



Independent coverage of composting, wood recycling and organics management

Composting News

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'Contaminated compost' gets federal hearing this month

By Ken McEntee

A motion hearing has been reset to May 26 on a federal case that may determine whether compost made from grass clippings must be tested for pesticides before being used in certified organic production.

Such testing requirements would cause "extraordinary cost increases that may render organic production economically infeasible," according to Hank Giclas, senior vice president, strategic planning, science & technology for Western Growers Association (WGA).

Western Growers, a trade association whose members farm about 185,000 certified organic acres and use an estimated one million tons of compost every year, this month was granted amicus status by a federal judge

(See Contaminated, page 8)



Student's microbial fuel cell converts organic waste to electricity

An 18-year-old Vancouver, B.C. high school student received a \$75,000 prize for developing microbial fuel cells (MFCs) that more efficiently convert organic waste into electricity. The award was given at this year's Intel International Science and Engineering Fair, which is the world's largest high school science research competition.

Han Jie Wang identified specific genes in genetically enhanced E. coli bacteria that enabled them to generate power efficiently. His system can produce significantly more power than existing MFC processes at a cost that is competitive with solar energy, which he believes will make MFCs commercially viable, said Intel Corp. and the Society for Science & the Public, which sponsored the award at their annual high school science fair. Primary applications could include sewage plants that consume large amounts of power, while wastewater itself is loaded with tappable energy.



A lot more food waste processing capacity is needed, SWANA says

A significant amount of additional food waste processing capacity will be required to achieve national, state, provincial and local food waste diversion goals, concluded a new report from the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) Applied Research Foundation (ARF).

The report, *Food Waste Diversion Programs and Their Impacts on MSW Systems*, also emphasizes the need for local decision-making in selecting and implementing food waste diversion programs.

The report says interest in the

recovery of food waste from municipal solid waste (MSW) is growing rapidly since the U.S. EPA and the USDA last September announced a joint goal to reduce food waste by half by 2030.

Several states, including

(See Capacity, page 5)

Highlights

- n **Tequila waste powers Mexican distillery**
- n **LA gets biosolids composter**
- n **National compost prices**

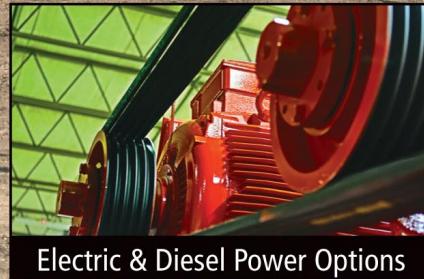
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Biomass

Tequila waste powers Mexican distillery

Nothing goes to waste in the Bacardi-owned Mexican distillery that produces Cazadores tequila, Bacardi said. The Arandas-based distillery has a new biomass boiler that harnesses every bit of green energy it can from the discards made during regular production of the brand's top-shelf spirits.

The ashes created within the boiler are used for composting, transforming the ashes into a nutrient-rich soil supplement, the company said.

Cazadores tequila is made from blue agave. About 60 percent of the biofuel used to produce the tequila comes from spent agave fibers, which equates to



about 11,000 tons a year. The other 40 percent is made up of about 8,000 tons of carbon-neutral, renewable fuel sources such as clean waste wood, biomass briquettes, sawdust, coconut shells and tree cuttings. Half of the biomass used comes from what used to be considered waste.

Together, the organic materials fill the enormous biomass boiler where they are transformed into the fuel needed to generate the steam power required for the agave sugar extraction process, cooking and distillation of the brand's tequila.

The large boiler conversion took 18 months to plan, 10 months to execute, and has been in operation for more than one year.



Composting News

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Food waste

Capacity

From page 1

Massachusetts and Connecticut, condition their food waste diversion requirements on the ability of generators to access adequate capacity within a certain distance. But many major metropolitan areas lack sufficient processing capacity to handle that level of food waste diversion, the report says.

The announcement of the federal goal identified 66.5 million tons of food per year lost and wasted in the U.S. and established a food recovery hierarchy that begins with source reduction and feeding hungry people, then works its way to less preferred options – with composting being preferred only to landfilling and incineration.

"We believe that Americans need to rethink how food is handled, before it is considered waste, to divert it into



programs to feed people, and to find other productive uses for food as food," said David Biderman, SWANA executive director and CEO. "Once it becomes waste, however, municipal decision-makers, working with their processing partners, need to determine how to best manage the material."

The report focuses on the effects of food recovery on composting and landfilling/incineration. It concluded that much of the food waste diverted

from those operations has the potential to be processed at composting facilities, and that anaerobic digestion (AD) and co-digestion at wastewater treatment facilities are also likely destinations for diverted food waste.

