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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

May 20, 2015

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**MAYOR EMANUEL INTRODUCES ORDINANCE TO EXPAND CITYWIDE COMPOSTING PROGRAM**

*Ordinance Expands Allowable Compostable Materials for Community Gardens and Urban Farms;  
Creates Urban Farm Accessory Composting Operation Permit*

Mayor Emanuel today introduced an ordinance that would expand composting operations at community gardens and urban farms across Chicago and create a citywide community garden registry and urban farm accessory composting operation permit.

"Urban agriculture will help make our communities more environmentally friendly and sustainable," said Mayor Emanuel. "Expanding composting is an easy way to support our neighborhoods in growing fresh fruits and vegetables right in their own backyards."

The goal of the program is to expand the type of allowable compostable materials at both community gardens and urban farms while implementing common sense measures to ensure public health standards are maintained. The ordinance also institutes a reduced fee for certain nonprofit composting and recycling organizations.

"Composting supports the reuse of material that would otherwise be considered waste and sent to landfills," said CDPH Commissioner Julie Morita, M.D. "I look forward to implementing these new policies and other best practices with our community stakeholders in the upcoming composting season."

In addition to landscape waste, such as grass or shrubbery clippings, community gardens will now be allowed to compost limited organic waste, including food scraps such as vegetables and eggshells. All community gardens will be required to register with the City at no cost through a new online community garden registry. The ordinance also creates a new Urban Farm Accessory Composting Operation Permit, which will allow urban farms to apply for a permit with the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) to compost livestock waste, in addition to landscape and limited organic waste.

Expanding composting is part of a larger strategy to support urban agriculture efforts in Chicago. In 2011, Mayor Emanuel passed the Urban Farm ordinance, expanding the size limit on community gardens, relaxing fencing and parking requirements on commercial urban farms to help reduce startup costs, and allowing for innovative new methods of farming such as hydroponic and aquaponic systems. Over the last four years, acreage devoted to urban farming has increased by a

factor of 13, going from 1.4 acres to roughly 18 acres, and the number of urban farm operators has gone from two to 13.

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