

# ecomaine

## Memorandum

**DATE:** May 16, 2024

**TO:** Chair and Members of the Board

**FROM:** Kevin H. Roche, CEO

**SUBJECT:** **Agenda for the Outreach & Recycling Committee Meeting**

There is an **ecomaine** Outreach & Recycling Committee scheduled for **May 23, 2024 @ 4:00PM**. The meeting will be here at **ecomaine**.

The agenda for this meeting is as follows:

1. Approval of Minutes (*Attachment A*)
2. FY24 P.R. & Outreach & Digital Media Metrics (*Attachment B*)
3. School Recycling Grants Program
  - Judging – School Year 24-25 Open for Applications (*Attachment C*)
4. Managers' Report:
  - Events/Program Updates:
    - City of Portland Earth Day
    - Promotional Program – Portland Sea Dogs
    - Upcycle Challenge
    - EPA Grant (Multi Family Recycling)
    - Recruitments – Environmental Educator
    - Tagging Program
    - Annual Meeting – June 20, 2024 – Halo at the Point
5. Recycling Market Report (*Attachment D*)
6. Other

**DATE:** April 19, 2024  
**TO:** Chair and Members of the Board  
**FROM:** Kevin H. Roche, CEO  
**SUBJECT:** Minutes – Outreach & Recycling Committee Meeting

There was an **ecomaine** Outreach & Recycling Committee scheduled for **April 11, 2024 @ 4:00 p.m.** The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Caleb Hemphill, Chair.

### 1. Approval of Minutes

Linda Cohen moved to approve the minutes of the February 8, 2024, meeting; Rob Wood seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

### 2. Outreach Updates – PR and Digital Media Metrics

Jamie Garvin and Abby Hart updated the committee on FY24 numbers for both in-person and digital outreach and engagement:

- Education and community outreach: 42,496 (69% of FY24 goal)
- Recent school assemblies and STEM expo events in Portland, South Portland, Scarborough, Gorham, and Falmouth
- Recyclopedia: 3,964 searches in March; +30 app downloads for March (5,755 total since launch)
- ecomaine.org web traffic +10.7% MoM
- Social media: strong reach and engagement with paid posts to promote Upcycle Challenge

Staff will be sending out an email to towns reminding them to update the Recyclopedia widgets on their own websites.

### 3. School Recycling Grants Program

Jamie Garvin reported that all final reports were received, and all payments have been completed for the school year 2023-24 grants. He also announced that applications are now being accepted for the 2024-25 grants and encouraged the committee to spread the word in their communities. Emails have been sent out to ecomaine's education contacts.

### 4. Event and Program Updates

Jamie Garvin updated the committee on the following:

- ecomaine will participate in the City of Portland's Earth Day Celebration (April 20, 10:00-1:00 at Payson Park) with tabling, activities, demonstrations, and painting a silver bullet on site

- A new sponsorship partnership has been established with the Portland Sea Dogs for the season that is just underway – will include on-field promotion in between innings at 12 games throughout the season; PA announcements; signage and coordination with facilities/operations staff for recycling collection on the concourses
- The EPA grant budget is with the agency for final approval and funding; recruitment for staff is underway
- Plans are being developed for the tagging program for Brunswick, Gorham, and Kennebunkport, with a rough start date of mid-May
- Recruitment open for the vacant environmental educator position

## **5. Upcycle Challenge**

The committee reviewed the submissions for this year's Upcycle Challenge. Everyone was impressed with the creativity and range of the submissions. All will be put forward for the public vote, which staff will coordinate online and promote via social media.

## **6. Recycling Market Report**

The Communications Director provided a summary of the updated materials reports. The committee took note of the marked increase in mixed paper.

## **7. Other**

Picking up on the conversation regarding the Sea Dogs sponsorship and Hadlock Field operations, the committee had a brief discussion about the recycling and waste diversion programs at the other sports facilities in Portland (specifically Cross Insurance Arena and The Expo.) Linda Cohen agreed to reach out to members of the CIA board, including past ecomaine board chair Jim Gailey, to see if there was an opportunity for ecomaine to work more closely with the facility to promote awareness, create access, and encourage utilization of recycling in the building.

Linda Cohen motioned to adjourn the meeting at 5:35 p.m., and Linda Boudreau seconded.

