

MEDIA RELEASE

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Stop organic waste going to landfill A new year's resolution we can all keep

Keep Australia Beautiful National Association (KABNA) has called for all Australians to keep their organic food and garden waste out of landfill in a bid to significantly reduce Australia's greenhouse gas emissions.

According to Keep Australia Beautiful National Chair, Don Chambers, "if we are serious about reducing Australia's environmental footprint and tackling climate change, it is imperative that measures are introduced to reduce the amount of waste we needlessly send to landfill each year.

"Organic waste makes up around a third of household waste and rises to an average 64 per cent* when paper and cardboard is included. In landfill, organic waste breaks down to form methane, a powerful greenhouse gas that is also highly flammable. Yet, it is such an easy material to divert from the waste stream through composting", Chambers added.

To help address this, Keep Australia Beautiful is calling on all State, Territory and Australian Environment Ministers to consider a national policy that encourages and facilitates Australian households and businesses to compost their organic food waste.

Whilst there are a number of initiatives involving organic food waste collections being run with households and businesses in various states and territories, much more needs to be done.

As a supporter of Keep Australia Beautiful, fast food chain Hungry Jack's began kitchen food waste composting trials in two Adelaide restaurants in June this year. In August, during Keep Australia Beautiful Week, an Australian-first trial was then rolled out to the dining room of its Fulham metropolitan restaurant.

According to **Hungry Jack's National Marketing Director, Jim Wilson,** "there is no doubt that businesses such as ours need to continually look at ways to reduce our impact on the environment. With the support of Keep Australia Beautiful, we decided to take our work in this area a step further to better understand the feasibility and logistics required to divert dining room waste from landfill.

"Early reports show that many of our customers were willing to get behind the initiative to divert their compostable waste from the general waste stream, with very little to no contamination issues arising", Wilson added.

KABNA is also calling for attention to be given to increasing the use of composted organic by-products.

"The use of composted organic by-products over manufactured virgin fertilizer products on our land helps create a sustainable industry and provides an opportunity to improve our soils and farms by returning carbon to the soil.

"This will help make Australia bountiful, as well as beautiful", **said the National Chair, Don Chambers.**

Also supporting Keep Australia Beautiful's push for a national organics policy is Luke Agati, CEO of Remondis.

“We know that organics materials have a significant greenhouse gas impact and removing them from the waste stream will have a positive effect. Our focus is delivering quality organics and residual waste processing solutions like the Organic Resource Recovery Facility we operate in Port Macquarie, which produces high quality re-earth compost.

“By recovering and processing organic materials collected from residential and commercial waste streams, we can minimize greenhouse gas and provide a high quality product for reuse in household gardens, farming and agriculture”, he added.

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Media Contacts:

- Lara Shannon, Keep Australia Beautiful, Publicity Manager, 0415 076 015
- Don Chambers, Keep Australia Beautiful National Chairman, 0408 654 209
- Tanya Ha, Keep Australia Beautiful National Board, 0404 083 863
- Tor Hundloe, Keep Australia Beautiful National Board, 0412 485 691

Editor's Notes:

*Source: Figure 5 page 37 National Waste Policy.

For further information about state or territory initiatives, or the Hungry Jack's SA trial, please contact Lara Shannon on 0415 076 015 or laras@kab.org.au