite 100
Denver, CO 80202

Dear STARS Program Staff—

This letter is to affirm that Oberlin College's Residential Compost Program meets the STARS criteria for Innovation credits. STARS reserves innovation credits for "new, extraordinary, unique, ground-breaking, or uncommon outcomes, policies, and practices that greatly exceed the highest criterion of an existing STARS credit or are not covered by an existing STARS credit." The composting system at Oberlin College meets those criteria.

While many institutions have adopted composting to divert waste from landfills in their dining and grounds operations, Oberlin College has gone further. Oberlin College incorporated composting into the building design of the newly opened Robert Lewis Kahn Hall, a sustainability-themed first-year experience residence hall, ensuring that food scraps are collected and sorted in an efficient manner. Further, student groups worked with college staff and faculty to design a pilot collection and transportation system, diverting 700 pounds of organic materials in fall 2011. The pilot is expanding campus-wide this spring. Further, and perhaps most importantly, Oberlin College staff and students are working with the City of Oberlin, The Oberlin Project, and other large food scrap-producing institutions to develop a community-wide composting program.

Our modern society allows individuals to too easily disconnect from and ignore the realities of waste. Oberlin College's Residential Compost Program is one of the many ways that the institution is an innovative leader in sustainability. The college is better connecting students to the realities of resource consumption. To increase sustainability literacy, it is imperative to improve understanding of humans' effects within their ecosystems.

Sincerely,

Heather Adelman
Assistant Director, The Oberlin Project
Vice-chair, Resource Conservation and Recovery Commission, City of Oberlin