



UCRRA Recycling Outreach Team Class Catalog

Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency



www.UCRRRA.org

2026 Class Catalog for Adults

Ulster County Recycles is a county-wide outreach education and community engagement program administered by UCRRA's Recycling Outreach Team.

The Agency proudly fosters environmental literacy in the communities we serve, believing that educating the public about recycling, composting, and waste reduction has incredible social, environmental, and economic impacts.

By promoting literacy in these areas, UCRRA strives to help build resilient communities that engage youth and citizens to demonstrate concern for the environment, so residents and community leaders can act on the environmental challenges of the future.

Our Recycling Outreach Team provides FREE workshops for adults. We often partner with libraries, community centers, town halls, social clubs and more to deliver public or private workshops for your group. Please consider contacting us 30 days in advance to discuss your program, as our availability and schedule fills up quickly.

I hope you enjoy browsing our 2025 class catalog for adults. **I look forward to connecting on how we can help you reach your goals with environmental education!**

Angelina Brandt, Director of Sustainability





Facility Tours

The Agency offers free guided tours of the recycling and composting facilities, by appointment. Tours must be scheduled on weekdays between the hours of 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM. Tours can be tailored to your group's interests or provide a complete overview of waste, recycling, and composting. Minimum five (5) and maximum twenty five (25) guests per tour group. Children must be accompanied by teachers or parents/guardians at all times. Tours are typically 45–90 minutes. Safety is our top priority; all visitors must wear hard hats during tours (provided by the Agency) and open shoes are expressly prohibited (no sandals, flip flops, etc.). A safety briefing will be emailed to you to further set expectations about tours. Tours are seasonal; scheduled April – October.

