

MEDIA RELEASE - 21 July 2025

Australian Organics Recycling Industry Report Card

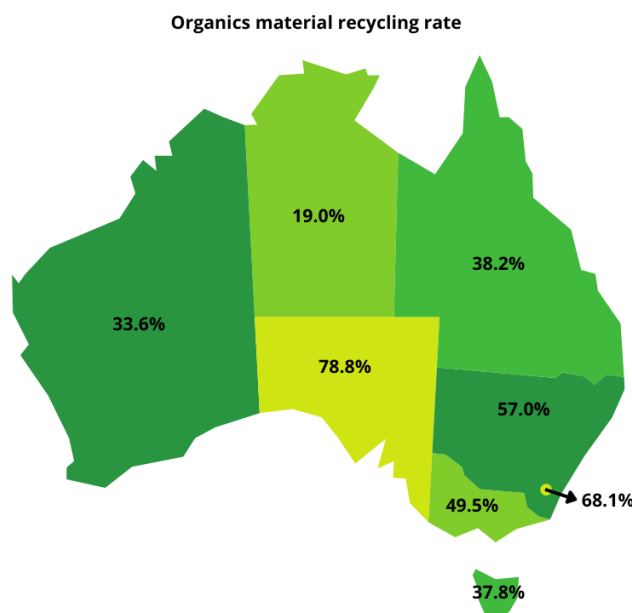
The Australian Organics Recycling Association (AORA) has recently released its latest report card on the performance of the Australian Organics Recycling Industry (AORI). The Economic Contribution of the Australian Organics Recycling Industry 2023-24 update, produced by Nick Behrens from the Australian Economic Advocacy Solutions and commissioned by AORA, is the third edition of the report.

AORI in 2023-24 is estimated to have recycled 7,676 kilotons of organic material - a 2.1 per cent increase on the previous financial year. Across the decade AORI's recycled material has grown by 0.9 per cent each year and compares to Australia's average population growth rate over the same period of 1.5 per cent.

In 2023-24 Australia is estimated to have produced 14.9 million tonnes of organic waste of which:

- 5.7 million tonnes was sent to landfill,
- 7.7 million was recycled and
- 1.6 million tonnes recovered through energy.

The report illustrates Australia's overall organic material recycling rate in 2023-24 was 51.4%. This compares to 52.3% in 2021-22. The reduction in recycling rate for 2023-24 reflects a higher number of tonnes recycled but a comparatively higher amount of organic material generated. South Australia currently has the highest organics material recycling rate at 78.8%, followed by the ACT (68.1%), NSW (57.0%), Victoria 49.5%, Queensland (38.2%) Tasmania (37.8%) and Western Australia (33.6%). The Northern Territory had the lowest organics recycling rate at 19.0 per cent in 2023-24.





On a per head of population basis, Australia recycles on average 282 kilograms per person of organics material. Garden organics representing the largest percentage of recycled materials in each of the Australian states and territories.

The report confirms that AORI is maintaining its role as a significant economic contributor –employing over 5,000 people, with a collective industry turnover of \$2.6b and contributing \$843 million in industry value add to the Australian economy.

In addition to the impressive economic metrics, AORI is also a significant environmental contributor. The total estimated greenhouse gas savings from recycling of organics materials received in Australia in 2023-24 is approximately 3.9 million tonnes of CO₂-e. These GHG savings are considered approximately equivalent to:

- 5.8 million trees that would have to be planted to absorb the same amount of CO₂.
- The greenhouse gas emissions that 895,329 cars would produce in a year.

“The Australian Organics Recycling Industry continues to perform strongly,” John McKew, National Executive Officer for AORA states. “This can clearly be seen from the economic contributions of the industry from this latest report. Adding to this the environmental contributions, and we have an industry that is of significance importance to all Australians. With a continuing focus on organics recycling by all governments, including the FOGO (Food Organics, Garden Organics) mandates, we expect the industry to continue to grow.”

“That is not to say there are not challenges to contend with – this latest report indicates that whilst we are recycling more organics as an industry, Australia is not on track to meet most federal and state government based organic waste recycling targets nor keeping pace with the generation of organic material. This generation is being driven by factors including population growth, economic growth, technological change, access to recycling markets, local government collection changes, and Federal and State government waste and carbon reduction policies. This cannot be ignored, otherwise more organics will inevitably end up in landfill and that is not a good outcome across the board.”

“Tangible progress on increased harmonisation of regulations and policy across states would be beneficial to improving the rates of organics processing” states John. “The industry is keen and ready for growth, but in order to do so, the Government needs to hasten the planning and approval processes for new or expanding organics processing facilities. It is imperative that Australian Organics Recycling Industry continues to grow to meet the ever-increasing volumes of organics that need to be recycled, but we need governments to work collaboratively with the industry to resolve the barriers to achieving this.”

The full Economic Contribution of the Australian Organics Recycling Association can be downloaded here: <https://aora.org.au/resources/>

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