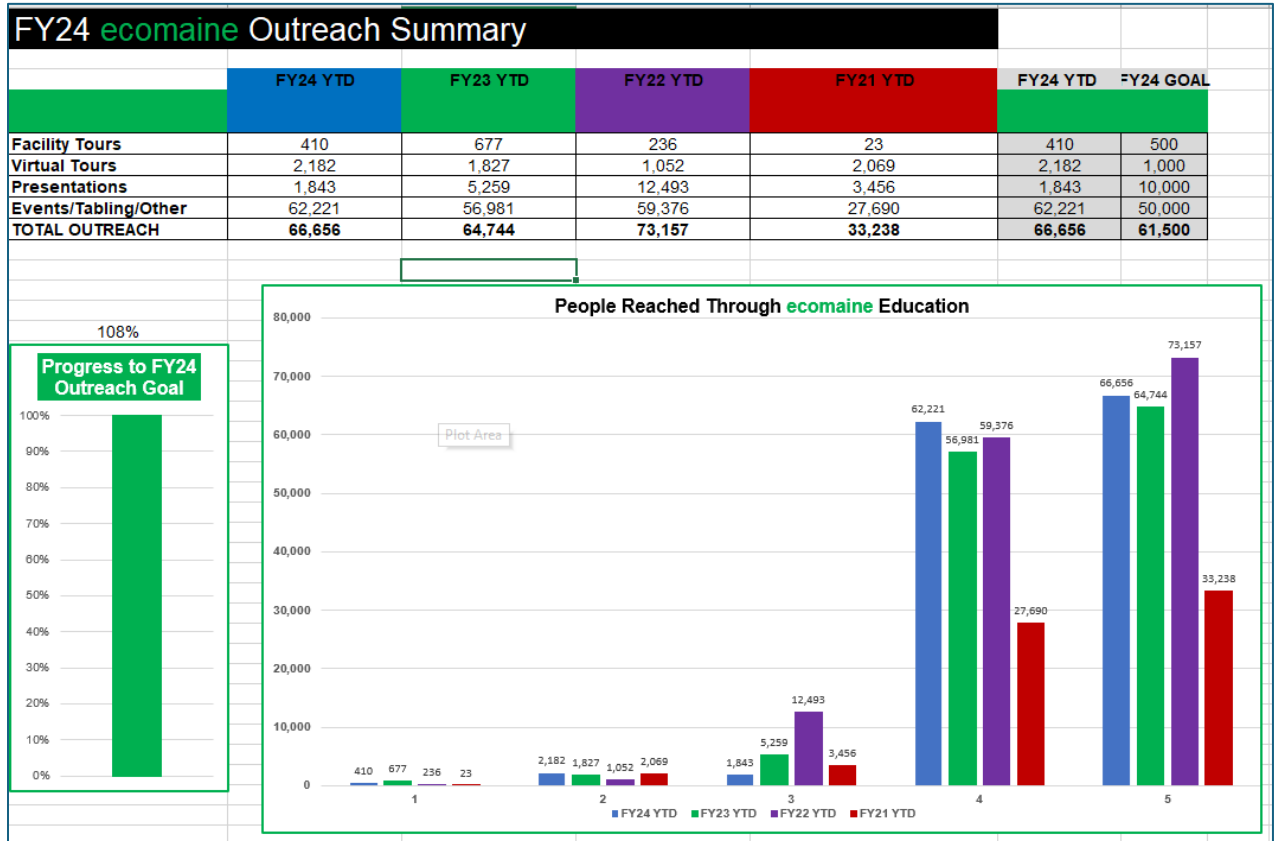
**Attendees:** Caleb Hemphill, Troy Moon, Linda Cohen, Linda Boudreau, Rob Wood, Dave Durrell, Amber Swett

**Staff:** Abigail Hart and Jamie Garvin

## Attachment B

### Education and Community Outreach

- For FY 24 year-to-date, our overall in-person outreach is at nearly **66,656 people**. We are at **108%** of our outreach goal for the year.



- Online and Social Media Metrics:
  - In April, the **Recyclopedia** saw **4,793** items searched. The total number of items searched over the lifespan of the database is **1,786,031**.
  - Total app downloads to date stand at **5,803** (an increase of **44**)
  - The top 10 searches this month are:
    - 294 Electronics
    - 210 Mattresses
    - 188 Styrofoam
    - 175 Almond milk cartons
    - 126 Clothing & textiles
    - 78 Latex paint
    - 74 Single-use batteries
    - 72 Baby formula cans
    - 63 Tires
    - 62 Textiles
  - ecomaine.org**
    - Total web traffic for April was 3.6k users. This shows an increase of 6.8% compared to the previous 28 days.

