



US Composting Council Newsletter • Summer 2017

## From the Top of the Compost Pile

Frank Franciosi, Executive Director



### Planning Out Your Piece of the Circular Economy

Recently I was interviewed by a reporter about best practices for introducing composting into a large city. For those of us in the thick

of compost manufacturing 24/7, the answer seems intuitive. But we forget that public education is a new proposition in every new facility application. While the idea of composting may be driven by demand in your area, remember that there's a bigger picture to address.

So here are some steps that the USCC will be working on for cities and counties as the year progresses:

1. Get buy in from your *solid waste department* and *municipal political leaders*. Give them solid evidence, like the Institute for Local Self-Reliance's 2013 report, *Pay Dirt* that provides data on job creation, products used in local markets and investment in the local economy.

2. Develop a public outreach plan to educate about the benefits of a composting program and seek input from your constituents. Stress the importance of planning for a sustainable future.

3. Hire a compost industry consultant or an experienced engineering firm that has a proven track record on developing composting projects. They should consider all options, like centralized composting or collection and transport to an existing facility. These experienced professionals

can recommend the proper site design, equipment, composting method and technology for

your local requirements. Put odor control and compliance with local zoning and environmental regulations high on the list of go/no-go factors. These priorities apply, whether you are developing a centralized commercial composting facility or an organics transfer station.

4. Invest in well-trained and certified staff, which is another way of assuring that the facility won't run afoul of your neighbors and regulatory compliance. Having people on board who are USCC CCOMs (Certi-

*Continues below*

The US Composting Council's *Compost Communicator* newsletter is published quarterly in *BioCycle*, the official magazine of the USCC.

## New Website for CCOMs To Launch in September

Certified Compost Operations Managers (CCOMs) can watch for the next milestone of the CCOM program — a dedicated site where they can monitor their progress and keep up their certification.

Last year, USCC launched the Certified Compost Operations Manager™ credential, creating and beta testing the exam, implementing the application process, and assembling the Commission to oversee it all.

With more than 50 CCOMs now credentialed, the most frequently asked question is, "how do I maintain my certification?" That is why we are nearly ready to launch the new *Certification Operating System*, a dedicated website where certificants will be able to record their Professional Development Hours, track progress, and "Stay Connected". The website will also house the application process for new CCOMs; the practice test; and lists of Approved Training Providers. To be notified and keep up with news on USCC Certification, click the "Stay Connected" link at [www.certificationsUSCC.org](http://www.certificationsUSCC.org).

The Certification Commission thanks our Heroes who help make this program possible with their financial support: BASF, New Earth Compost, and Denali Water Solutions. You can join them! <http://certificationsUSCC.org/Our-Heroes/Be-a-Hero>



## Welcome Young Professionals Leadership Group

The next generation is stepping up to increase its impact on the direction of the US Composting Council! A group of 16 people hailing from all parts of the U.S. is directing the Young Professionals Group. Its Steering Committee, which will oversee overall direction for the group, includes Angela Duong; Erik Martig; Shephali Patel and Heather Wasilewski. A Mentoring subcommittee is focusing on the success of this year's mentoring program, and a committee in charge of planning the Business Pitching event at COMPOST2018, headed by Reece Hammer ([reecehammer@gmail.com](mailto:reecehammer@gmail.com)), has already gotten to work. A survey about the event was conducted in early July.

Two committees are just starting work at this writing: one to plan a volunteer service event at COMPOST2018 and another to plan the networking event at the conference.

Any USCC member between 18 and 35 is welcome to join the Young Professionals Group, and participate in committees. Email membership manager Linda Norris-Waldt ([lnorriswaldt@compostingcouncil.org](mailto:lnorriswaldt@compostingcouncil.org)) if you are interested, and visit [www.compostingcouncil.org/young-professionals](http://www.compostingcouncil.org/young-professionals) for more information.

MEMBER NEWS

**Arizona State  
And City of Phoenix**

Arizona State University (ASU) and the City of Phoenix have opened the Resource Innovation and Solutions Network (RISN) green incubator, a niche business accelerator for entrepreneurs in the early stages of waste-to-product innovation with the goal of moving a circular economy in the Phoenix area forward further and faster. The RISN Incubator provides ventures an opportunity to rapidly scale and transform startups into solutions to circular economy challenges.