"The food recovery hierarchy does not apply universally," said Jeremy O'Brien, ARF director, who added that "an analysis of greenhouse gas impacts based on local data and conditions is needed to identify the best food scraps management options for a specific community."

The report encourages solid waste managers to perform a life cycle analysis of economic and environmental costs and benefits based on local needs, system capabilities and data in order to identify the most effective ways to manage food waste at the local level.

SWANA said it is a long-time advocate for local decision-making in establishing programs to collect and manage municipal solid waste.

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National Compost Prices

The prices listed below are intended to indicate the value of mature compost products sold by compost producers and retailers in noted regions. Prices listed are based on surveys and publicly posted prices. Your input on published prices is encouraged. Contact Ken McEntee, editor, at (440) 238-6603. Fax: (440) 238-6712. EMail: ken@recycle.cc. Address: 9815 Hazelwood Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44149. Notes on listings.

- Each listing includes a high price obtained, a low price obtained and an average of all prices obtained within a particular market.

- Market areas: Thirteen market areas have been

targeted to provide a cross section of compost product markets in the U.S. Where regions are not identified by a specific city, "Chesapeake" refers to the region stretching between Norfolk, Va. to Baltimore, Md. "Texas" incorporates several major cities in the state. "Northwest" represents the Seattle and Portland, Ore. areas. "SF-Bay" refers to the San Francisco Bay area. SoCal is Southern California, including the Los Angeles and San Diego areas. Denver includes Colorado, Wyoming and Montana.

- "Food waste" compost: This category refers to compost products that include food waste, regional specialties and other feedstocks not specifically

covered in other categories.

- Manures: Chicken manures may include other poultry manures, such as turkey and duck manure. Cow manures may include manures marketed as steer and dairy manure. Horse manure is included in this category as well.

- Absence of a regional listing within a given category indicates not enough information for a valid listing. Additional data will be added as more information is obtained.

- Bulk retail prices do not include municipal operations that give compost away for free.

Bulk Retail (yard)

	Average	High	Low
Yard waste compost			
NE	\$ 32.55	\$ 77.00	\$ 17.50
Chesapeake	\$ 24.50	\$ 30.00	\$ 17.00
SE	\$ 21.88	\$ 29.95	\$ 16.00
Florida	\$ 16.42	\$ 26.00	\$ 10.50
Cleveland	\$ 19.90	\$ 28.00	\$ 12.50
Iowa	\$ 21.57	\$ 53.00	\$ 7.50
Minneapolis	\$ 17.09	\$ 28.00	\$ 8.00
Texas	\$ 29.71	\$ 40.00	\$ 15.00
Denver	\$ 20.31	\$ 31.00	\$ 12.00
Northwest	\$ 24.05	\$ 55.00	\$ 10.00
SF-Bay	\$ 21.92	\$ 30.00	\$ 10.00
SoCal	\$ 14.75	\$ 24.00	\$ 8.00
Food waste compost			
NE	\$ 39.12	\$ 64.00	\$ 17.50
Chesapeake	\$ 23.00	\$ 30.00	\$ 15.00
SE	\$ 28.11	\$ 35.00	\$ 24.00
Florida	\$ 17.50	\$ 22.00	\$ 13.00
Iowa	\$ 25.00	\$ 65.00	\$ 15.00
Minneapolis	\$ 12.33	\$ 16.00	\$ 9.00
Texas	\$ 30.21	\$ 48.95	\$ 15.00
Denver	\$ 15.00	\$ 15.00	\$ 15.00
Northwest	\$ 20.55	\$ 30.00	\$ 15.00
SF-Bay	\$ 23.61	\$ 38.00	\$ 14.00
SoCal	\$ 30.50	\$ 45.00	\$ 16.00
Leaf humus			
NE	\$ 24.98	\$ 30.00	\$ 19.95
Chesapeake	\$ 27.49	\$ 30.00	\$ 23.95
Cleveland	\$ 19.27	\$ 26.00	\$ 8.00
Composted biosolids			
NE	\$ 30.00	\$ 40.00	\$ 20.00
Chesapeake	\$ 24.98	\$ 35.00	\$ 12.00
SE	\$ 12.14	\$ 28.00	\$ 4.00
Florida	\$ 13.14	\$ 22.00	\$ 8.00
Cleveland	\$ 24.77	\$ 30.00	\$ 19.50
Iowa	\$ 12.67	\$ 21.00	\$ 8.00
Texas	\$ 21.28	\$ 30.00	\$ 10.00
Denver	\$ 9.00	\$ 10.00	\$ 7.00
Northwest	\$ 17.91	\$ 26.00	\$ 7.00
SoCal	\$ 13.36	\$ 22.00	\$ 3.50
Composted chicken manure			
NE	\$ 45.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 40.00
Chesapeake	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00
SE	\$ 42.00	\$ 42.00	\$ 42.00
Minneapolis	\$ 17.00	\$ 17.00	\$ 17.00
Texas	\$ 37.23	\$ 47.50	\$ 26.95
Denver	\$ 25.65	\$ 28.00	\$ 24.00
SF-Bay	\$ 16.00	\$ 16.00	\$ 16.00
SoCal	\$ 44.00	\$ 75.00	\$ 27.00
Composted cow manure			
NE	\$ 45.50	\$ 46.00	\$ 45.00
SE	\$ 31.33	\$ 45.00	\$ 12.00
Cleveland	\$ 24.00	\$ 24.00	\$ 24.00
Iowa	\$ 42.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 16.00
Minneapolis	\$ 29.33	\$ 32.00	\$ 26.00
Texas	\$ 29.33	\$ 47.50	\$ 15.00
Denver	\$ 21.71	\$ 30.00	\$ 12.00
Phoenix	\$ 20.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 20.00
Northwest	\$ 23.85	\$ 33.75	\$ 17.45

