

# College Composting

## Trends and Resources

Cary Oshins  
Director of Education and Annual  
Conference  
US Composting Council



# Presentation outline:

- C & U Composting Snapshot and trends
- Successful program elements
- Role and growth of compostables
- Resources

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# What does College Composting Look Like?

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St. John's U



UMD

# COMPOST

Help reduce our campus footprint

## YES



Food Waste

Cups and Plates from the Food Court, Bookstore, & Coffee Shop



Paper Products



Compostable Cups & Compostable Utensils

## NO



Styrofoam Plates



Wrappers



Straws



Coca Cola Cups

Also:

••••• Pizza Boxes

••••• Plastic Wrap

← & PRODUCTS WITH THIS

UMD Sustainability



UNC-Charlotte



St. John's U



Austin CC



WSU-Mt Vernon



Cornell



OSU

# First poll: who's here?

Is your college/university:

1. Currently collecting food scraps for composting
2. Planning or piloting a food scrap collection program
3. Not actively planning but expect will have to develop a food scrap collection program in the next few years

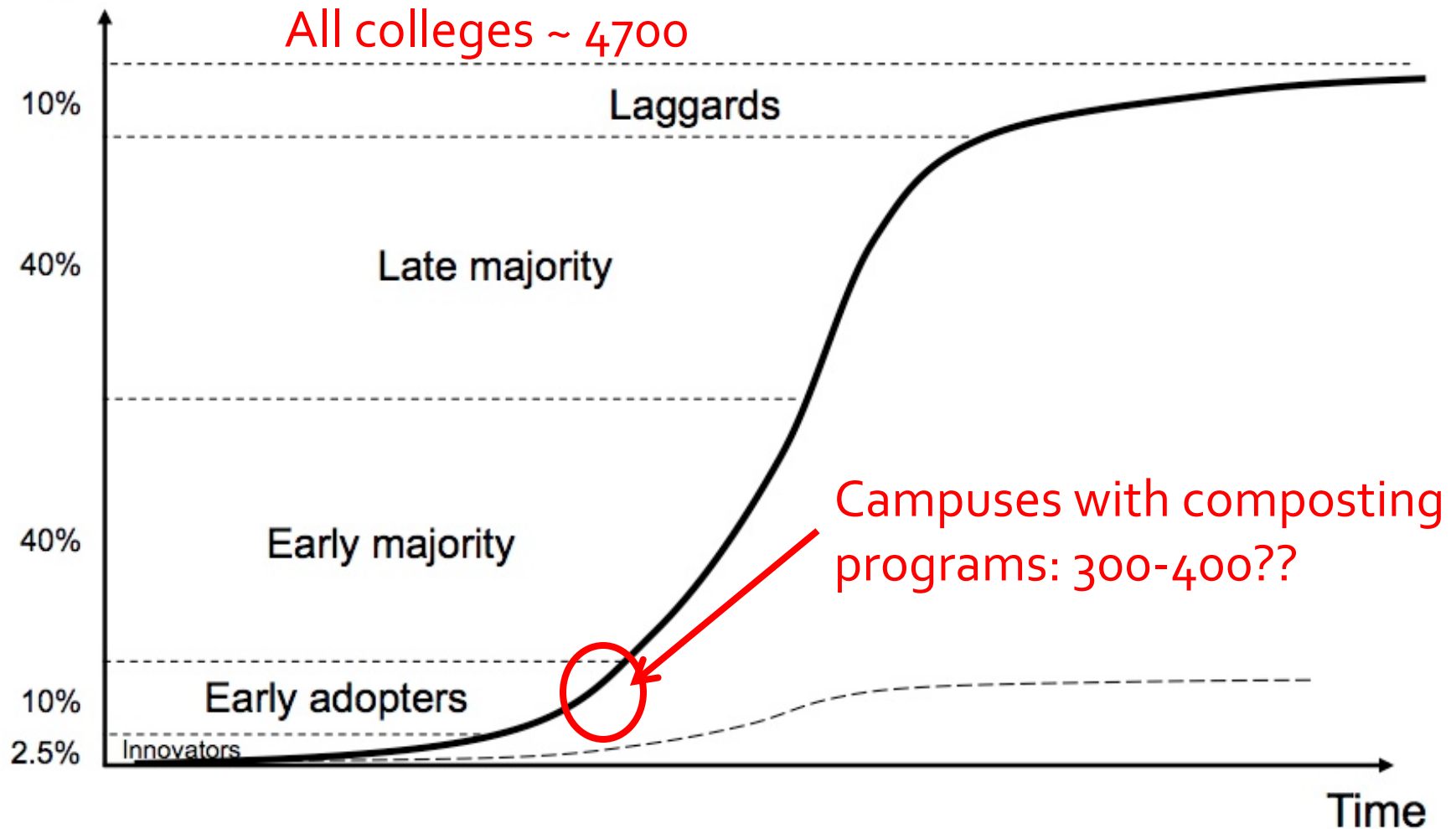
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# Diffusion of innovation model



