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Nourishing healthy eating habits

Waste Management donates compost to San Leandro, Hayward schools for student gardens

By Chris Metinko

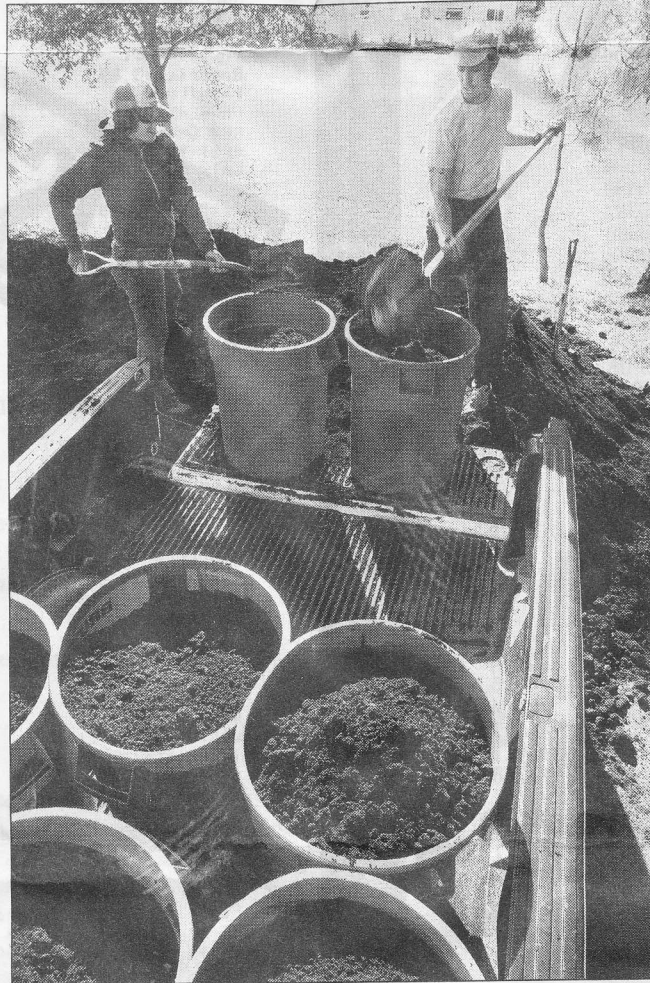
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Nearly two dozen schools in the Hayward and San Lorenzo school districts this week got some help kicking off their spring planting.

Waste Management of Alameda County Inc. donated a mountain — a total of 40 cubic yards — of compost to 21 school gardens for Project EAT. The project, which is run through the Alameda County Office of Education, provides nutrition education and promotes physical activity through gardening education and cooking classes.

The compost was dropped off Tuesday at Tennyson High School in Hayward and San Lorenzo High School and then will be distributed to 16 elementary schools and three middle schools in the area. The compost, produced by the Waste Management's WM EarthCare recycling program, was made from yard trimmings and food scraps in the county.

"Kids will eat what they grow, so this type of program is important," said Chris Boynton, director of Project



ANDA CHU/STAFF

Goldberg, left, and Brown load some of the donated compost into containers Tuesday. Waste Management donated compost to the Hayward and San Lorenzo unified school districts that will be distributed to 21 Project EAT school gardens in the districts.

EAT.

Boynton helped start the program a decade ago when

it was only in the Hayward school district and called the Hayward Nutritional Learn-

ing Community Project. She said 51 percent of high school students at Tennyson and San Lorenzo high schools now are purchasing or preparing food from the program.

Boynton said the project aims to help students and families establish a lifelong dedication to their communities and environment. She added that Waste Management's donation helps toward that goal.

"We all know that you don't grow gardens, you grow dirt," Boynton said. "We are grateful for Waste Management for supporting a unique and engaging learning environment for our students and providing the necessary ingredients to produce healthy food for our students in Alameda County."

Schools receiving the compost are Bidwell, Bowman, Burbank, Cherryland, Colonial Acres, Eldridge, Hesperian, Longwood, Lorenzo Manor, Palma Ceia, Park, Ruus, Shafer Park, Shepard, Treeview and Tyrell elementary schools; Chavez, Ochoa and Winton middle schools; and San Lorenzo and Tennyson high schools.

"We appreciate Waste Management's donation to help create and maintain school gardens in Alameda County," said Sheila Jordan, Alameda County superintendent of schools.

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