

Date of Hearing: April 20, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Isaac G. Bryan, Chair

AB 2112 (Bains) – As Amended April 13, 2026

**SUBJECT:** Integrated waste management plans: annual report

**SUMMARY:** Establishes the Climate-smart Organics Management for Protecting Our Soil and Terrain (COMPOST) Act of 2026 (Act), which requires the Natural Resources Agency (NRA), on or before January 1, 2028, in collaboration with specified entities, to develop an integrated nature-based climate strategy (strategy) to link waste diversion goals with soil health practices on natural and working lands. Requires the strategy to include multiagency recommendations and incentives to increase climate-friendly on-farm compost production and use, including compost application on grasslands and priority rangeland for improved vegetation and carbon storage.

**EXISTING LAW:**

- 1) Requires the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) to establish and oversee a Healthy Soils Program, which seeks to optimize climate benefits while supporting the economic viability of California's agriculture by providing incentives and educational materials and outreach to farmers whose management practices contribute to healthy soils and result in net long-term on-farm greenhouse gas (GHG) benefits. (Food and Agriculture Code 569)
- 2) Requires the Air Resources Board (ARB) to develop a Scoping Plan to achieve the maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective GHG emissions reductions. Requires the Scoping Plan to be developed in consultation with relevant state agencies. Requires the Scoping Plan to identify and make recommendations on direct emissions reduction measures, alternative compliance mechanisms, market-based compliance mechanisms, and potential monetary and non-monetary incentives for sources that ARB finds necessary or desirable to facilitate the achievement of the maximum feasible and cost-effective GHG emissions reductions. (Health and Safety Code (HSC) 38561)
- 3) Requires NRA and ARB to jointly establish an expert advisory committee of university researchers, technical assistance providers, practitioners and other experts in the field of climate change, soil carbon sequestration, and natural and working lands science and management, and Indigenous and environmental justice representatives, to inform and review modeling and analysis for natural working lands, to advise state agencies on implementation strategies and standardized accounting, and to provide recommendations on addressing barriers to efficient implementation of the targets for natural carbon sequestration and nature-based climate solutions. (HSC 38561.5)
- 4) Requires NRA, in collaboration with ARB, the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA), CDFA, the advisory committee, and other relevant state agencies, to determine an ambitious range of targets for natural carbon sequestration and for nature-based climate solutions that reduce GHG emissions for 2030, 2038, and 2045 to support the state's goals to achieve carbon neutrality and foster climate adaptation and resilience. Requires the targets to be integrated into the Scoping Plan and other state policies. (HSC 38561.5)

- 5) Requires NRA, in collaboration with CalEPA, ARB, CDFA, and other relevant state agencies, to establish the Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy (Climate Smart Strategy) to create a framework to advance the state’s climate goals, consider how climate impacts affect carbon sequestration on natural and working lands, support the economic resource value of the lands, and support pathways to transition to a carbon neutral economy. (HSC 39740.2)
- 6) Establishes pathogen reduction requirements for the production of compost in the state. (California Code of Regulations 17868.3)

**THIS BILL:**

- 1) Establishes the Act, which requires NRA, on or before January 1, 2028, in collaboration with CDFA, CalEPA, ARB, the Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle), the advisory committee, and other relevant state agencies, including the Wildlife Conservation Board and the Department of Conservation, to develop the strategy to link waste diversion goals with soil health practices on natural and working lands. Requires the strategy to include multiagency recommendations and incentives to increase climate-friendly on-farm compost production and use, including compost application on grasslands and priority rangeland for improved vegetation and carbon storage.
- 2) Requires that the recommendations in the strategy include:
  - a) The targets for natural carbon sequestration and nature-based solutions for natural and working lands;
  - b) NRA’s Climate Smart Strategy;
  - c) CDFA’s Climate Resilience Strategy for California Agriculture and the Healthy Soils Program;
  - d) Reduction of at least 5 million metric tons of GHG emissions in the state annually;
  - e) NRA’s 2022 report entitled *Pathways to 30x30 California: Accelerating Conservation of California’s Nature*;
  - f) The Scoping Plan; and,
  - g) CalRecycle’s pathogen reduction standard for compost.
- 3) Requires the Secretary for the NRA to use the best available science, mapping, and land management planning tools to support prioritization, siting, and deployment of soil amendment strategies to maximize climate benefits.
- 4) Requires NRA to publish the strategy on its website on or before January 1, 2028, and to publish annual updates on implementation progress.
- 5) Adds practitioners and experts in “soil carbon sequestration” to the types of practitioners and experts included on the advisory committee.