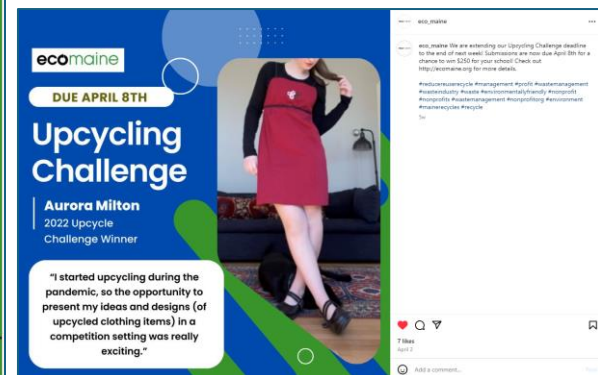
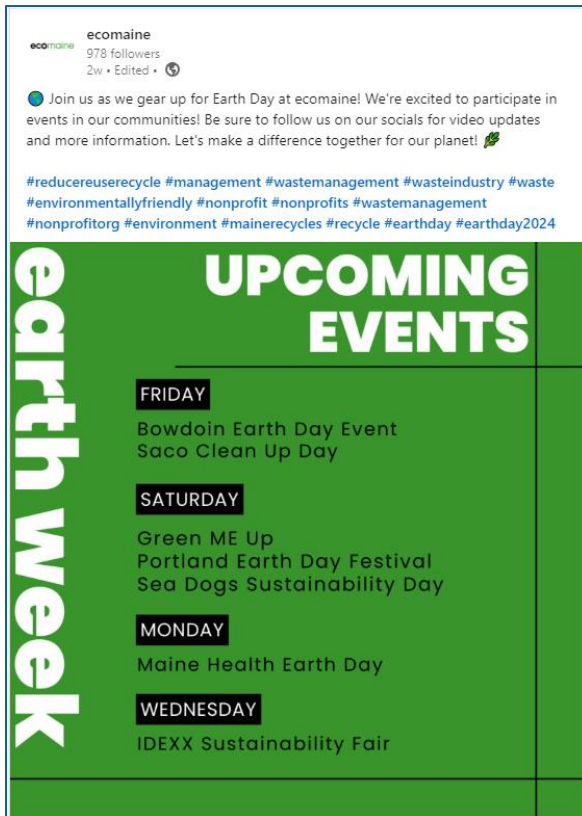
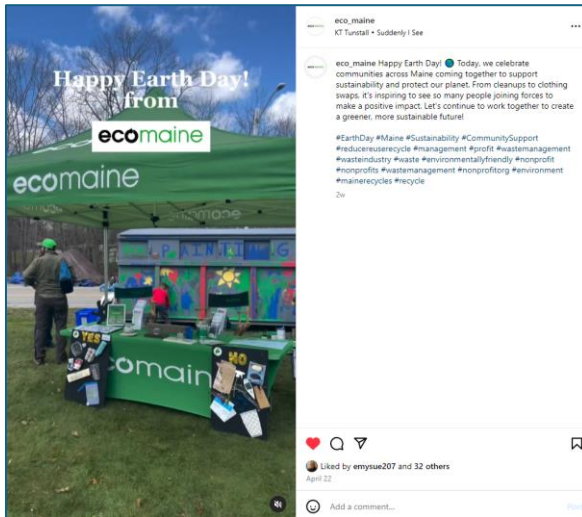
- o **Social media platforms**

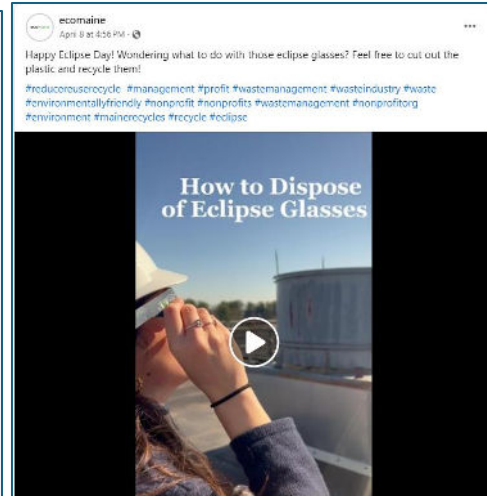
- Facebook:

- Gained 12 new followers in April (3.8k total)
    - Our top post in April, with a reach of 1.2k, was an informational video about how to dispose of eclipse glasses
    - Our total reach was 5.3K users in April

- Instagram:

- We had 7 Instagram posts in April, which had a reach of 1.7k. We gained 32 new followers for a total of 3,038.





