

Preserving the environment through integrated recovery and disposal.

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**PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Oneida-Herkimer Solid Waste Authority Unveils New Facility to Recover Food Scraps for Energy**

The Oneida-Herkimer Solid Waste Authority (Authority) has completed construction of a new Food2Energy/Source Separated Organics Processing Facility. The facility will provide for the recovery of food scraps in order to divert this waste from the Regional Landfill and turn it into energy. The \$3.4 million facility is located at the Authority's Utica location and will provide feedstock to Oneida County's Water Pollution Control Plant's (WPCP) new anaerobic digestion system.

Through the Authority's new organics diversion program, "Food2Energy", participants will be able to deliver bagged and packaged source separated organics (SSO) to the Authority's processing facility where packaging will be separated from food scraps. The recovered food scraps will then be sent to Oneida County's WPCP where it will be turned into energy through a process called anaerobic digestion.

Examples of source separated organics include grocery store bakery and produce waste, institutional cafeteria and restaurant waste, and food production waste. The SSO Processing Facility will begin accepting organics waste from large generators (i.e. colleges, hospitals, grocery stores), as well as voluntary disposal from smaller generators and residents.

"The Authority has continually evaluated options for organics diversion to find a practical and economical solution to integrate into its existing solid waste management system. It is the Authority's goal to be proactive in terms of diverting waste and preserving our region we call home," stated William Rabbia, Authority Executive Director. "Food2Energy is another example of that."

Food2Energy provides an economic incentive for large generators to participate in the program. The tipping fee for garbage in Oneida and Herkimer Counties is currently \$62 per ton. The tipping fee for SSO is \$40 per ton.

In addition to the economic and environmental benefits, Food2Energy provides our region with the infrastructure to be ahead of the curve when it comes to an organics mandate. In April 2019, New York State passed legislation requiring large generators of organics waste (producing at least two tons per week) to divert the material from regional landfills through waste reduction, donation, or delivery to a certified anaerobic digestion or composting facility (if such facilities are within 25 miles of the generator). The new mandate will take effect January 1, 2022.

"We designed the program to succeed with or without a mandate and we are able to provide an economic incentive of \$22 per ton. Generators who fall under NYS's new mandate will have a cost-effective, efficient option," said Rabbia.

Oneida County Executive Anthony J. Picente said, "This is another great example of the benefits of thinking regionally. The implementation of Food2Energy is something County businesses and residents should be proud of." He went on to say, "This is a prime example of how good planning, foresight and an integrated system can benefit the County today and in the long-term."

According to Herkimer County Legislator and Authority Board Vice Chairman Vincent Bono, "There is great value to our region in the Authority's long-term planning and Herkimer County is proud to be partners in an endeavor that will greatly benefit future generations."

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