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Unknown

**COMMENTS:**

- 1) **Organic waste recycling.** Nearly 40 million tons of waste are disposed of in California's landfills annually. Nearly half of those materials are organics (~48%). Organic waste

includes food, yard, paper, and other organic materials. As that material decomposes in landfills, it generates significant amounts of methane, a potent GHG with 84 times the climate impact as carbon dioxide. The ARB states that about 20% of methane emissions in California comes from landfills.

SB 1383 (Lara), Chapter 395, Statutes of 2016, requires ARB to approve and implement a comprehensive short-lived climate pollutant (SLCP) strategy to achieve, from 2013 levels, a 40% reduction in methane, a 40% reduction in hydrofluorocarbon gases, and a 50% reduction in anthropogenic black carbon, by 2030. In order to accomplish these goals, the law specifies that the methane emission reduction goals include targets to reduce the landfill disposal of organic waste, including food, 50% by 2020 and 75% by 2025 from the 2014 level. SB 1383 also requires that 20% of edible food that would otherwise be sent to landfills is redirected to feed people by 2025.

To achieve this, California's waste management infrastructure is going to have to process and recycle much greater quantities of organic materials, involving significant investments in additional processing infrastructure. Organic waste is primarily recycled by composting the material, which generates compost that can be used in gardening and agriculture as a soil amendment and engineering purposes for things like slope stabilization. Composting operations in California range from large-scale commercial operations to onsite agricultural composting activities to backyards. Anaerobic digestion is also widely used to recycle organic wastes. This technology uses bacteria to break down the material in the absence of oxygen and produces biogas, which can be used as fuel, and digestate, which can also be used as a soil amendment. Tree trimmings and prunings can also be chipped or mulched and applied to agricultural land for beneficial use, known as land application.

- 2) **Healthy Soils.** The Healthy Soils Program supports farmers and ranchers to help them incorporate new sustainable agricultural practices into their systems. These practices build organic carbon both above- and below-ground while reducing land-based GHG emissions. Improving soil health, and often providing physical soil protection and habitat, increases the resilience of California's farms and surrounding ecosystems to climate challenges. The program supports practices including organic soil amendments (compost, mulch, etc.), annual plantings, permanent plantings, and decreased tillage. According to CDFA, farmers and ranchers who implement soil health practices improve crop nutrition, soil structure, water infiltration and storage, biodiversity, pollinator habitat, pest control, carbon sequestration, and human and animal nutrition while reducing soil erosion and GHG emissions.
- 3) **Compost.** In addition to providing a critical management option for organic waste, compost has innumerable benefits when used as a soil amendment. Compost reduces both the need for synthetic fertilizers and reduces water use and improves water retention in the soil. According to the California Farm Bureau, when compost is used as a soil conditioner, it sustainably improves the "physical, chemical, and biological health of the soil, which leads to stronger crops and higher yields." The Marin Carbon Project calls compost a "triple win." It increases carbon sequestration in the soil, mitigates emissions from other sources, and enhances the land's resilience to extreme weather, such as flooding and drought. One application of compost to soil increases carbon sequestration for at least 30, and possibly up to 70, years.

4) **This bill.** The state has recognized the importance of both soil health and organic waste management, but efforts to address these issues have not been effectively integrated. The compost and other soil amendments produced by the recycling of organic waste can be used to dramatically improve soil health throughout the state. This bill seeks to link these efforts by requiring NRA, on or before January 1, 2028, in collaboration with CDFA, CalEPA, ARB, CalRecycle, the advisory committee, and other relevant state agencies, to develop the strategy to link waste diversion goals with soil health practices on natural and working lands.

5) **Author's Statement:**

Composting is a vital climate solution that turns organic waste into a nutrient-rich soil amendment, reducing landfill methane emissions—a potent greenhouse gas. It improves soil structure, boosts water retention to combat droughts, and sequesters carbon in the ground, fostering healthier plant growth while restoring depleted soil ecosystems.

To date, California's compost policies are disconnected and scattered throughout state government. This bill builds upon existing policies for natural and working lands to deliver a comprehensive compost strategy for the state.

**REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

**Support**

7th Generation Advisors  
 California Association of Winegrape Growers  
 California Compost Coalition  
 Californians Against Waste  
 Center for Environmental Health  
 Citizens Climate Lobby  
 Clean Earth 4 Kids  
 Climate Action California  
 Climate Action Campaign At the Humboldt Uu Fellowship  
 Climate Reality Project, Los Angeles Chapter  
 Community Environmental Council  
 Earth-Riders  
 People Food and Land Foundation  
 People, Food and Land Foundation  
 Santa Cruz Climate Action Network  
 Silicon Valley Youth Climate Action  
 Tree People  
 Zero Foodprint

**Opposition**

None on file

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