	Average	High	Low
SF-Bay	\$ 26.00	\$ 26.00	\$ 26.00
SoCal	\$ 17.25	\$ 24.00	\$ 12.00
Wood waste mulch			
NE	\$ 21.35	\$ 38.00	\$ 12.50
Chesapeake	\$ 21.13	\$ 28.00	\$ 12.00
SE	\$ 18.78	\$ 34.95	\$ 12.00
Florida	\$ 17.50	\$ 18.00	\$ 17.00
Cleveland	\$ 25.56	\$ 36.25	\$ 14.00
Iowa	\$ 32.50	\$ 40.00	\$ 25.00
Minneapolis	\$ 26.00	\$ 35.00	\$ 20.00
Texas	\$ 16.19	\$ 27.00	\$ 9.00
Denver	\$ 18.74	\$ 25.00	\$ 12.48
Phoenix	\$ 17.61	\$ 22.95	\$ 10.00
Northwest	\$ 19.00	\$ 35.00	\$ 7.50
SF-Bay	\$ 18.14	\$ 30.00	\$ 8.00
SoCal	\$ 20.50	\$ 50.00	\$ 6.00
Composted cow manure			
NE	\$ 36.00	\$ 36.00	\$ 36.00
SE	\$ 21.38	\$ 31.50	\$ 7.00
Iowa	\$ 35.00	\$ 35.00	\$ 35.00
Texas	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00
Denver	\$ 12.05	\$ 14.10	\$ 10.00
Northwest	\$ 22.00	\$ 22.00	\$ 22.00
SF-Bay	\$ 34.25	\$ 34.50	\$ 34.00
SoCal	\$ 5.00	\$ 6.00	\$ 4.00
Wood waste mulch			
NE	\$ 15.75	\$ 33.00	\$ 8.00
Chesapeake	\$ 15.80	\$ 17.00	\$ 13.00
SE	\$ 14.60	\$ 24.95	\$ 5.00
Florida	\$ 14.00	\$ 15.00	\$ 13.00
Iowa	\$ 30.00	\$ 40.00	\$ 20.00
Minneapolis	\$ 18.50	\$ 20.00	\$ 17.00
Texas	\$ 10.83	\$ 14.00	\$ 8.00
Denver	\$ 7.66	\$ 8.32	\$ 7.00
Northwest	\$ 15.00	\$ 15.00	\$ 15.00
SF-Bay	\$ 12.33	\$ 14.00	\$ 9.00
SoCal	\$ 9.25	\$ 15.00	\$ 5.00
Colored wood mulch			
NE	\$ 22.00	\$ 22.00	\$ 22.00
Chesapeake	\$ 20.50	\$ 22.00	\$ 19.00
SE	\$ 19.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 15.00
Florida	\$ 16.00	\$ 16.00	\$ 16.00
Iowa	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00
Minneapolis	\$ 27.00	\$ 35.00	\$ 19.00
Texas	\$ 20.67	\$ 24.00	\$ 18.00
Denver	\$ 17.66	\$ 21.32	\$ 14.00
Northwest	\$ 22.00	\$ 22.00	\$ 22.00
SF-Bay	\$ 21.00	\$ 22.00	\$ 19.00
SoCal	\$ 22.50	\$ 25.00	\$ 20.00

Bulk wholesale (yard)

