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### **CHAIRMAN'S PRESS RELEASE**

## **ECORICH FOOD WASTE COMPOSTER NOW ONLINE AT GREENPORT TRANSFER STATION**

Approximately 35 community members were on hand at Columbia County Solid Waste Department's Greenport Transfer Station on Friday, April 21, for a demonstration of the EcoRich Elite II aerobic composter/digester by company founder and president Manish Desai.

The machine is now operational at the Greenport Transfer Station. Food waste is accepted for it Monday through Saturday between the hours of 7:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. Food waste is also accepted at all eight full-service county-operated convenience stations located in Chatham, Gallatin, Germantown, Copake, Hillsdale, Livingston, and Kinderhook, as well as Greenport.

As part of the county's ongoing effort to reduce its carbon footprint, the EcoRich composter is a fully automated way to convert food waste into a nutrient-rich soil amendment that can be added to landscaping and other plantings. The composter reduces 100 pounds of food waste into as little as 10-15 pounds. It is designed to hold up to 1,000 pounds of food scrap, which is heated and churned electrically for 24 hours, then allowed to sit for 21 days.

"New York State has recommended that we take a look at the food waste that is winding up in landfills," said county Solid Waste Deputy Director Wendy Madsen. "Food waste is one of the largest methane producers in landfills. We're looking to alleviate how Columbia County contributes to that."

Much of the cost of the EcoRich Elite II system will be covered under grant funding.

Food items acceptable for use in the EcoRich system are fruits and vegetables (no stickers, bands, or ties); meat and poultry – bones are okay; fish and shellfish – shells are okay; dairy

products; bread and pasta; rice and grains; eggshells; chips and snack; beans, nuts, and seeds; leftover and spoiled food; coffee grounds; and tea bags – staples must be removed.

Non-acceptable items include plastic bags, compostable/biodegradable bags, packaging, stickers, rubber ties, and twist ties. Also, no pet waste, baby wipes, foil, paper plates, paper towels, tissues, napkins, diapers, feminine products, or compostable products, as well as no plastic, glass, metal, or kitchenware. If it is a non-food item, the EcoRich system cannot accept it.