**Sound Sustainable Farms**

An initiative started this summer by Cedar Grove Compost in Redmond, Washington, strives to bring fresh, locally grown, organic food to the tables of diners at Seattle restaurants, fans at the region's ballparks and the tables of hungry families. Cedar Grove supplies its compost manufactured with source separated or-



Arturo Lopez, farmer (left) and J. Stephan Banchemo III, founder (right)

ganics from local residents and restaurants to what was a dormant farm to restore soil health and initiate productivity on land that was intended for and protected for farming (soundsfarms.com).

**Pacific Region Compost**

The Association of Oregon Recyclers (AOR) has recognized the Pacific Region Compost facility (Republic Services) in Corvallis, Oregon, with the Recycler of the Year Award. The award was presented at the AOR's annual conference.

**Expanding Organics Collection**

The Austin (Texas) City Council recently approved an expansion from 14,000 to 200,000 households that are offered curbside organics collection by 2020. Member Organics By Gosh was awarded the contract. The City of Boise (Idaho) just launched its program serving a potential 70,000 households with organics collection, provided by Republic Services.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

**Vegware, Huntington Beach, CA**

Bronze Member

*Compost Communicator spoke with Julia Wetstein to find out what's up with Vegware.*

**CC: Tell us about your product and the mission of your organization.**

**Vegware:** Vegware is a compostable packaging company that produces catering disposables that are low carbon, made from renewable or recycled materials, and can all be recycled along with food waste. Vegware is the only completely compostable packaging company operating globally, with bases in the United Kingdom, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, United Arab Emirates, Hong Kong, and now in the U.S.

**CC: What are challenges to being successful in your industry?**

**Vegware:** We are well known in Europe, but are still relatively new to the North American market. Now that we have offices and a warehouse in California, we will be spreading the news that everyone here can finally get Vegware products.

**CC: Are there ways that being involved in USCC is helping you meet those challenges?**

**Vegware:** Our global Managing Partner and Founder of Vegware, Joe Frankel, made the trip from Edinburgh, Scotland to attend COMPOST2017 in Los Angeles. Joe met with many USCC members, the California chapter and other organizations. We believe being active with the USCC is essential to having a successful company in the U.S.

**CC: What are some of the features that USCC offers that you find most useful?**

**Vegware:** We like the opportunity to work with operators who share our vision and values. And when compost manufacturers find out how much we know about their needs and challenges, we find partners and close allies. We also value our involvement in the Compostable Products Task Force.

**CC: If you could sit down with another member to discuss any issue, what would it be and why?**

**Vegware:** In a word, contamination. We believe Vegware has some innovative ideas to significantly reduce contamination coming to composters from food service operations. If Vegware and composters can get a handle on this problematic issue, we could revolutionize the way organics recycling is done in our country.

**CC: What do you think is a key challenge to the successful future of**

**the compostable products industry in the U.S.?**

**Vegware:** More public awareness of the benefits of compost. The general public does not understand how our soils have been overworked for 200-plus years and compost is the answer to bringing back soil fertility, tilth, and water retention. When so much of our unused or spoiled food scraps go to landfills, we are losing out on the rich ingredients to make our soils healthy and productive again. The public also needs to know how we can fight climate change by using composting, which can sustainably manage greenhouse gases that landfills would otherwise emit. Compostable foodservice products can be the conveyance mechanism to link more food scraps into the soil life cycle.

**CC: Tell us a bit more about your role at Vegware.**

**Vegware:** My role at Vegware is Zero Waste Director. I am an economist by training, and the former Assistant Dean of Agriculture at Southern Illinois University (SIU) in Carbondale, Illinois. Our campus started a composting program when I was there. My family has had a farm in southern Illinois for more than 120 years, growing corn, soybeans and wheat. One last bit — I have a "travel pair" of boots so I am always ready at a moment's notice to visit a USCC Member facility!



Vegware's Joanna Snelson, Abigail Macleod, Julia Wetstein, and Joe Frankel (left to right)



# USCC Springing To The Next Level — Are You In?

With an energetic shot of Young Professionals, an active, focused and growing Legislative and Environmental Affairs Committee, a reenergized Compostable Products Task Force, new states considering chapters, and a partnership with Atlanta organizations and the Green Sports Alliance that is shaping COMPOST2018 into a meeting not to be missed, the USCC WANTS YOU IN — for the IN-Vestment!!