# College composting data

- EPA Food Recovery Challenge
  - 147 colleges
- KAB Recyclemania
  - 145 colleges (only 30 duplicates)
- AASHE
  - 137 colleges (49 dupes)
- Google News Search
- Focus on food—what about other organics?

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# Second poll:

Are you a college

1. Student
2. Faculty/Administrator
3. Building, grounds or maintenance staff person
4. Food service staff person
5. Other—non college

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# Features of successful programs

## 1. Involve all key stakeholders

- Students
- Administration
- Buildings and grounds, maintenance
- Dining services
- Faculty

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- Hauler
- Composter

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# Features of successful programs

1. Involve all key stakeholders
2. Champion
  - Can be any of the stakeholders
  - Keeps process moving

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# Features of successful programs

1. Involve all key stakeholders
2. Champion
3. Pilot study
  - Start small
  - Test technologies, techniques
  - Low risk, cost

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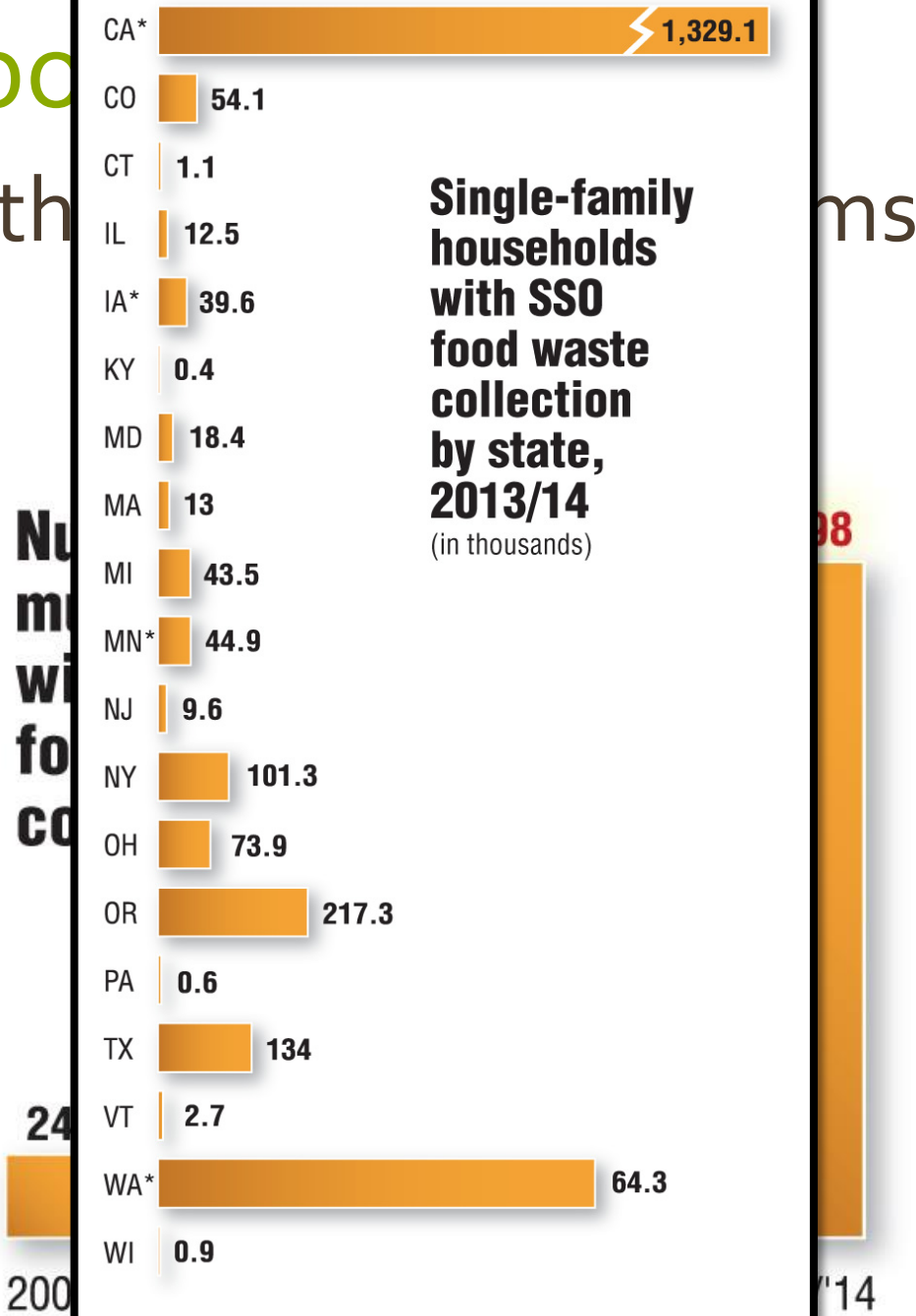