## Advertising

- We updated our print ad focused on our municipal audiences. This is running in MMA's *Maine Town & City* and other similar publications targeting elected officials and other decision makers in current and prospective ecomaine communities.

RECYCLING | WASTE TO ENERGY | FOOD WASTE DIVERSION | EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

# Empowering Communities: Leading the Way in Sustainable Waste Management

AS TRUSTED PARTNERS IN MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT, WE UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF RESPONSIBLE STEWARDSHIP AND OFFER EFFECTIVE SOLUTIONS FOR OUR COMMUNITIES.

Learn how we can help your community at: [ecomaine.org/become](https://ecomaine.org/become)



## Attachment C

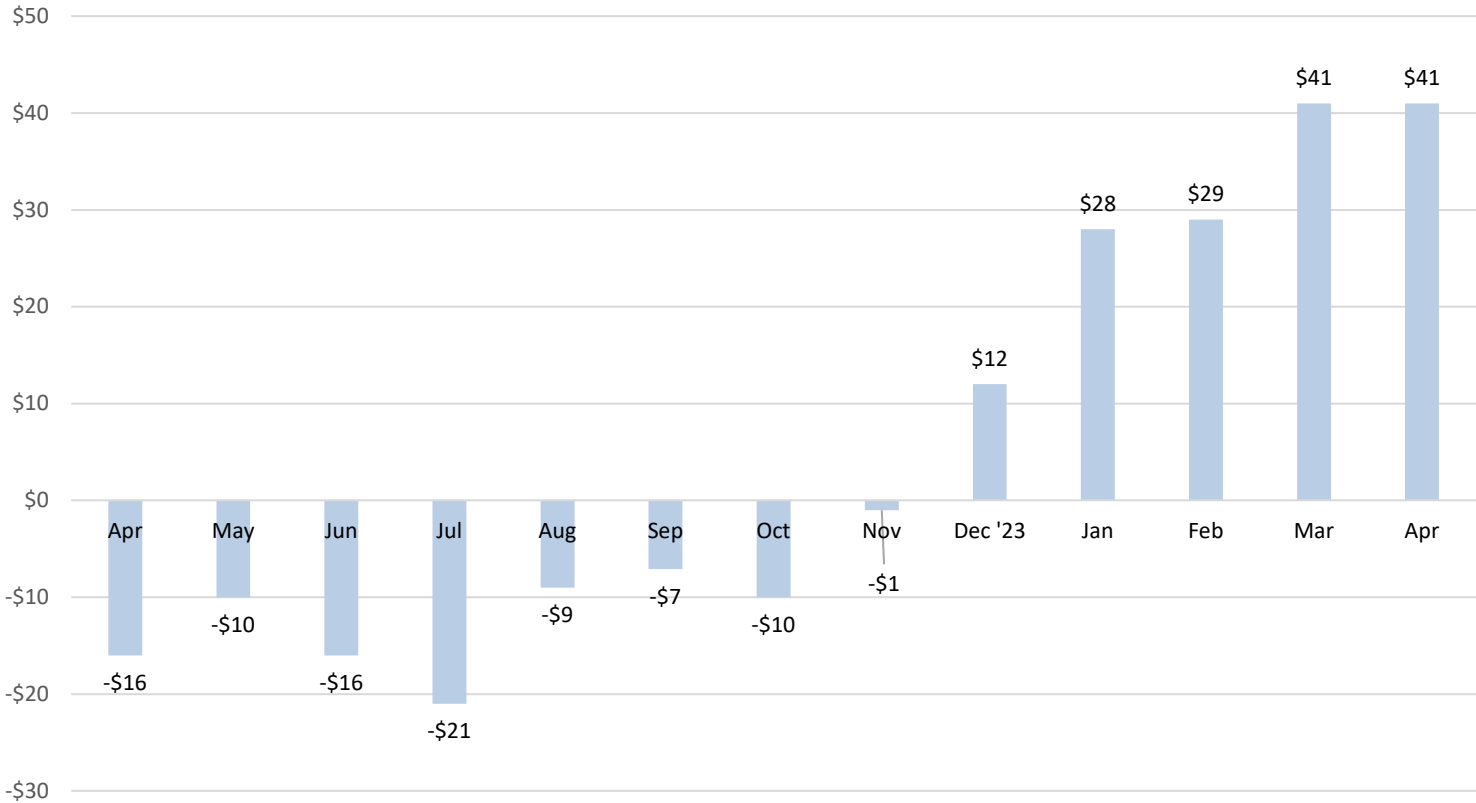
Name of Staff Leader for Proposed Project	Name of ecomaine Community	Name of School / Child Care Program	Please provide a full description of the project for which you are requesting grant funding.	For what, specifically, will the money be used?	Total amount of grant funding requested (whole dollar amount)
Jennifer Polley	Chelsea	Stepping Stones Montessori School	<p>We are in need of covered trash and recycling containers for the 2 ends of the playground. This project (ordering and installing) would be completed by end of the school year with optional help from students interested in our before/aftercare program. In addition I would be going around to the classrooms to let them know the types of items that go in each container. At the moment our trash can gets filled with water when the cover blows off or leaks and the recycling bucket fills with water, making a lot of items unable to be recycled. A lot of trash is left on playground also due to limited location access. Currently we have 80 students and only have 1 bag of trash a day, the rest is recyclable (that I bring to the bin at Chelsea Town office 1-3 times per week). This project could be easily replicated by other schools.</p>	<p>We are requesting 2 trash and 2 recycling containers: Two - Tone Panel Custom Disposal Containers from Tree Top Products that list at \$668.85 each for a total of \$2675.40. These items were chosen because they are made with 100% recycled materials and flat top can also serve as location for hand sanitizer, tissues and attendance books. They were also the most aesthetically pleasing for our nature infused play spaces.</p>	\$2,675.00
Jennifer Frost	Claxton Community	Claxton Elementary	<p>Many years ago our school had a recycling program. Administration changed many times and the teachers that ran the program retired and the program no longer was able to continue. Our school has a new staff and people that are interested in making our school a better place and teaching our students the importance of recycling. We would like to do this to show our students how recycling can impact our community in a positive way. Our vision is for students to take the information that they are given at school and continue the process in their own homes.</p>	<p>Rubbermaid Commercial rolling trash cans (5) \$149      Small classroom recycle bins (50) \$28</p>	\$2,145