The USCC is looking for both text/photo and video testimonials to put on our website and social media that say Why You're In — as the compost manufacturing industry ramps up to the next level with more frequent public policy actions, a growing circle of members and heightened visibility as a professional industry to the recycling, waste and regulation community. Contact Linda Norris-Waldt for details on providing a testimonial and getting involved ([lnorriswaldt@compostingcouncil.org](mailto:lnorriswaldt@compostingcouncil.org); 301 508 7577).

# Advocacy Issues Are HOT— Can We Have Your Input?

The Advocacy Committee is now actively represented by members from the states of California, Colorado, Ohio, North Carolina, New York, Maryland, Minnesota, Michigan and Florida, and is monitoring other states and counties' activities. State permitting and changing county zoning regulations are keeping the committee busy discussing and taking positions on new policies, legislation and regulations. Are you a member who is interested in joining or bringing issues to our attention? Email [advocacy@compostingcouncil.org](mailto:advocacy@compostingcouncil.org).

### USCC Advocacy In Florida

The USCC recently opposed zoning regulations proposed in St. Lucie County, Florida for compost manufacturing facilities. The zoning regulations would be costly and significantly discourage the siting of any commercial composting facility

in that county, the USCC pointed out in a letter of opposition sent recently.

Alerted by the Organics Recycling Committee of Recycle Florida Today, the USCC's Legislative and Environmental Affairs Committee studied the proposed legislation, which was written in response to a proposed biosolids composting facility in the county. Aspects of the proposed ordinance that would be especially onerous include:

- Enclosing the entire process, from raw material grinding through storage of finished product, in a building
- Requiring 72-hour, 100 year rain event storage
- Requiring fire lanes inside the building without regard to technology type

The USCC urged the county to extend its public comment and workshop period to allow potential amendments to the regulation.

# Third Annual USCC Mentoring Program

At press time, the USCC was accepting mentor/mentee applications for the third year of its mentoring program that aims to connect 18 to 35 year-olds with less than five years' experience to veteran compost industry members. The 2017-18 program runs from August 1 through January 31, 2018 so that pairs can wrap up their mentoring relationships at COMPOST2018 in Atlanta, Georgia!

Member submissions for Compost Communicator can be emailed to Linda Norris-Waldt at the USCC: [lnorriswaldt@compostingcouncil.org](mailto:lnorriswaldt@compostingcouncil.org)

## MEMBER NEWS



Komptech Americas' Brandon Lapsys (left) and Todd Dunderdale (right) present Bejac Corporation's Mike Smith (center) with the Spirit of Komptech Award.

### Komptech Honors Sales Rep

Mike Smith, Sales Representative at California-based Bejac Corporation, was honored with the first annual "Spirit of Komptech" award that was created in memory of Komptech's late founder, Josef Heissenberger. This distinction recognizes the dealer representative who best demonstrates the ideals and passion of Komptech. "Mike's willingness to always go above and beyond to support his customers, coupled with his vast product knowledge and passion for the industry is exemplary," said Todd Dunderdale of Komptech.

### Operator Training In Action



St. Louis Composting hosted the June Midwest Compost Training at its Belleville, IL facility June 21.

### Q2 New Members

Acadia University, Community Compost Company, Compass Group, Compost Joe's, Dr. Gobbler, D.C. Department of Public Works, Draper Aden Associates, Duffy Layton Contracting, EcoPractices, Food Forward, Fort Hood, Murphy Products, Perdue Agribusiness, Prolime, Q2 Earth, SMS360, Sunshine Community Compost, Superior Soil & Bark, Thelin Recycling, Thomas Halbach Consulting, West Marin Compost, Mutaz Al-Alawi, John Donahue, Kelly McBee, Angela Duong, Christe Fraser, Jane Harris, Shelby Hogle, Molly Lindsay, Erik Martig, Maria Mevs, Sofia Ratcovich, Evelyn Rhodes, Adriana Salmoran, Jeffrey Vredenburg, Heather Wasilewski



## Composting Council Research & Education Foundation News

### 2018 ICAW Theme

The CCREF Board of Trustees has chosen the theme, “Compost! Building a Better Future”, for the 2018 program. This theme will be used for the ICAW Poster Contest that opens on September 1, 2017. It is intended to send a strong message out across the country and internationally that compost is an important, effective tool that guarantees a future of improved soil and environmental health.