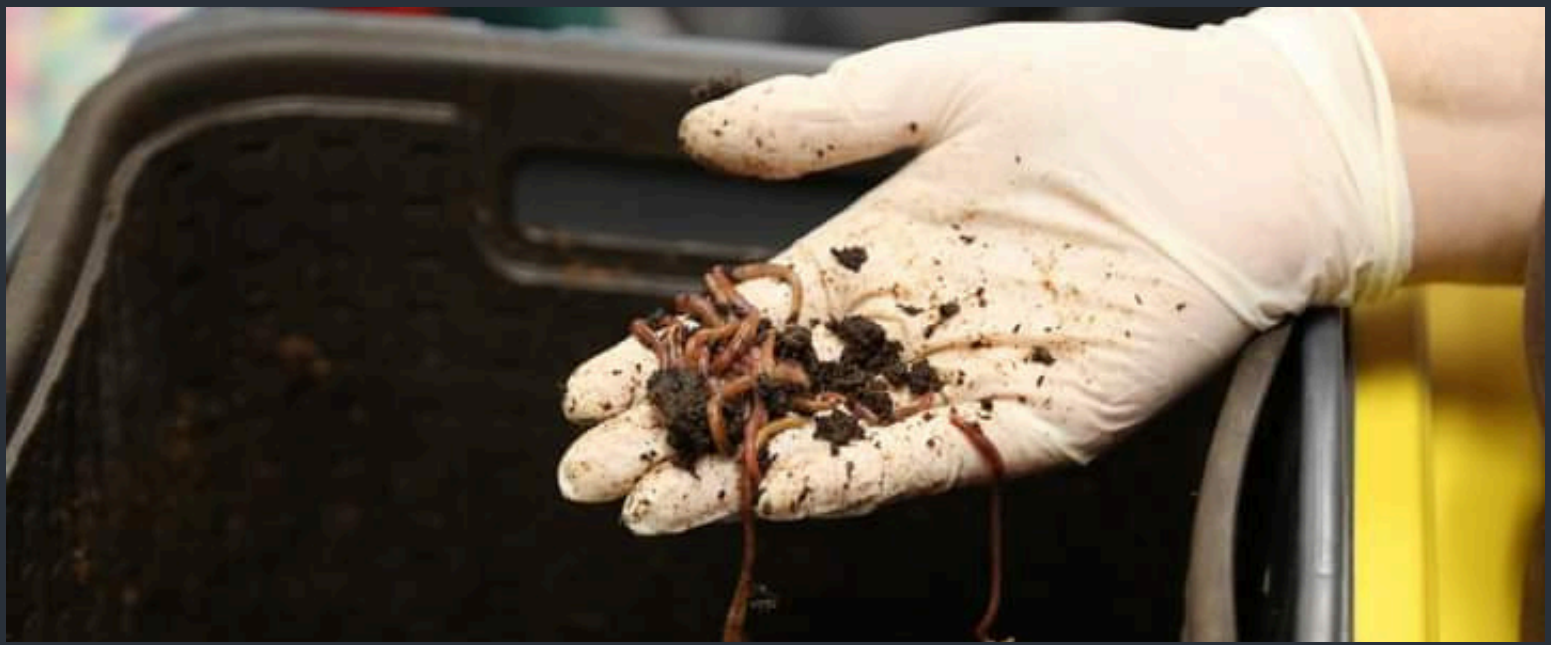
Home Composting Demonstration Garden

The Compost Demo Garden is an outdoor learning center for hands-on instruction on backyard composting systems, troubleshooting tips, and best practices. The Garden features various styles of compost bins, educational signs, and other interactive tools. A visit to the Demo Site can be a stand-alone session or added to a facility tour.



Advanced Composting Seminar

This advanced composting seminar is ideal for home composters who have some experience, but want to 'up their game' with backyard composting and learn more about using finished compost. Let us help you to learn more skills, tips, and tricks to address some common troubleshooting issues and make that 'gardener's black gold' as quickly as possible. This class will review some of the science behind how composting 'works' through the soil food web, how to properly balance browns and greens, and various other tips for making a hot compost heap. At the end of the seminar, participants can also learn about the benefits and uses of finished compost and how compost can improve soil health. Ask us about our topic add-ons for this workshop!



Vermicomposting 101

Vermicomposting (composting with worms) is a great way to compost indoors all year round, whether you live in an apartment or a home. Vermicomposting is also a great option for group settings (composting in the classroom or in a work office). By learning a few simple tips and tricks, anyone can be successful at this method of indoor composting. This workshop will explain everything you need to know to get started. Participants will get to see inside a live worm bin and learn about worm ecology, the worm lifecycle, how a worm bin is built, designed, and managed, and why worm poop is some of the best fertilizer on Earth! Please note that this class can be a stand alone workshop or a topic add-on.

Bokashi Composting 101

Unlike “conventional” composting, Bokashi is an anaerobic process where food scraps are placed in a sealed, air-tight container and are fermented with the aid of a specialized additive (a microbial compost accelerator). After a few weeks of fermenting, the “unfinished” byproduct of bokashi should be added to a backyard compost pile to complete the decomposition process. For advanced composters, bokashi methods have a lot to offer as a way to manage meat, bones, and dairy products. Using Bokashi can also introduce beneficial microbes to the compost pile, which speeds up the process so you can use your finished compost faster. Learn about the wacky world of microbes and this interesting method of composting! Please note that this class can be a stand along workshop or a topic add-on.



Cold Weather Compost

This is one our many workshop “add-on” topics for any of our other composting seminars. Composting slows in colder weather. Learn some helpful tips to keep your outdoor compost pile cooking all year round! Participants learn practical tips and what maintenance you can do in the Fall and Winter to keep “cooking” hot compost even in the cold weather.





Using Compost in the Garden

Ever wonder why compost is called Gardener's Black Gold? This class will introduce you to the basics of soil science, and how using compost in the garden enriches the soil and makes any soil easier to work and cultivate. There are many horticultural benefits to using compost! We'll review all beneficial uses and different types of applications for how to use compost, and participants will hear about the Agency's Grow Ulster Green Compost. This class can be a stand alone workshop or a topic add-on.

School Composting 101

Did you know that up to 80% of school waste can be reduced, recycled, or composted? Whether you're interested in starting an onsite compost pile, or working with a local composting service, we can help explain the pros and cons of each option and resources for how to get started! This workshop is ideal for a Green Team that's interested in implementing composting at school (classroom or cafeteria). This presentation can be geared towards youth or school administrators. We'll explain the benefits of school composting, planning tips and best practices, and everything you need to know to plan a successful composting program.

UCRRA: Connecting Communities Through Composting

Have you ever wondered how the UCRRA makes it's Grow Ulster Green Compost, and how this program came about? Over 12+ years, the UCRRA grew from a small scale pilot project to an award-winning industrial scale composting operation nationally recognized by the United States Composting Council. This presentation not only shares our story and big milestones along the way, but also explains the basic principles behind the Extended Aerated Static Pile methods used by the Agency. Learn how we transform "trash" to treasure in as little as 90 days!





