



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Calling all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians... Are You Composting Yet?**

During Compost Awareness Week, May 3-9, Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are encouraged to start composting and do their part to help keep organic waste out of landfills.

"Composting is an important waste management activity that can be done with great ease and has many benefits, and I encourage all residents of the province to become involved in composting," said the Honourable Charlene Johnson, Minister of Environment and Conservation. "Not only does composting divert organic waste from our landfills, preventing harmful greenhouse gases from being produced, it also creates rich organic soil that can enhance and beautify gardens and lawns."

The interim Chair and CEO of the Multi-Materials Stewardship Board (MMSB), Mike Samson, said that MMSB participates in a number of activities during Compost Awareness Week to help advance composting in Newfoundland and Labrador, including presentations in schools and at businesses. This year, MMSB is partnering with MUN Botanical Garden to educate residents about the simplicity of composting. Throughout the week, there will be a number of activities at the garden, including compost displays, demonstrations, lunchtime lectures and a special family program called Three Cheers for Composting, all of which are free to the public.

"MMSB is very pleased to be teaming up with MUN Botanical Garden to help create compost awareness and educate the public about the benefits of composting," said Mr. Samson. "Engaging the public in composting activities is key to helping them understand the process and why small actions, such as composting, taken by each and every one of us can make a big difference for our environment."

Anne Madden, MUN Botanical Garden's Education Co-ordinator, said Compost Awareness Week is always an exciting time at the garden and partnering with MMSB will help enhance its compost awareness celebration this year.

"We enjoy celebrating Compost Awareness Week and are extremely pleased to have MMSB onboard with us this year, as we work together for a great cause and ensure another successful event," said Ms. Madden. "We encourage everyone to drop by the garden and learn about the value of composting. We have lots of educational activities, as well as fun for the whole family."

Mr. Samson also added that MMSB is building on the success of its 2005 Residential Backyard Composting Program with the development of a new Community Composting Pilot Program for

the province. The program will be funded through the Newfoundland and Labrador Waste Management Trust Fund.

“Under the new Community Composting Pilot Program, MMSB will provide the initial capital investment to establish the program and the required training to operate the programs in each of the participating communities,” said Mr. Samson. “Participating communities in the pilot have been strategically selected to represent a variety of geographic, climatic and demographic conditions throughout the province. Program details are being finalized and we expect to officially launch the new initiative within a couple of weeks.”

MMSB’s Residential Backyard Composting Program was a two-year program that involved the sale of subsidized compost bins and a major public education and awareness initiative to increase participation in backyard composting in the province. The program received an overwhelming response throughout the province and MMSB sold all 10,000 compost bins in the first six months of the program. An additional 10,000 bins were acquired which were also quickly sold. Through this program, participation in residential backyard composting increased by 60 per cent.

Compost bins can be purchased at stores throughout the province that normally carry garden equipment and supplies.

Organic waste makes up 30 per cent of all waste that is generated in Newfoundland and Labrador. Over 300 tonnes of organic waste goes into our landfills on a daily basis. Buried, organic waste produces harmful greenhouse gases, as well as a toxic liquid commonly known as leachate, which can pollute soil and water.

MMSB is a provincial Crown agency that reports to the Minister of Environment and Conservation. Its mandate is to support progressive waste management practices in the province, with a particular focus on waste diversion, recycling and public education, in order to ensure a clean and healthy environment throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

For more details about Compost Awareness Week activities and times, please visit <http://www.mun.ca/botgarden>

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