

RITA In Action!

PUSH-IT Composting Workshop

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Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs), along with other Indiana Conservation Partnership (ICP) staff, work diligently to meet the needs of local landowners and producers through technical assistance, funding, outreach and education, and other avenues of support as needed. As districts in southwest Indiana reviewed post-event surveys following adult outreach and education events, they began to notice an ongoing desire for education surrounding composting. As the Resilient Indiana technician covering this region, I worked closely with local SWCDs to brainstorm ways in which we could meet those needs.

Fortunately, our local working group, Promoting Urban Soil Health in Towns (PUSH-IT) is still operating and has funds available for planning and event costs. This not only helped financially but also allowed us to lean on members of that group for support in the planning process. Because of the collaborative effort of PUSH-IT, Purdue Extension, Resilient Indiana, and Warrick, Posey, and Vanderburgh County SWCDs, the Composting Workshop was a great success!

This event was held April 11th, 2026, and featured a number of expert speakers. Matt Knepper of Evanston Valley Compost was the keynote speaker, educating the audience on what compost is and the added value of composting. Our breakout sessions included local producer Pat Bittner covering the details on vermicomposting, Bruce McDonald of Advanced Composting Technologies discussing industrial composting and waste disposal, Amanda Bradshaw Burks of Purdue Extension talking about backyard composting, and Evanston Valley Compost addressing commercial composting. One of the primary goals of this particular workshop was to offer a variety of speakers with different backgrounds, levels of expertise, and areas of focus. We recognized these differences within potential participants and felt it was necessary to address these differences with the information and education provided. Post-event feedback has been positive thus far and we are already looking forward to planning the next workshop like this!