Christopher Sutherland	Cape Elizabeth	Cape Elizabeth Middle School	<p>The Cape Elizabeth Middle School (CEMS) cafeteria waste separation, recycling, and composting initiative would begin in August of 2024 in preparation for the 2024-25 school year. CEMS currently has no official separation, recycling, and composting program in our cafeteria. This ECOMAINE grant would fund the construction and installation of a separation/recycling/composting station in our cafeteria.</p> <p>Although students wouldn't be involved in the construction of the station, our CEMS Green Team would facilitate education and implementation of its usage to the greater student community. Students will work with parent and community volunteers to educate, train, and retrain the school community on waste reduction, reuse, recycling, and composting best practices. The separation/recycling/composting station would be used by grades K-8 as our cafeteria is shared between both the elementary school (Pond Cove) and CEMS. The project will provide students with hands-on learning opportunities in waste management, instilling a sense of environmental stewardship and responsibility for future generations. Our main issue is that we don't have any structural way to separate food waste, recycling, and trash for the landfill. Currently, all food and non food waste from the cafeteria goes to the landfill. There is no separation of waste and no formal recycling or composting. Yet, there is precedent of composting and recycling at both schools as before the Covid epidemic efforts were being made to reduce, recycle, and compost. ECOMAINE has already facilitated multiple educational programs here in Cape and the municipal recycling/composting committee is ready to work with the school system, therefore no additional support would be needed beyond the funding.</p> <p>The separation/recycling/composting station would provide students and staff with a structural component promoting both recycling (CLYNK) and composting programs for food waste and other compostable materials using Garbage to Garden. This effort will divert significant amounts of organic waste from landfills and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Our goal is to match the municipality's annual waste reduction of approximately 25%. Meeting this goal would both reduce the cost of waste management for the school district and municipality as well as support our mission to be better stewards of our environment. Ultimately, by reducing waste sent to landfills, the initiative will contribute to a cleaner environment and help combat climate change.</p>	<p>I am in close contact with a local business called The Lumbery. Fortunately, they currently have two stations already built that with modifications (width dimensions extended by 12", adding a backsplash for instructions, and cutting 4 top holes for separation) would meet our needs. The Lumbery has agreed to make these modifications and provided us the stations for \$1400 each. Therefore, the total cost of the project would be approximately \$2800. [1]</p>	\$2,800.00