	Average	High	Low
Yard waste compost			
NE	\$ 21.50	\$ 48.00	\$ 11.00
Chesapeake	\$ 13.39	\$ 16.00	\$ 8.00
SE	\$ 16.66	\$ 25.00	\$ 8.65
Florida	\$ 9.75	\$ 13.00	\$ 8.00
Cleveland	\$ 12.50	\$ 15.00	\$ 10.00
Iowa	\$ 14.00	\$ 19.00	\$ 8.00
Minneapolis	\$ 12.00	\$ 17.00	\$ 7.00
Texas	\$ 17.25	\$ 24.00	\$ 9.00
Denver	\$ 13.05	\$ 14.10	\$ 12.00
Northwest	\$ 14.79	\$ 35.00	\$ 7.50
SF-Bay	\$ 13.71	\$ 22.00	\$ 7.00
SoCal	\$ 7.33	\$ 10.00	\$ 6.00
Food waste compost			
NE	\$ 25.79	\$ 48.00	\$ 11.00
Chesapeake	\$ 10.50	\$ 15.00	\$ 8.00
SE	\$ 20.65	\$ 30.00	\$ 15.00
Florida	\$ 10.50	\$ 13.00	\$ 8.00
Iowa	\$ 13.40	\$ 20.00	\$ 10.00
Minneapolis	\$ 12.00	\$ 12.00	\$ 12.00
Texas	\$ 17.50	\$ 24.00	\$ 8.50
Denver	\$ 11.33	\$ 15.00	\$ 7.00
Northwest	\$ 17.25	\$ 20.00	\$ 15.00
SF-Bay	\$ 12.67	\$ 26.00	\$ 5.00
Composted biosolids			
NE	\$ 15.33	\$ 20.00	\$ 10.00
Chesapeake	\$ 9.31	\$ 15.00	\$ 5.00
SE	\$ 10.93	\$ 15.00	\$ 5.00
Florida	\$ 10.50	\$ 13.00	\$ 8.00
Texas	\$ 15.99	\$ 20.00	\$ 9.00

Bag Retail

	Average	High	Low
Compost (40# bag)			
NE	\$ 6.87	\$ 8.00	\$ 4.50
Chesapeake	\$ 3.73	\$ 5.49	\$ 2.15
SE	\$ 4.00	\$ 4.00	\$ 4.00
Iowa	\$ 1.99	\$ 1.99	\$ 1.99
Cleveland	\$ 2.45	\$ 2.99	\$ 2.10
Iowa	\$ 3.12	\$ 7.99	\$ 1.50
Texas	\$ 4.25	\$ 6.99	\$ 1.99
Denver	\$ 3.59	\$ 4.75	\$ 1.73
Phoenix	\$ 4.71	\$ 5.99	\$ 2.77
Northwest	\$ 4.29	\$ 5.99	\$ 2.99
SoCal	\$ 5.39	\$ 6.25	\$ 3.90
Composted cow manure(40#bag)			
NE	\$ 6.53	\$ 9.87	\$ 3.85
Chesapeake	\$ 5.97	\$ 7.95	\$ 3.99
SE	\$ 5.16	\$ 6.97	\$ 3.34
Florida	\$ 1.98	\$ 1.99	\$ 1.97
Cleveland	\$ 3.27	\$ 3.99	\$ 2.49
Iowa	\$ 2.18	\$ 2.49	\$ 1.75
Minneapolis	\$ 3.70	\$ 7.00	\$ 1.99
Texas	\$ 4.59	\$ 6.99	\$ 1.99
Phoenix	\$ 2.99	\$ 3.99	\$ 2.49
Northwest	\$ 3.99	\$ 3.99	\$ 3.99
SF-Bay	\$ 7.00	\$ 7.00	\$ 7.00

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Litigation

Contaminated

From page 1

in support of defendants USDA and its National Organics Program (NOP) in a federal lawsuit relating to their allowable use of potentially pesticide contaminated compost for certified organic food.

Federal Judge Jacqueline Scott Corley, of the U.S. District Court, Northern California District, also was considering amicus requests from the Organic Trade Association (OTA) and the California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF) to join the case in support of the federal agencies.

The case involves NOP's issuance, in April 2010, of guidance for *Allowance of Green Waste in Organic Production Systems* (Document NOP 5016). The guidance allows, for certified organic production, the use of green waste compost that may contain residue from

synthetic pesticides applied to lawns. The three plaintiffs in the suit are asking the court to prevent the federal agencies from allowing such compost to be acceptable for organic production. Their primary argument is that NOP 5016 was put into effect without first undergoing proper public hearing procedures.

The case

The suit was filed in April 2015 by plaintiffs Center for Environmental Health (CEH), of Oakland, Calif., Center for Food Safety (CFS), of San Francisco and Beyond Pesticides, of Washington, D.C. against defendants USDA, USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service and USDA's National Organic Program.

