

2013 TEEA Winner Education Category: Texas State University, San Marcos – Bobcat Blend

Neil Kaufman, Student, Texas State University

Bobcat Blend is a student-run organization on campus.

Jen Sembera, Graduate Student & Bobcat Blend Project Manager

We go to cafeterias. We pick up food waste.

A.J. Perez, Student, Texas State University

We're sorting out stuff that won't break down and transform it into organic hummus. We really wanna divert as much waste as possible.

Jen Sembera

Composting is a way to divert trash from going into a landfill.

A.J. Perez

We try to capture as much organic waste as possible from the dining halls. We can break down pretty much anything that came from the Earth or has any kind of plant base.

Jen Sembera

Last year, we hit 57 tons of food waste, which is a lot of waste for students to handle.

Tina Cade, Ph.D., Professor of Horticulture, Texas State University

The whole campus participates in composting because we're asking them to sort their food waste at the dining halls.

A.J. Perez

So we created different signage to educate the students on the items that are compostable. We put on referee jerseys and we stand next to the bins, and then we just, you know, educate them.

Jen Sembera

We've expanded to the point where we are now screening and selling the compost that we create.

Tina Cade

Initially, the project was to research invasive species and whether or not we could compost it and come up with a valuable product.

Jen Sembera

We add food waste to the Sargassum, which is the seaweed that comes all throughout the Atlantic, in order to create a final product and figure out if that product is usable. It gives this gross stuff the opportunity to bring life right back to where we are.

Neil Kaufman

Texas State University is a great model for other universities. We operate sort of like a small business.

Jen Sembera

People want to get involved with this movement that's happening, that's not so much a movement anymore. It's becoming a lifestyle.