AN ACT

RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- FOOD RESIDUALS RECYCLING

Introduced By: Senators Cool Rumsey, Sosnowski, Goldin, Archambault, and Conley

Date Introduced: February 12, 2014

Referred To: Senate Environment & Agriculture

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

SECTION 1. Title 23 of the General Laws entitled "HEALTH AND SAFETY" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following chapter:

CHAPTER 18.18

FOOD RESIDUALS RECYCLING

23-18.18-1. Purpose. — The purposes of this chapter are:

(1) To establish a safe and environmentally sound food residuals recycling initiative in Rhode Island that covers facilities that generate food residuals in the state;

(2) To reduce the disposal of food residuals in landfills in order to minimize the production of greenhouse gases, recover the nutrient value of food residuals and extend the capacity of landfills;

(3) To develop a strategy for waste reduction in the state with the participation of manufacturers, processors and consumers; and

(4) To promote the creation of green jobs.

23-18.18-2. Findings. — The general assembly hereby finds and declares:

(1) Food residuals disposed in landfills result in the production and release of methane, a greenhouse gas twenty-one (21) times as potent as carbon dioxide;

(2) The nutrient value of food residuals disposed in landfills cannot be recycled into beneficial uses;

(3) Reducing the amount of food residuals sent to landfills will extend the life of those
(4) In order to address these real threats to public health and the environment, efforts should be made to minimize the disposal of food residuals in landfills.

(5) Food residuals collected under the requirements of this chapter shall be managed according to the following order of priority uses:

(i) Reduction of the amount generated at the source;
(ii) Diversion of food consumption by humans;
(iii) Diversion for agricultural use, including consumption by animals; and
(iv) Anaerobic digestion, composting, and land application.

23-18.18-3. Definitions. – For the purposes of this chapter, the following words shall have the following meanings:

(1) “Food residuals” means organic material, including, but not limited to, pre-consumer and postconsumer food scraps, food processing residue and food-soiled non-recyclable paper products used in food preparation or food service that is recyclable, but excludes materials from a residence.

(2) “Organics recycling facility” means land, appurtenances, structures or equipment where food residuals originating from another process or location are recovered using a process of accelerated biological decomposition of organic materials under controlled aerobic or anaerobic conditions.

(3) “Residence” means a single, multi-family or group home, or apartment complex, Residence does not include any centralized dining facility.

(4) “Source separated” or “source separation” means the separation of compostable or recyclable food residuals from non-compostable, non-recyclable materials at the point of generation.

23-18.18-4. Food residual disposal ban. – (a) A person who produces more than an amount identified under subsection 23-18.18(4) of this section of food residuals and is located within twenty (20) miles of an organics recycling facility that has available capacity and that is willing to accept the food residuals shall:

(1) Separate food residuals from other solid waste, provided that a de minimis amount of food residuals may be disposed of in solid waste when a person has established a program to separate food residuals and the program includes a component for the education of program users regarding the need to separate food residuals; and

(2) Recycle food residuals on site or treat food residuals via on-site organic treatment equipment permitted pursuant to the general laws or federal law; or
(3) Arrange for the transfer of food residuals to an organics recycling facility; or

(4) Arrange for the transfer of food residuals to another location that manages food residuals in a manner consistent with the priorities established under subsection 23.18.18.2(d).

(b) The following persons shall be subject to the requirements of subdivision (a)(1) of this section:

(1) Beginning on January 1, 2015, a person whose acts or processes produce more than fifty-two (52) tons per year of food residuals;

(2) Beginning on January 1, 2017, a person whose acts or processes produce more than twenty-six (26) tons per year of food residuals;

(3) Beginning of January 1, 2019, a person whose acts or processes produce more than eighteen (18) tons per year of food residuals; and

(4) Beginning on January 1, 2021, a person whose acts or processes produce any amount of food residuals.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.
This act would create a food residuals recycling program to establish a safe and environmentally sound method to dispose of food residuals.

This act would take effect upon passage.