The plaintiffs say USDA improperly issued NOP 5016, which they call the "Contaminated Compost Decision," as a guidance document without providing public notice or comment opportunities. They say that since the document changed the rules for the

use of compost in organic production, it constitutes a legislative rule, not simply guidance, and is subject to the federal government's Administrative Procedure Act (APA), which mandates public notice and comment.

NOP regulations support the use of composted plant and animal materials to maintain or improve soil organic matter. The regulations specify that organic producers must "manage plant and animal materials to maintain or improve soil organic matter content in a manner that does not contribute to the contamination of crops, soil or water by plant nutrients, pathogenic organisms, heavy metals or residues of prohibited substances."

The organic standards prohibit the use of synthetic chemicals, but allow for exceptions that are specified on a "National List" of allowed and prohibited substances. To be added to the National List, a synthetic substance

(See *Contaminated*, page 12)

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Contact: Rick Cohen



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Web: www.dynahog.com
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Hogzilla Grinders CW Mill Equipment-

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Contact: Rick Cohen

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must get agency approval after a review process to determine human or environmental harm and whether wholly natural substitutes are available. Recognizing that trace amounts of synthetic chemicals may be present on farms, NOP regulations contain exceptions for unavoidable residual environmental contamination (UREC) in organic products. The exception, plaintiffs say, is intended for agricultural inputs generated on farms where farmers are unable to control contamination already in the soil and air and should not apply to compost made from grass clipping contaminated with synthetic pesticides.

Bifenthrin

In 2009, the California Department of Food Control and Agriculture (CDFA) found residue of NOP-prohibited pesticide bifenthrin in samples of three different commercial green waste compost products made by Grover Environmental Products, Feather River Organics and Nortech Waste LLC. Bifenthrin is used to control fire ants and other insects and is applied to lawns through a variety of brand name products.

CDFA advised organic producers and accredited certifying agents that the three affected composts were banned for use in organic crop production in California.

NOP said it then addressed the issue nationally by sending a draft policy on pesticide residues in compost to accredited organic certifying agents and received six comments, all of which "urged the NOP to take an alternative approach" to the CDFA decision.

In December 2009 and February 2010, CCOF – one of the parties now seeking amicus status in the lawsuit – tested soil and crop samples where affected compost had been applied at the rate of five to six tons per acre and

did not detect bifenthrin samples above a detection limit 0.01 parts per million. Following that, NOP issued NOP 5016, which applied the "unavoidable residual contamination" exception to compost.

"The NOP standards are process based and do not mandate zero tolerance for synthetic pesticide residues in inputs, such as compost," the guidance document says. "Compost that is produced from the approved feedstocks...is acceptable for use in organic production provided that any residual pesticide levels do not contribute to the contamination of crops, soil or water."

Plaintiffs in the lawsuit, which was filed five years later, said, "For the first time, the Contaminated-Compost decision allowed organic producers to use contaminated materials such as commercial food waste and lawn trimmings treated with synthetic pesticides as compost for their crops as long as the producers do not either directly apply synthetic pesticides or contribute to the contamination of crops, soil or water...The Contaminated-Compost decision did not define or explain how it would measure the contamination of crops, soil or water."

The plaintiffs argue that bifenthrin, for example, is not an unavoidable environmental contaminant as allowed by NOP rules prior to NOP 5016, but rather a substance intentionally applied to grass that becomes a feedstock for compost.

"The Contaminated-Compost decision changed the legal status of bifenthrin and other pesticides that are prohibited for use in organic production but are now being allowed in green waste used in organic production," the suit says. "Prior to the Contaminated-Compost decision, the National Organic Program banned producers from using contaminated compost materials in organic agriculture. But the Contaminated Compost decision renounced that ban, tolerating the use of contaminated compost materials and thus

undermining organic standards."

Dismissal denied

In September, the court denied USDA's motion to dismiss the suit. The motion to dismiss was based on USDA's insistence that public notice was not necessary before issuance of a "guidance document." The plaintiffs argue that NOP 5016 creates a change of policy, rather than just guidance.

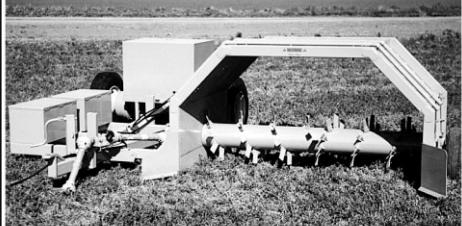
"Defendants have not shown that as a matter of law NOP 5016 is merely a guidance policy for which no notice and comment is required," the court ruled.