Recycle Right

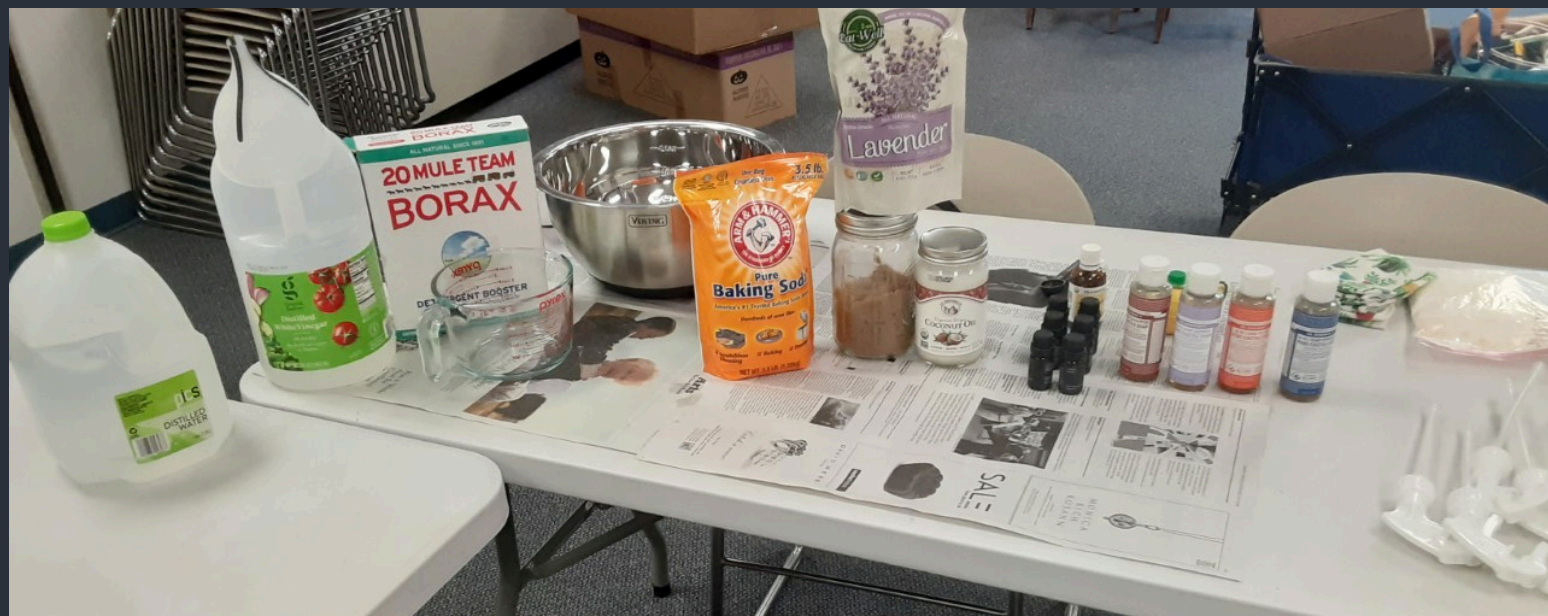
Why can't ALL plastics be recycled? What does the chasing arrows symbol really mean? Should you recycle that coffee cup? Keep the bottle cap on or off? What is a clamshell, anyway?? We get it, recycling can be very confusing. Putting unacceptable items in the recycling bin can damage equipment, harm workers, and reduce the value and environmental benefits of recycling. In this class, you will learn how recycling 'works' in Ulster County, the benefits of recycling correctly, what happens at a recycling center and what makes something 'recyclable' or not. Let us help demystify how to recycle right. This is one of our most popular workshops!

Plastic Pollution & Its Impacts

Have you ever wondered where plastic comes from, how it's made, and what happens once it's thrown away? Plastic litters our environment, pollutes our oceans, and emerging science suggests plastic use can also expose us to chemicals that affect our health. This class will explain the impact of plastic pollution from ecological, social, and environmental issues, and how we can drastically reduce the amount of single-use disposable plastics we use on a daily basis. There are plastic alternatives to almost all of the common items we buy, consume, and discard. Simple swaps and new habits can help avoid needless packaging and lessen our impact on our environment. Learn how to recycle plastic correctly, become a climate smart shopper, save money, and reduce waste by developing new habits. You will never look at plastic the same again!