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# Compo

- Growth



Number of households with SSO food waste collection

200

Source: Biocycle



Compos

\*Not all communities reported households, so number is actually higher

# Composting trends

- Growth of curbside programs
  - Switch from on-site to off-site composting
- Policy drivers
  - Organics Bans and Diversion mandates

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# Composting trends

- Growth of curbside programs
  - Switch from on-site to off-site composting
- Policy drivers
  - Organics Bans and Diversion mandates
- Technologies
  - Forced air systems
    - For odor control, stormwater mngt, footprint minimization
    - CASP
    - In vessel
  - Screening technology
    - Removal of physical contaminants
    - Limits in finished compost

- Rise of compostables

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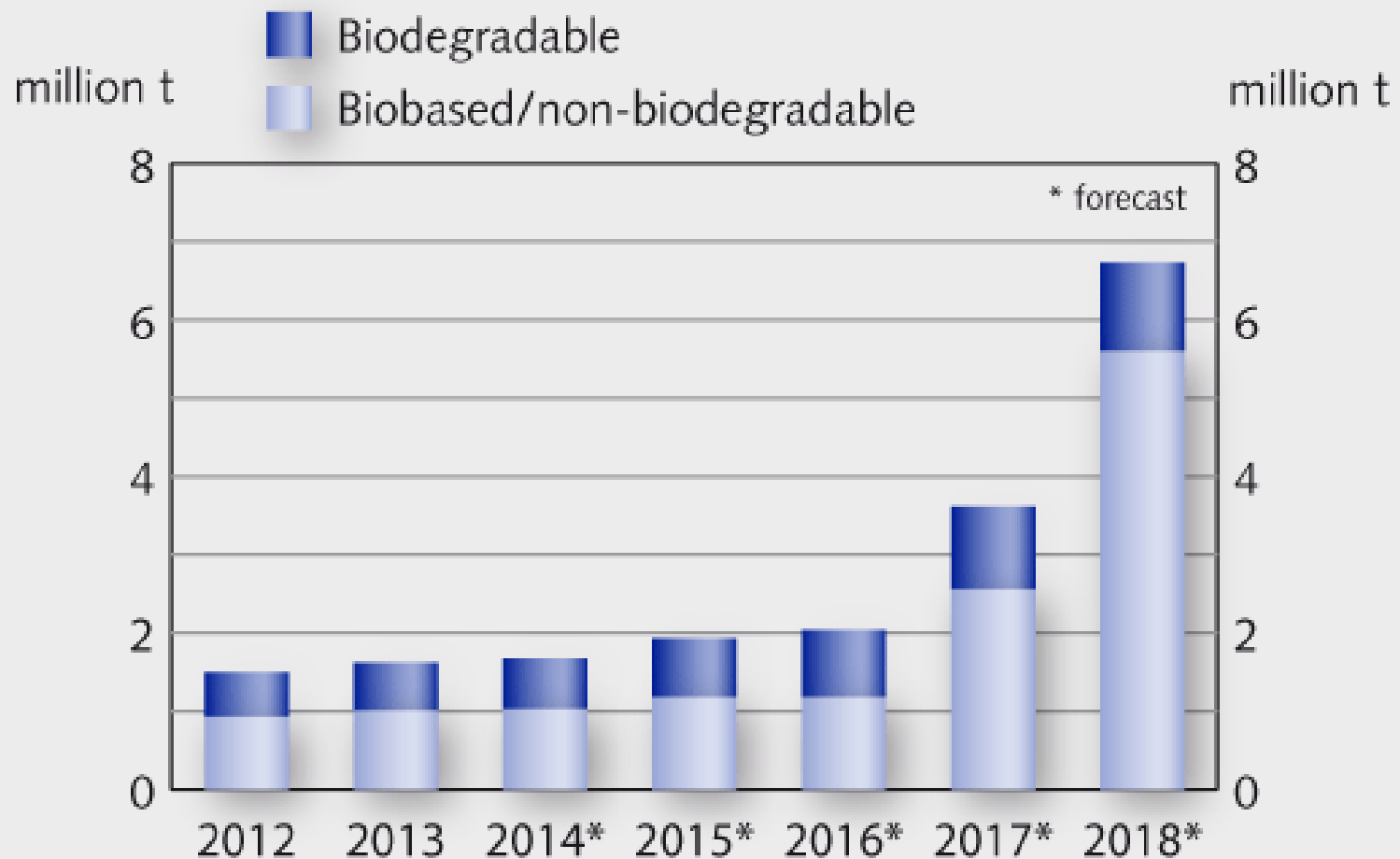


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# Bioplastics: Global Production

2012 - 2018, by type (in million tonnes)



# Compostables

- Breaks down under composting conditions
  - Biodegradation: 90% Converted to CO<sub>2</sub> and biomass within 180 days
  - Fragmentation: >90% passes through 2mm screen
  - Toxicity: grows plants, limits on metals
  - NOT the same as BIODEGRADABLE
    - Ambient conditions

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# Compostables

- Bioplastic ≠ Compostable

- Bio

- o

- s

- Co

- E

- M

- F

- S

- Should be 3<sup>rd</sup> party certified



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## Certified Products Catalog

4637 Products listed as of  
