Executive Summary

This document expands on the idea, thought process and research to implement a food waste diversion programs (FWDP) and systems into the Slate Belt area, comprised of Bangor, Pen Argyl, Portland and Wind Gap boroughs located in Northeastern Pennsylvania. The idea for food waste diversion programs stemmed from the growing concern coming from the community regarding the second expansion of the Waste Management Grand Central Landfill located in Pen Argyl, PA. The expansion will add an additional 81 acres, which are currently zoned for farming and forest, to the existing site which was expanded previously in 2008. Primary research in this document focuses on the Pen Argyl Borough which serves as a sample size for the project.

In addition to creating FWDP’s, the programs aim is to benefit the entire community, which consists of farmers, urban and rural individuals and small businesses. The concept for a community-focused program was inspired by the Green Knight Economic Development Corporation (GKEDC) business model and the determination to create a circular model, benefitting more than just the GKEDC alone. Idea suggestions originate from food waste diversion systems implemented in other institutions within the United States. Food waste diversion strategies include food dehydrators, food waste diversion programs in eating areas in grade schools and universities, community gardens and composting. Responses from primary audiences show a hopeful future for implementing a food waste diversion program into Pen Argyl High School and select businesses and institutions in Pen Argyl. Community-focused benefits of implementing FWDP’s include educational variety and innovation in school systems, leadership opportunities for students and workers, enhanced urban and rural community collaboration and greater opportunity for farmers to utilize food waste for operations. Environmentally focused benefits include decreased and/or slowed down impacts from food waste in landfills, and reduction of negative environmental impacts including methane emissions, polluted water run-off into soil and larger bodies of water originated from landfills.