Understanding the Waste-Climate Connection

What actually happens to the objects that we throw something "away" – how is waste managed in a landfill and how does waste contribute to our carbon footprint? This workshop will introduce some basic climate science, eye-opening facts about waste generation and characterization in New York, and leave participants feeling inspired to radically transform their relationship to "waste." Americans generate 2x the world waste generation rate per capita, but leading experts believe that up 80% of what Americans throw away can be reduced, recycled, composted, or avoided all together. Let's dive in to the facts and explore the strategies our community is taking and how each of us can play a role in reducing our impact.



Eco Friendly Home: DIY Cleaners & More!

We all have our favorite household products that we rely on because they work well – from a preferred all-purpose cleaner to our favorite toothpaste. But some of the brands and products we've grown to love contain chemicals that don't love us back! Chemicals can irritate our skin, eyes, and lungs even with small repeated exposure. Many products contain chemicals whose health risks are still unknown. Did you know that cleaning chemicals are also classified as Hazardous Waste and require safe disposal? Although eco-friendly alternatives are becoming more widely available in stores, you can easily make your own at home with very simple and low-cost ingredients! Curious? This fun hands-on workshop is informative and will introduce you to ways of making your own products that are better for the environment, your health, and your wallet! Ask us about the demos we can offer in this class! Participants will also learn about what to do with their old unwanted chemicals and how the Agency's Household Hazardous Waste Collection program works.

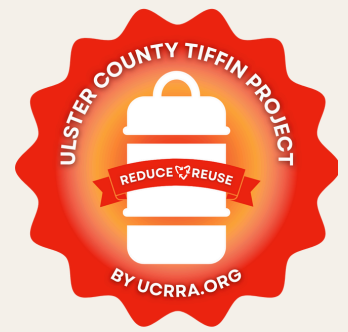
The Conscious Closet: from Waste to Wardrobe - coming soon!

New York State residents trash over 1 billion pounds of clothing, fabric, and textiles each year. Ninety five percent (95%) of all used clothing, footwear, and other fabric household products like sheets, towels, curtains, and more can be recycled, but most people are unsure how to recycle fabric correctly. What is at the root of our fashion overconsumption in America? What is the real carbon footprint behind the clothes we wear? And can our garments be potentially toxic to us, or pollute our watershed with every load of laundry? How can we make better choices, from thrifting, to repair, to donating, to downsizing sustainably? We'll discuss these questions and more in this eye-opening class that will inspire you to have a more eco-conscious wardrobe – and THAT'S dressing for success!



The Tiffin Project

Single-use packaging (like food take-out containers) are wasteful products that are used once, for a very short period of time, before being discarded in a landfill where they may take hundreds of years to “break down.” The environmental, social, and financial impacts of these wasteful single use products add up to make a big impact on our planet, communities, and local businesses. Luckily, “low-waste living” and the “Bring Your Own” movement has inspired many people to make a difference by choosing to reuse when dining or shopping on-the-go. Participants will learn about the shocking amount of single use packaging used in the food industry, the impact of “to-go” food and drink containers on litter and waterways, and are introduced to how single use packaging may affect our public health. Most importantly, participants will learn about the power of reuse through “tiffins” which are reusable stainless steel food containers, and other ways to avoid single use items when dining on the go! Please inquire if our free Tiffins are available for participants while supplies last.



Waste Audits 101

If you can't measure it, you can't manage it. A waste audit is the practice of studying and recording the amount and types of waste generated at a specific location. Waste audits can be a facility walk-through or an actual “trash sort” where waste is collected, sorted, and weighed as various categories. This workshop is ideal for a facility's Green Team interested in improving or implementing the waste and recycling practices in their facility. We will explain the benefits of waste audits, planning tips and best practices, and everything you need to know to plan a successful waste audit.



7Rs to Rethinking Waste

We've all heard of Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, but there is really so much more that we could do to live a low-waste lifestyle. This is a great introductory class for anyone interested in or just beginning to learn about a eco-friendly living. The class will introduce you to the 7R's that go beyond recycling and share helpful and easy examples, and spotlight all the local options for where to recycle, reuse, donate, repair, compost, and more. Together, we can rethink our waste and reimagine our waste system!