Name of Staff Leader for Proposed Project	Name of ecomaine Community	Name of School / Child Care Program	Please provide a full description of the project for which you are requesting grant funding.	For what, specifically, will the money be used?	Total amount of grant funding requested (whole dollar amount)
Sara Spidle	Cape Elizabeth, Cumberland	Appletree School	<p>This year we have brainstormed for a new idea and it came to me as I stopped by the nearby GoGoRefill shop to refill some supplies for my own home. The store offers non-toxic, natural product refills for countless items, and we thought this could be a perfect option for a grant.</p> <p>The prices of these natural products are a bit higher than our school would typically pay for cleaning products and hand soaps, etc, but the idea of keeping the plastic containers and items out of the waste stream is a mission that we embrace whenever possible. We would use grant funds to purchase liquid hand soap, dish soap, cleaning spray and cleaning scrub powder and possibly some wooden/compostable cleaning tools. Beyond the waste issues, we embrace the ingredient list and the fact that we are using safe and natural products for the children and staff.</p> <p>The children love to help cleaning tables before and after meals and art projects. Having a safe cleaner is an absolute must, and the GoGoRefill products would fit our needs. Hand washing is obviously an important part of the day (no matter how much we embrace the mud and dirt at our predominantly outdoor school!), and non-toxic hand soap is a continuum of our nature based school philosophy.</p> <p>We would share the natural product information with the parents, which is a selling point for our health conscious community.</p> <p>The grant funds would be used on a monthly/seasonal basis over the course of the school year, September to June, as needed with refills of products. I would just take the containers back to the store when I am in that part of town, and have them fill them right up!</p> <p>There are also a few items in the store that we could benefit from having, such as pot scrub brushes that are compostable once they have reached their limits of use, compostable sponges, and pump tops for mason jars for our dish soap.</p> <p>Overall, we are excited about the idea of using our local GoGoRefill for our products and if ecomaine could offset the higher cost, we would love to move forward with using them for the upcoming school year and possibly beyond.</p>	<p>GoGoRefill Pricing:  Dish Soap: 24c/oz We generally use at least 6 25 oz containers 9 (in 2 kitchens) per year=150 oz .. this could be an underestimate though.  ~\$40  Gentle Cleaning Scrub: 69c/oz Generally use 4 14oz containers of powder scrub/year  ~\$40  Surface and glass cleaner: 25c/oz. Generally use 4 25 oz bottles per classroom(3) per year  ~\$75  Hand Soap: 45c/oz Generally use a lot of this with 40 kids and 10 staff! four gallons/year  ~\$230  Pot Scrubber \$4.50 X 4 (2/yr in each kitchen)= \$18  Compostable sponges \$2 X 14 (7/yr in each kitchen)= \$28  Dish Brush \$9 X 2 (1 in each kitchen)= \$18  Mason jar caps \$10.50 X 2= (seems pricey but the cheap ones don't work well) \$21</p> <p>TOTAL: (\$470 plus \$25 tax) = \$495</p> <p>(option 2: If you choose not to include the scrubbers/sponges, etc = approx \$400 +\$22 tax = total \$422)</p>	\$495
Emily Loder	Westbrook	Intercultural Community Center	<p>The Intercultural Community Center's (ICC) youth program staff are committed to the continuation and expansion of our sustainability curriculum by not only a further incorporation of waste reduction and sustainable practices, but also by combating food inequality and educating students about the importance of local food systems. Because many Power School students are members of New Mainer and low-income families, our students often encounter language, socioeconomic, and transportation barriers to consistently access fresh produce, urban greenspace, and knowledge of local Maine edibles and ecosystems.</p> <p>ICC strives to combat these inequalities by engaging Power School students in the practices of learning about, creating, and sustaining our own food system. Practices included in this curriculum expansion will include: the creation of an ICC garden to grow produce and native plants, increased composting, collecting rainwater, educating on food waste, and educating on the nutritional and ecological value of plant life. To ensure the success of this project, ICC will promote student leadership by expanding the responsibilities of the student sustainability committee to include care of the garden. Members of the sustainability committee interested in the ICC garden will delegate tasks, take into account choices of how to design the garden, what to plant each season, and how to distribute food amongst community members. This will ultimately create a sustainable and environmentally conscious Power School food system.</p>	<p>Budget breakdown (how much does each item cost):  Garbage to Garden - \$19 x 12 months = \$228  Water bottles cost: \$25/pack x 12 = \$300  Reusable plates: \$18/per pack x 4 = \$72  Reusable utensils: \$13/per pack x 3 = \$39  2 raised garden beds: \$197.24 x 2 = \$394  Rain barrel and supplies: \$267  Gardening supplies such as gloves and shovels = \$100</p>	1,400



