

Organics Guide

In February 2020, the Victoria Government released Recycling Victoria (RV), a policy that is supported by a \$300 million investment, to transform our recycling sector and drive investment in world-class infrastructure and technology, create cutting-edge local industries and support thousands of new local jobs.

With the introduction of RV, the Victorian Government's priorities for organic waste have been reset. The policy outlines the Government's direction and priorities for waste and recycling, including organics, over the next 10 years.

As a result, the Victorian Organics Resource Recovery Strategy (VORRS) is no longer the primary reference document for State Government priorities. RV has superseded the strategy and will provide a strategic, coordinated approach to organics waste management, building on the actions and objectives identified in the VORRS.

The VORRS was first developed as part of a suite of strategies that, together with the Statewide Waste and Resource Recovery Infrastructure Plan, aimed to prioritise and deliver waste and resource recovery initiatives in Victoria.

Prior to the formulation of RV, a rigorous independent review of the VORRS was completed. The Victorian Organics Resource Recovery Strategy five-year action plan progress report (the VORRS Review):

- › assessed the progress of VORRS actions
- › determined the current relevance and future focus of VORRS strategic directions
- › recommended priority actions.

The recommendations from the review were assessed and contributed to Victoria's strategic direction for waste management, detailed in RV.

Sustainability Victoria (SV) values the work and contribution from the community, industry, local government and the government waste portfolio in developing the strategy and delivering strategy actions.

SV also acknowledges the investment in the VORRS Review and the value of the subsequent recommendations. To preserve this value, the VORRS, and VORRS Review have informed this guide, and an implementation plan for organics actions.

This guide presents SV's transition from the VORRS to the delivery of RV actions.

Corresponding Recycling Victoria programs

RV's organics priorities can be found under Recycling Markets Acceleration Package (8.1) in the policy. These include:

- › increase the value of recycled organic products through research and development
- › develop, promote and support standards, specifications and guidance materials
- › build sustainable agricultural and urban amenity markets for recycled organics.

Under RV, SV will continue to work with government and industry to:

- › improve the recovery of organic material to reduce impacts on the community, environment and public health
- › facilitate collaborative procurement of waste and resource recovery services and infrastructure for local governments.

Key components of the Strategy

SV will continue to utilise the VORRS strategic directions to guide its organics programs under RV.

The organics program is guided by seven strategic directions which prioritise the protection of the environment, human and animal health; and seeks to build the knowledge, skills and infrastructure for Victoria to realise the benefits of the better use of organic resources.

Vision:	A vibrant, functioning recycled organics market will ensure that the environment, human and animal health and amenity impacts of organic waste are eliminated. Organics resources will be contributing to climate change adaptation and mitigation by improving the quality of our soil and providing an energy source to local infrastructure.
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Goals

Reduce the impact of climate change

Protection of the environment, human and animal health and amenity

Risk based and proportionate approach

Strong and sustainable markets

Strategic directions

Best practice environmental, human and animal health and amenity management	Sustainable markets	Leverage existing assets	Identify future needs	Education to facilitate change	Building collective knowledge	Streamlined governance and strong leadership
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Outcomes

Environmental, public health and amenity impact of organics waste management are eliminated	Market demand drives product development and innovation Victorian soil condition is improved because of the use of quality products	Organic waste management facilities are not subject to community concern	Local organic resource management infrastructure is financially viable and is supporting local economies	Demand for organic resources is exceeding supply	Local government and industry partnerships deliver local solutions for social and economic benefit Value of organic resources exceeds the cost of disposal	Policy and market settings support innovative technological advances for organic management
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Summary of the VORRS Review

To determine the relevance and future focus of VORRS strategic directions, independent reviewers evaluated projects completed by:

- › SV
- › government waste portfolio partners
- › local government
- › industry.

They also evaluated the responses from stakeholder interviews and assessed the current importance of issues, opportunities and barriers included in the VORRS. The strategic directions were then ranked accordingly.

Strategic direction	Relevance	Future focus
Education to facilitate change	Very high	Very high
Building collective knowledge	Moderate	Low
Leveraging existing assets	Very high	Very high
Identifying future needs	Low	Very low
Sustainable markets	High	High
Best practice environmental management	High	High
Streamlined governance and strong leadership	High	High

The VORRS review has six general recommendations and these align with actions under the RV Policy as shown in the table below.

VORRS Review Recommendation	Recycling Victoria Action
Food waste avoidance and supporting food donation Continue to drive food waste avoidance and food waste minimisation.	Delivers Recycling Victoria Policy – Action No 2.3. Information, education and tools could help people to avoid and minimise waste
On-site and small scale collaborative recovery solutions Increase small scale collaborative organics recovery solutions for businesses and multi-unit developments.	Delivers, Recycling Victoria action No 5.1 Household recycling reforms
Transitioning green organics services to food organics green organics Continue to guide and incentivise the transition of Victoria's green organics kerbside service network into a kerbside collection service that receives food organics and green organics combined.	Delivers Recycling Victoria Policy – Action No 5.1 Household recycling reforms
Contamination reduction and management using a supply chain approach Intervene across the value chain to reduce contamination.	Delivers, Recycling Victoria Policy – Action No 8. Increasing the use of recycled materials
Greater capacity, diversity and access to food processing Increase the number, coverage and capacity of organics processing facilities and investigate the opportunity to build capability of the existing transfer station network to receive, consolidate and transfer food wastes.	Delivers Recycling Victoria Policy – Action No 8.3 Accelerate and stimulate investment in infrastructure for the increased recovery of organics.
Create value and standards for organic waste derived agricultural products Develop quality assurance guidelines and product specifications for 'fit for purpose' organics products. Determine the monetary and environmental value of organics products.	Delivers, Recycling Victoria Policy – Action No 8.1. Develop and promote standards, specifications and guidance materials