Greening the Holidays

We often find ourselves overindulging during the holiday season, leading to a 25% increase in waste from Thanksgiving to New Year's. Let us help inspire ways of making your celebrations easier, more affordable, and eco-friendly. Discover creative DIY gift ideas, practical tips for reducing waste from gift-wrapping and holiday decor, explore dinner party hosting tips that let show gratitude for the planet, and learn what should be IN and OUT of the recycling bin this time of year. This workshop does not emphasize any particular holiday. All are welcome no matter how you may be celebrating!

Meet the Team



Angelina Brandt, Director of Sustainability

Prior to joining the Agency in January 2019, Angelina was the Recycling and Composting Educator at Cornell Cooperative Extension, Schenectady County. Angelina holds a Bachelor of Technology from the Department of Agricultural Engineering at SUNY Cobleskill, where she studied Environmental Energy Technologies in Waste Management and Renewable Energy. In college, she was involved in a MSW gasification pilot project, spearheaded an award-winning college campus composting initiative, and completed internships with UCRRA, and with Community Compost Company. In her current role, she oversees the overall efficacy of waste sustainability programs at UCRRA, assists with technology research, supervises outreach staff and volunteers, and is sustainability liaison to elected officials, private industry, and other stakeholders. A life long local, Angie is happy to bring her passion to her hometown communities! She jokes that reduce-reuse-recycle is in her blood, having grown up in her parent's antique store in Saugerties as a kid! She still believes that one person's trash can be another person's treasure, and you'll often find her thrifting, yard sale-ing, upcycling, and stopping at the side of the road to rescue junked furniture or other cool vintage finds. There's something truly magical about recycling... her favorite trick is to transform food scraps into vermicompost!

Meet the Team



Eva Barnett, Recycling Educator

After earning her BA in Film/Video from Evergreen State College in 2005, Eva moved to NYC to explore storytelling through dance and film. However, when she gained access to a small garden in Brooklyn, her focus shifted. In 2008, she moved to the Catskills to work on organic farms, deepening her connection to fresh, locally grown food. Her passion for sustainable food led her to work with renowned chefs, including Mary Cleaver, a leader in local sourcing and sustainability. In 2016, Eva opened her own café, Adella Dori, in Callicoon, NY, offering a menu based on what was available at the farmer's market. As the café grew in popularity, so did the waste it produced, prompting Eva to become a passionate advocate for recycling, composting, and sustainable waste management within her community. After selling the café in 2019, Eva furthered her knowledge by becoming a certified soil health analyst through Dr. Elaine Ingham's Soil Food Web School, where she studied the biology of healthy soils. In 2024, she joined the UCRRA's Master Composter/Master Recycling Certification course as a volunteer, and officially joined the UCRRA Recycling Outreach Team as Recycling Educator in March 2025. Eva loves connecting the dots between what we eat, what we waste, and how we can do better and is excited to help her community look at trash and see a valuable treasure trove of resources.

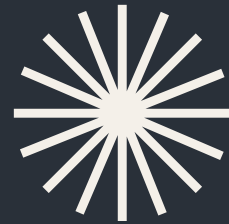
Meet the Team



Ellie Reese, Administrative Assistant

Ellie is a seasoned community outreach and administrative professional, currently serving as the Administrative Assistant for the Recycling Outreach Team at UCRRA. With a rich background in community engagement and environmental education, Ellie has previously worked with the Wallkill Valley Land Trust and the Woodstock Land Conservancy, where she helped foster connections between local communities and conservation efforts. A lifelong resident of Ulster County, Ellie is deeply committed to both the region's environmental sustainability and its long-term growth. She is an alum of SUNY New Paltz, where she studied Communications with a focus on political communications, environmental justice, and community engagement. Over the past 15 years, Ellie has applied these skills in the nonprofit sector, working with a variety of organizations to support and uplift Ulster County communities. Driven by a passion for environmental advocacy and service, Ellie brings a unique, well-rounded perspective to her role at UCRRA, where she continues to make meaningful contributions to the region's sustainability initiatives.

Ulster County *recycles!*



Contact Us

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