# Mixed Paper

Paper Pricing (per ton)



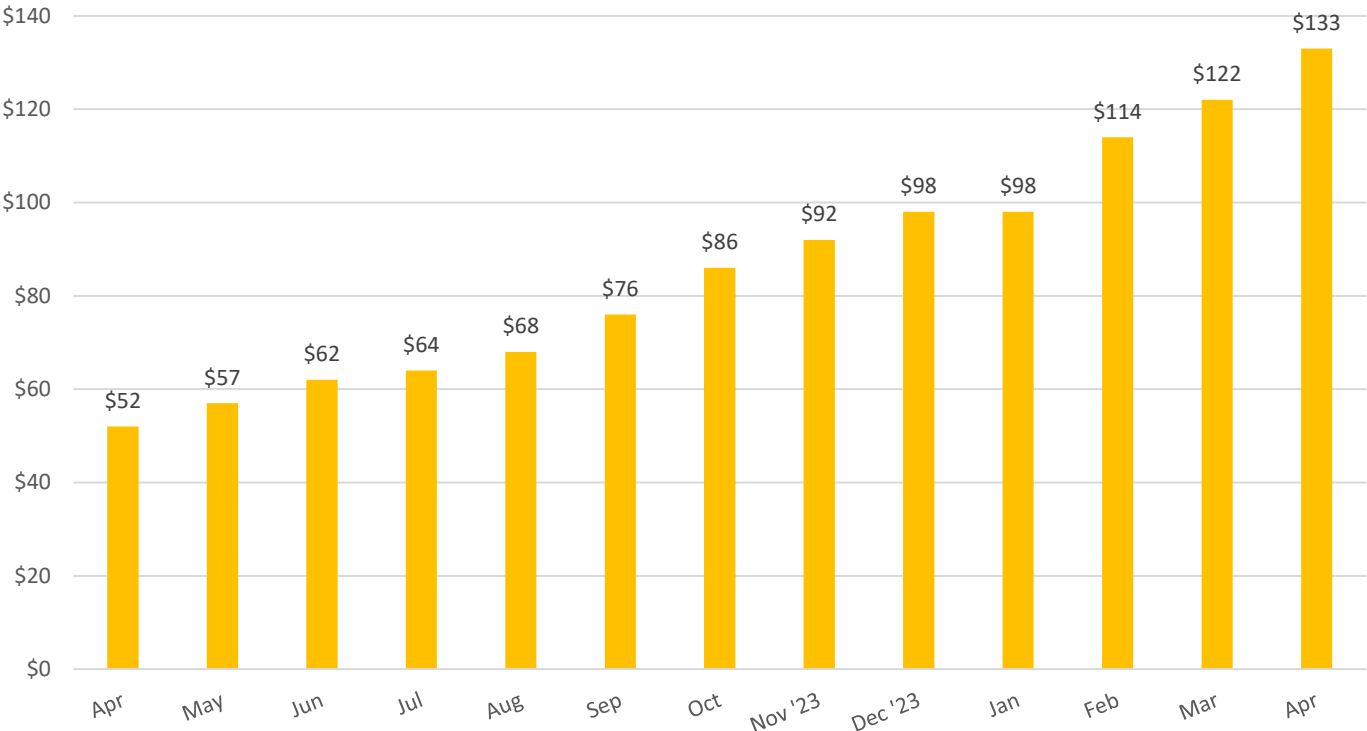
**356% increase**  
(Apr '23 to Apr '24)

*Markets & pricing are subject to fluctuation, due to supply & demand and transportation / shipping*

All information property of ecomaine

# Cardboard

Cardboard Pricing (per ton)



**256% increase**  
(Apr '23 to Apr '24)

*Markets & pricing are subject to fluctuation, due to supply & demand and transportation / shipping*

All information property of ecomaine

# Metal

Metal Pricing (per ton)