*Friday, May 29, 2015*

[About the BPI](#) | [Help](#)



Foodservice



Cups (hot)



Cups (cold)



Cutlery



Food Waste  
Bags



Yard Waste  
Bags



Resins &  
Coatings



Certificates  
no longer  
valid

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Fabrical



EcoProducts



World-Centric



Stalk Market



BioBag



Green Day



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# Compostables: Issues

- Greenwashing

- Labels like biodegradable, oxo-degradable
- Model labeling law and labeling guidelines

- Inconsistent results

- Even certified products don't always work
  - Time, moisture, temperature
  - Composter needs to test

- Organic market

- NOSB: Compostable plastics not allowed, even as feedstock
- Under petition

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# Resources

- EPA Webinar: Composting Strategies for Colleges and Universities
- AASHE: [resources/campus-composting-programs](https://aashe.org/resources/campus-composting-programs) (members only)
- GRRN: campus compost
- Cptoolkit.org
- PLAN: <http://www.postlandfill.org/>

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# Thanks!

## Cary Oshins

Director of Education and Annual Conference

US Composting Council

phone: [301.897.2715](tel:301.897.2715) x308

[cary.oshins@compostingcouncil.org](mailto:cary.oshins@compostingcouncil.org)

CA Office: 709 Modesto Ave, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Main Office: 5400 Grosvenor Lane, Bethesda, MD 20814

[compostingcouncil.org](http://compostingcouncil.org) | [compostsolution.org](http://compostsolution.org)

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