### New CCREF Staff

Wayne Howard of Cary, NC has joined the CCREF team as the Foundation’s new Project Manager. Howard will be working with the Foundation predominantly on its Compost Operations Training Courses (COTC), organizing a robust online library,

and creating webinars and videos for training and educational purposes. He brings to CCREF a wealth of knowledge and experience in agricultural waste treatment, water resources, as well as in film and developing online learning opportunities, which helps CCREF enhance and grow its mission-driven educational and training programs.



Wayne Howard

### Komptech National Sponsor Of CCREF’s COTC

Komptech Americas, a longtime USCC member, is a national sponsor for the CCREF’s

Compost Operations Training Courses (COTC) for 2017-18. Komptech Americas is the first company to become a national COTC sponsor, committing to the Foundation’s Platinum sponsor level. Komptech’s support will allow CCREF to put more resources into COTC, ensuring that attendees of any of the annual four trainings increase their skill level, solidifying their knowledge for careers in the compost manufacturing industry and growing their companies and organizations. “We are excited to be part of such a high quality training program,” says Melissa Dunderdale, marketing manager for Komptech Americas. “Becoming a national sponsor was something everyone at Komptech Americas felt very strongly about. We send our own employees through the program.”

## Game On for COMPOST2018 In The Peach State!

Let’s have a big conversation about green infrastructure, composting facility issues, events recycling and the best equipment and products to run your organics recycling program — in January in Atlanta, Georgia! And while we’re there, let’s stop over at DeKalb County’s compost manufacturing facility and the new Atlanta Falcons Mercedes-Benz Stadium.



It’s COMPOST2018 January 22-25, 2018 in Atlanta! Our keynote speaker will be Scott Jenkins, General Manager of the Falcons’ stadium and

President of the Green Sports Alliance. The COMPOST2018 Demonstration Day will be hosted by DeKalb County. Cultivating Community Composting will be part of the schedule as well as a Young Professionals networking, volunteer and pitching event.

Komptech Americas, a longtime USCC member, is the first Headline Sponsor (at \$25,000) for a USCC National Conference. “We support the US Composting Council and its goal to significantly impact the compost industry,” says Brandon Lapsys, GM of Komptech Americas. “With our headline sponsorship, we are solidifying not only our commitment to the Council and the Conference, but to the entire composting industry.”

Don’t miss it — sign up to get early notification of the opening of hotel and registration at [compostconference.com](http://compostconference.com).

### From The Top Of The Compost Pile (continued from top)

fied Compost Operations Managers) is certainly the way to go!

5. Plan from the start to manufacture a quality product. Facilities that settle for “giving away” compost are not meeting their potential. Think about it — don’t you question the quality of a product when it’s given away for free? Making quality compost is a manufacturing process therefore you need to have a quality assurance and

quality control plan in place. The USCC Seal of Testing Assurance (STA) can be part of your overall product quality plan. STA is a way to reassure your market and your regulators, that you’re in it for the long haul.

It just makes sense that we plan for excellence and make a high quality product designed to close the loop for a long-term solution to managing organic residuals.

Have more ideas for the toolkit? Let us know! You can always reach me at [ffranciosi@compostingcouncil.org](mailto:ffranciosi@compostingcouncil.org).

## Certified Compost Is Now On National TV!

Certified Compost is now on national TV! Check your local PBS channel’s schedule for Growing a Greener World and look for the USCC logo in the credits!!

More and more certified compost producers are featured on the USCC Youtube page! Go to [Youtube.com/uscompostingcouncil](http://Youtube.com/uscompostingcouncil) to check it out! Seal of Testing Assurance (STA) participants now have access to a new weather-resistant, customized label for use on their compost sample bags. The new label complements other STA marketing collateral that certified compost manufacturers can personalize and order directly from USCC’s printer (<https://www.conquest-graphics.com/products/USCC/stickers>).



Your STA Compost Supplier

For more information on STA Certified Compost, please visit: [www.certifiedcompost.com](http://www.certifiedcompost.com) [www.compostingcouncil.org](http://www.compostingcouncil.org)