**2% increase**  
(Apr '23 to Apr '24)

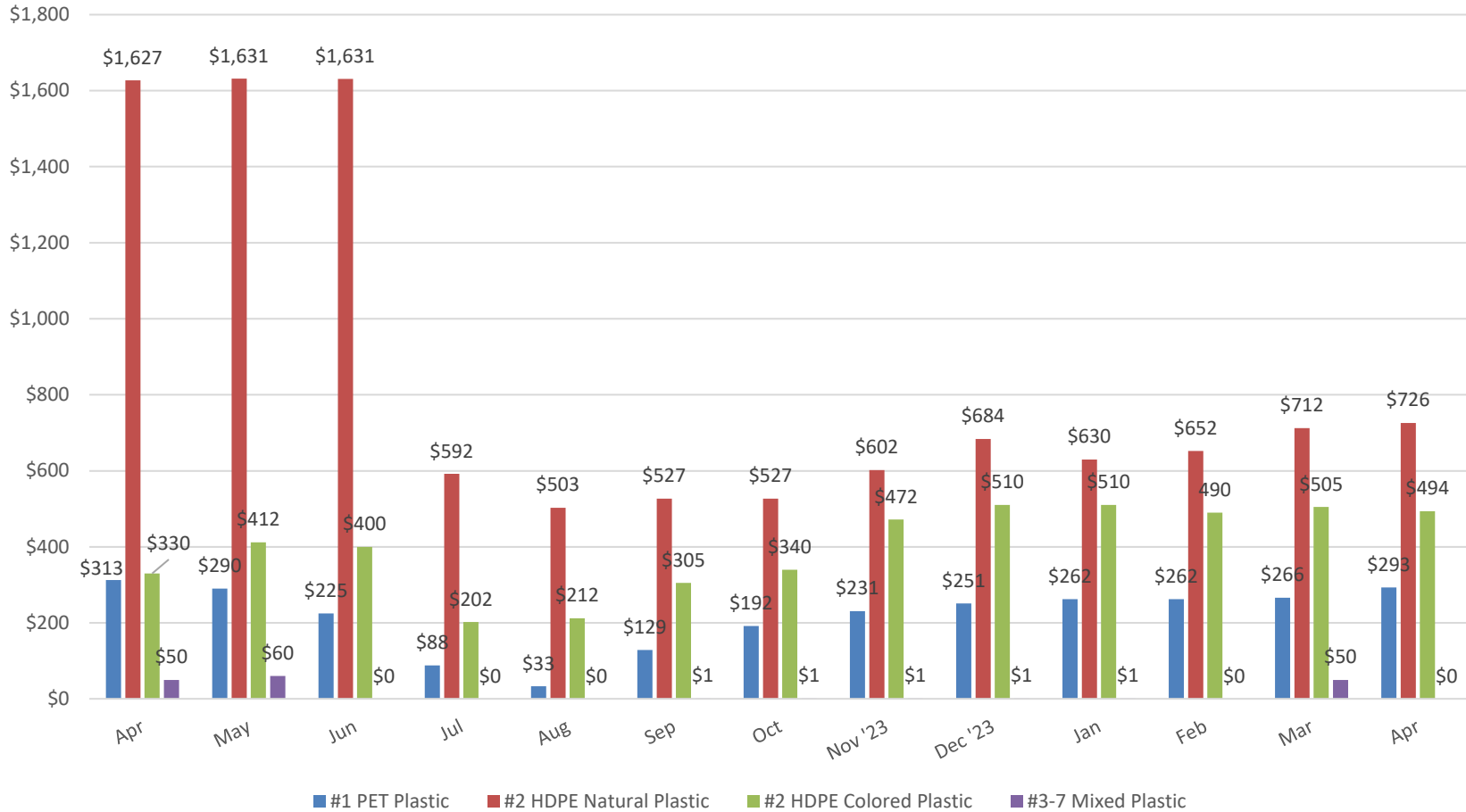
**10% decrease**  
(Apr '23- Apr '24)

*Markets & pricing are subject to fluctuation, due to supply & demand and transportation / shipping*

All information property of ecomaine

# Plastics

Plastics Pricing (per ton)



**6% decrease**  
(Apr '23 to Apr '24)

**56% decrease**  
(Apr '23 to Apr '24)

**44% increase**  
(Apr '23 to Apr '24)

**100% decrease**  
(Apr '23 to Apr '24)

*Markets & pricing are subject to fluctuation, due to supply & demand and transportation / shipping*

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