New parties

With just two weeks remaining before a scheduled hearing on summary judgment in the case, the plaintiffs objected to Western Growers' last minute request to support USDA and NOP under amicus status. The

(See Contaminated, page 14)

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Litigation

Contamination

From page 12

court, however, granted amicus status early this month, and said it would also consider last minute amicus status requested by OTA and CCOF. Corley also rescheduled the hearing on summary judgement – motions filed by each side to rule in their favor without further moving forward in the case – from May 12 to May 26.

Western Growers said its members – farmers in California, Arizona and Colorado – grow, pack and ship almost half of all U.S. produce, and produce a third of all fresh organic produce in the U.S. Yet, the association explained its last minute interest in the case because it became aware of the case and its implications for certified organic farmers just in March 2016.

Western Farmers, however, said it wants to appear only to explain the implications should the court rule in favor of the plaintiffs.

Those implications, Giclas wrote, could include expensive residue testing of all compost before it could be used for organic production.

"To improve soil organic matter content in a manner that does not contribute to contamination of soil, crops or water resources, our members use significant amounts of manufactured compost that is generally obtained from an OMRI (Organic Materials Review Institute) recognized commercial source," Giclas wrote. "We are not aware of available substitutes for prepared compost for certified organic operations. The unavailability of compost unless proved to be analytically free of all known substances that are not allowed by the federal organic regulations will

have a dramatic and negative impact on the soil on organic farms. It will likely impact adversely the soil fertility, soil tilth, biological activity and crop nutrients."



Compost Digest

Read these complete stories at www.facebook.com/CompostingNews.

- Every afternoon, a dump truck from the **Buffalo** Zoo arrives at East Buffalo Custom Composts and deposits about a half-ton of poop scooped from the bison pen, elephant exhibit, giraffe house and the watering holes or hangouts of other herbivorous zoo animals like antelopes, zebras and rhinos.

The arrangement between the

(See Digest, page 16)

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Compost Digest

Read these complete stories at
www.facebook.com/CompostingNews.

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composter and the zoo began in March.

Instead of piling the animals' daily detritus into large dumpsters to be picked up weekly by refuse trucks and hauled 25 miles to a Lewiston landfill, a zoo dump truck makes the five-mile jaunt to the nine-acre composting site. The manure stays local and gets composted.

The nutrient-rich zoo manure, including the alfalfa, straw and wood shavings it contains, are mixed with over-ripened fruits and vegetables from a local produce hauler and other occasional proprietary ingredients.

The compost is used for bio-retention cells, rain gardens and other soil remediation projects designed to build soil and manage stormwater runoff.

Soon the Buffalo RiverWorks will take specially blended compost for a massive bio-filtration project at RiverWorks' new green parking lot. The compost is designed to filter and clean stormwater runoff from RiverWorks' parking lot before water makes its way through the water table into the nearby Buffalo River. – *The Buffalo News*, www.buffalonews.com

- After 12 years of planning, a facility to compost **Los Angeles** county sewage sludge is up and running in Kings County, Calif. The \$100 million plant, owned and operated by the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles

County, located on land southeast of Kettleman City and dubbed "Tulare Lake Compost," started processing small amounts of the pre-treated sludge in January. The facility mixes sludge from 78 Southern California cities with mostly agricultural green waste and composts it in large heaps. The result, according to engineers, is safe, "exceptional quality" fertilizer approved by the U.S. EPA for application on any farm crops, garden plants and lawns.

The product is intended for distribution to Central Valley farmers as a soil amendment.

After it was approved by the Kings County Board of Supervisors in April 2004, the proposal faced environmental lawsuits alleging the sludge was unsafe. Those lawsuits were settled by the end of 2006. A plan to start operating in 2007 has delayed by corrosive soils that compromised the concrete foundation.

The facility is a sprawling site that includes a massive, odor-proofed building. The trucked-in sludge is dumped inside and mixed with green waste. From there, it goes outside on conveyor belts to a huge paved composting area. The facility is currently operating at a capacity equivalent to 20,000 tons of sludge a year – a small fraction of the 500,000 tons a year the facility would process at full build-out. – *The Hanford Sentinel*, hanfordsentinel.com

- **Emerald Coast Utilities Authority (Florida)** is now producing Emerald Coast Bloom, a nutrient-rich compost at the Central Water Reclamation Facility in Cantonment. The compost is made from a combination of yard waste such as leaves, grass and pine straw, and biosolids. Some of the compost is being sold to smaller landscaping companies for their use and resale to the public. In Escambia County, Woerner Landscape offers the product to the public, including small "by the bag" quantities.

ECUA hopes to soon find a single buyer for all of the compost it



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produces. – *North Escambia.com*, www.northescambia.com

- The legal battle between the operator of **Gainesville, Fla.**'s biomass plant and a local fuel supplier, which started last year, played out in a courtroom this month. With millions in potential damages on the line, both sides presented closing arguments and awaited the judge's ruling.

