



SF Environment

Our home. Our city. Our planet.



GAVIN NEWSOM
Mayor

JARED BLUMENFELD
Director

Honorable Pietro Vignali
Palazzo del Municipio
Piazza Giuseppe Garibaldi
43121 Parma, Italy

Dear Mayor Vignali,

I am sorry to learn that Parma is considering managing its municipal solid waste by incineration. I manage the environmental programs for a large, geographically constrained city, and I want to bring to your attention our success: we recycle and compost 72 percent of our waste stream.

We turn our food scraps and garden waste into organic compost that is in high demand with our local farms and vineyards. This compost enriches our soil, saves on water usage, reduces pesticide and fertilizer use, and at the same time takes carbon out of the atmosphere.

Parma is the center of Emilio-Romagna, home to some of the world's most famous and delicious food and wine. If you were to make compost out of your food scraps rather than burn them, I'm sure you would find a ready local market in your farms and vineyards. Consider your decision to compost and enrich your region as a contribution to Emilio-Romagna's bountiful legacy, and our planet's safe passage forward.

30 years ago, San Francisco faced a landfill crisis and seriously considered building an incinerator. Thankfully, our populace showed great foresight and rose up to defeat this project. To this day San Francisco continues to have a formal policy opposing incineration. We did not take this step lightly, nor do we offer our advice without also offering our hand in support. You are welcome to visit San Francisco, and we will arrange to show you how our recycling and composting programs work, as well as how we recover over 72 percent of our municipal waste stream for beneficial use.

Finally, I urge you to join over the 100 cities that have signed on to the Urban Environmental Accords, which were developed here in San Francisco for United Nations World Environment Day, 2005.

Respectfully,

Jared Blumenfeld,
Director, San Francisco Department of the Environment

Encl: UN Accords