

The Tulane Office of Sustainability Receives Grant to Reduce Waste, Expands Composting at Crawfest

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Tulane University was among the first 25 organizations across the state to receive the Greener Grounds Grant through Tulane's Office of Sustainability. This grant helped Crawfest 2024 divert 5,500 pounds of crawfish and other compostables from the landfill, over half the weight of crawfish purchased for the event held on April 20.

"Crawfest is a perfect opportunity to build our capacity for diverting waste to compost because the waste from this event is largely compostable," said Jordan Stewart, director of the Office of Sustainability at Tulane.

Receiving the Greener Grounds Grant helped the Crawfest team expand compost collections from one compost station in 2023 to 12 multi-stream stations in 2024 to reduce waste and litter. Crawfest leadership also reduced reliance on single-use plastics by providing water refill stations and compostable cups.

"There is an incredible amount of work happening behind the scenes to achieve initiatives such as our Crawfish composting initiative," said Sinead O'Connor, the Crawfest director of site operations this year. "I am so proud of the Crawfest team and appreciative of the Office of Sustainability for their time, energy, and passion for this project."

Crawfest partnered with RealCycle to divert much of the event's discarded crawfish shells and other waste to soil production.

"Shellfish compost better than most things," said Ryan Singer (Tulane, School of Liberal Arts, 2020), RealCycle co-owner and director of partnerships. "Crawfish need a higher temperature to break down as efficiently as a banana...the shells need to be within a larger quantity of composting material that can achieve higher temperatures as it decomposes."

Crawfest is a festive student-led crawfish boil that welcomes over 7,000 guests annually. It was founded in 2007. This was the second year that students have facilitated compost collections to complement waste and recycling collections provided by the university.

Learn more about the Greener Grounds Grant go to: [keeplouisianabeautiful.org](https://www.keeplouisianabeautiful.org). Find RealCycle online at [RestartRecycling.com](https://www.restartrecycling.com).

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