

The FoodCycler is available in Bancroft



By Kristena Schutt-Moore

During the Sept. 14 meeting of Bancroft council they approved in partnership with the FoodCycler company to bring the FoodCycler to Bancroft residents at a discounted price.

This is part of a pilot project the company is holding with several municipalities throughout Ontario. The goal is to divert as much food waste from waste sites as possible. The FoodCycler is an electronic composter that is roughly the size of a bread maker and can take up to two liters of food waste per cycle and turn it into nutrient rich soil amendment/additive that can be used to help plants and gardens or turned into pellets for home heated options. Every tonne of food that is diverted from a landfill is estimated to reduce greenhouse gas by 13 tonnes of CO₂, and that is without adding in the amount of transportation emissions.

The project cost the town roughly \$5,400 plus the HST to purchase 36 FoodCyclers for their residents. If a resident is interested in purchasing a FoodCycler for their home the cost is \$169 which is approximately 35 per cent off the list price. To register for a FoodCycler the form can be found on the town's website www.bancroft.ca. It can be found under the "News, Notices and Postings" button on the main scene of the website.

Once registered and, if they qualify, then the resident can pick up their FoodCycler at the town office between Monday, Oct. 18 to Friday, Oct. 22. Payment can be made with pickup and the town does except cash, cheque, debit or credit.

Before the town approved to be part of the pilot project they took one FoodCycler and gave staff and council members the chance to try it in their own homes. Many of those who tried it liked the FoodCycler.

?I think it's a great little thing for sure,? says Councillor Wayne Wiggins

A lot of people just scrape the leftovers from their plate into their garbage, and when cleaning out the fridge it can sometimes produce a full garbage bag. Food waste is known to produce methane gas when decomposing. This is 30 times more harmful to the environment than the CO2 from the emissions from vehicles.

?You know you are always skeptical when you see a product like this, but when you see how it does reduce that [the waste] by 20:1 or more it's just a real wise investment for anybody. You know especially in the urban areas, we get into some development that is coming with the new apartment buildings, it's a real positive. Not only does it just help with the tipping fees, but there are so many positive aspects too. The carbon footprint and how often we are going around collecting waste and if we can reduce that and put our resources into other areas that are more prevalent then I definitely think it's a real win,? said manager of public works Perry Kelly.

The emissions generated by the FoodCycler is similar to the CO2 produced by backyard compost piles. For those that have compost piles this can be used in team with the composter. The food put in the FoodCycler takes eight to 10 hours to turn into a dry soil nutrient additive, and it can be used directly in the garden as soon as the machine is done, or it can be poured on top of a compost pile. Part of the reason that the town was interested in the FoodCycler was that a compost pile is not always possible in urban settings, and can also attract predators in rural settings, and Bancroft has both settings within its limits. So the town hoped that the FoodCycler may be a better option for those looking to grow their own food or flower gardens, while removing waste from the town waste site.