The dispute began in April 2015 when Wood Resource Recovery, which is owned by local businessman Bill Gaston, sued the Gainesville Renewable Energy Center (GREC). Both parties previously had established a contract in which Wood Resource Recovery would supply GREC, which runs the biomass plant, with wood waste it could use as fuel.

Wood Resource Recovery terminated its contract with GREC last year and argued that the plant's operator had breached the agreement, according to court documents.

However, GREC filed a counterclaim and said Wood Resource Recovery was the one that actually breached the contract.

Wood Resource Recovery is seeking more than \$16 million in damages from GREC. But GREC is seeking about \$2.2 million in damages from Wood Resource Recovery.

The fuel supplier said it invested millions to ramp up its operation in anticipation of the tens of thousands of tons of woody material it would need to supply the plant. The company argued that GREC refused to accept yard waste even though their contract said it could be used as fuel and wouldn't accept biomass material from agriculturally zoned properties either.

- *Gainesville Sun*, www.gainesville.com

- Neighbors want to know whether they should be concerned about chemicals and repurposed waste products that have been used on

farmland in **Medina, Ohio**. The land has been sprayed with fertilizer by Quasar, which processes food waste, manure, biosolids and crop waste. With 14 anaerobic processing facilities in Ohio, New York, Massachusetts and Maine, Quasar produces 80,000 megawatt hours of power annually from 700,000 wet tons of biomass material. Methane and biogases can be used in place of fossil fuel-derived energy. The remaining material is rich in nutrients including nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium — key ingredients found in fertilizers, the company said.

Biosolids, Quasar said, are a resource, not waste to be disposed of.

Quasar said it distributes the fertilizing material across more than 15,000 acres with permits from the Ohio EPA, and the specific type of fertilizer to be used in Medina has been in use across the country for 45 years.

- *Medina Gazette*, medinagazette.northcoastnow.com

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Komptech Americas, Plexus to partner at Waste Expo

Plexus Recycling Technologies said it will launch as a full-line recycling solution provider at the 2016 Waste Expo, June 6-9, in Las Vegas. Plexus was formed by a team of industry leaders with one massive goal - to bring advanced recycling technologies from around the world together in systems that solve entrenched problems.

Along with Komptech stationary equipment, Plexus will begin distribution of three new product lines - Andritz MeWa, Matthiessen and ZenRobotics. A ZenRobotics unit will be on display at Waste Expo along with Komptech machinery and representatives from all product lines.

"With Komptech sales climbing every year, we decided to partner with complementary brands to provide the latest recycling technologies to our customers," said Marcel Vallen, CEO of Komptech Americas and Plexus Recycling Technologies.

According to Dave Matz, founder of Plexus Recycling Technologies, "It's not enough to just be the best solution today. At Plexus, we look towards the future."

You can visit Komptech Americas and Plexus Recycling Technologies at Waste Expo, booth No. 1243, to see the latest technology the industry has to offer.

For more information, visit www.komptechamericas.com.

Bandit recognized for export success

Bandit Industries this month received the president's "E" Award, the highest government recognition any U.S. entity can receive for making a significant contribution to the



L-R: Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker, Bandit President Jerry Morey, International Sales Manager Felipe Tamayo. (Photo: Bandit Industries)

expansion of U.S. exports, the company announced. Bandit Industries President Jerry Morey and International Sales Manager Felipe Tamayo accepted the award from Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker during the ceremony held in the U.S. Department of Commerce building.

This year 123 awards were presented, with 72 going to manufacturers.

Bandit is among the largest global manufacturers for wood and waste processing equipment, including hand-fed brush and whole tree wood chippers, stump grinders, forestry mowers, horizontal grinders, specialty yard equipment and skid-steer loader attachments. Bandit equipment is sold in 56 countries through a growing list of distributors and agents.

"Exports account for more than 25 percent of our business, and that number continues to grow," Morey said. "We've always been a manufacturer that listens to our customers and what they need; that's why we've invested significantly into research and development of

equipment that meets the special needs of international customers. Our export success is the result of a collaborative effort from everyone at Bandit, from our design engineers to representatives in the field and of course our international sales and marketing team. We are very proud and honored to receive this award on behalf of everyone in our mid-Michigan community."

Founded in 1983 in rural Isabella County, Mich. between the towns of Mount Pleasant and Remus, the company grew from six employees in a small converted repair shop to more than 400 employees utilizing 280,000 square feet of manufacturing space.

For more information, visit www.banditchippers.com.

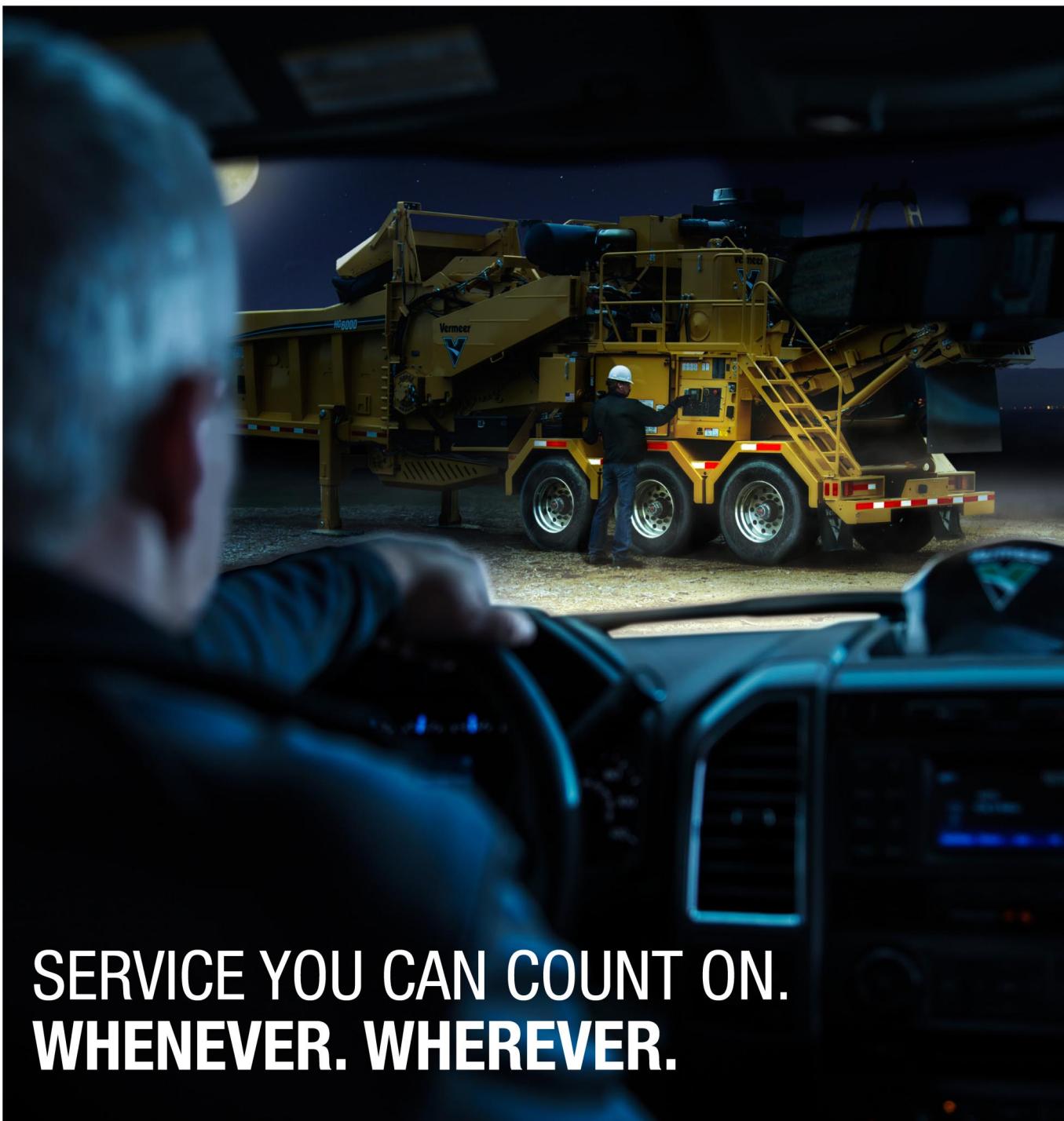
Ruskin appointed CEO at Morbark

Dan Ruskin was appointed CEO of Morbark LLC. The appointment coincides with the recent sale of Morbark to Stellex Capital Management, a private equity manager that invests in U.S. and international corporations.

"Dan is an excellent fit for Morbark," said Ray Whiteman, chairman and managing partner of Stellex. "We have known Dan for close to 20 years, and his experience across multiple industries, in particular industrial markets such as heavy equipment, automotive, truck and transport vehicles, have prepared him well for this position."

Ruskin has an extensive management background in lean manufacturing, corporate turnarounds and restructurings. He has broad experience in helping companies by growing revenue, improving systems and operations, and institutionalizing practices to increase productivity.

"I'm excited, honored and humbled to have the opportunity to lead Morbark as we enter a new era of innovation and productivity," Ruskin said. For more information, visit www.morbark.com.



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