



US Composting Council Newsletter • Winter 2017

## From the Top of the Compost Pile

Frank Franciosi, Executive Director

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



### Capacity Growing

Rome wasn't built in a day, and expanded compost industry infrastructure won't happen overnight. It takes attacking the challenge of establishing composting facilities within practical reach of U.S. population centers from a number of angles.

The USCC, with the guidance of our Infrastructure Committee is doing that.

From the Policy standpoint, we're working to support or facilitate:

- Federal grants and low interest loans
- Federal funding at land grant universities on compost use
- State policies that ban organics from landfills
- State and local policies that incentivize organics collection and separation
- Making organics recycling a long-term

waste diversion strategy for municipal waste plans

- Practical, less onerous zoning requirements for siting composting facilities
- Use of brownfield sites and abandoned areas that could be redeveloped as composting facilities

When it comes to Education and Outreach, we're looking at:

- Public service announcements that promote recycling of organics and teach compost use benefits
- Promoting and supporting state education curriculum on "The Value of Composting and Its Benefits"
- Partnering with other grassroots organizations that promote composting (Keep America Beautiful, BioCycle, American Public Works Assoc., Green Blue, etc.)
- Providing Toolkits through the Composting Council Research and Education Foundation to help generators compost. These include: Curb to Compost Tool-

kit: <http://compostfoundation.org/c2c>; and Compostable Plastics Toolkit: <http://cptoolkit.org/>

- Professional training and certification — Compost Operations Training Courses and Certified Compost Operations Manager programs to raise the bar on operating composting facilities

Market Development is an element we can't forget, and we continue to:

- Promote and expand Certified Compost (the STA program)
- Educate landscape architects with a new website, [www.compostforlas.com](http://www.compostforlas.com)
- Have Joe Lamp'l as our national promotional advocate for certified compost to consumers through *Growing a Greener World*
- Work with state governments on integrating and requiring compost in their DOT Specs
- Educate users with materials and web resources through *Compost: The Sustainable Solution*

## Composting Collaborative Brings Together Diverse Players to Close Consumer-Compost Producer Gap

USCC is a founding member of the Compost Collaborative, a new group pulling together resources of organizations from across the compost supply chain to help grow composting capacity in the U.S. GreenBlue, *BioCycle* magazine and USCC are the founding members; the advisory board includes representatives of key stakeholder groups, including composters, state and municipal governments, nonprofits, for-profits and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Any organization can get involved; 32 organizations joined the first official meeting in November in Washington, D.C. The emphasis is on active organizations who are contributing; "no lurkers allowed," according to Collaborative organizers!

The Collaborative was formed after a number of groups recognized that U.S. capacity to recycle organics is severely constrained by the lack of infrastructure (access to composting facilities for large population centers) The groups involved include ReFED, Food Packaging Institute, Green Sports Alliance, and the USCC, with our Compostable Products Task Force and new Food Scrap Com-

*Continues on bottom page*

## USCC Officers Announced for 2017

The US Composting Council Board of Directors serves a critical role in guiding the organization to a sustainable and vibrant future. Lorrie Loder-Rossiter of Murdoch Enterprises was elected as the 2017 US Composting Council Board President and is serving a fourth term as president.

"I am extremely honored to be able to serve, once again as president and I am truly looking forward to working with our USCC Board members, USCC staff and our membership to fulfill the Council's mission of promoting the composting industry," said Loder-Rossiter, USCC President. "We have a great year in store for us as an industry and we look forward to helping the nation focus on the importance of diverting organic materials from disposal by sending those valuable renewable resources to our compost manufacturing facilities. The US Composting Council and its membership are leading the way for the nation by promoting best manufacturing practices, establishing operational standards to ensure high-quality compost products are sold into the marketplace, certifying our professional operators through our Compost Operations Manager Certification Program and educating the public about the many environmental benefits of composting and compost utilization."

*Continues below*



**MEMBER NEWS**

**Dirt Hugger**

The Washington Organic Recycling Council awarded Dirt Hugger with the 2016 Composting Innovation award at its November 2016 conference. Dirt Hugger produces compost using a Turned Aerated Pile system designed and engineered by fellow USCC member Green Mountain Technologies.

**BioDOGradable Bags**

Prosourcing, parent company of the bioDOGradable bag material, recently received the Vincotte “OK Compost” and “OK Compost Home” labels, which is in accordance with the European standard (EN 13432) for compostability in industrial composting installations. The company is working on future Biodegradable Products Institute certification.



**Club Coffee**

PürPod100™, the compostable single serve pod manufactured by Club Coffee, was tested and is now accepted by Cedar Grove Composting, a fellow USCC member. Billions of single serve pods are thrown away each year. In 2014, so many Keurig cups were sold that they could have circled the globe over 10 times when stacked end to end.

**UNISCRAP**

UNISCRAP, a Greek Public Benefit Corporation located in New Castle, Delaware, is participating on Delaware’s Organics Task Force Committee to identify a solution for recovery of the organic waste materials from the poultry industry and producing by-products such as biogas, power and organic fertilizer. The company recently announced that it is representing Food Service Sustainability LLC in Europe, with an initial focus on Greece.

**USCC New Members, Q4**

Joel Brown, City of Manteca, Cornell Waste Management Institute, Dirt Cheap Mulch Co., Inc., Elemental Impact, Heritage Organics, Monica Herrera, Humdinger, Island Topsoil, Michelle Langdon, Lower East Side Ecology Center, Murdoch Enterprises, Rocky Top Resources, Inc., Rule Steel Inc./Diamond Z, San Mateo County, Spectra Laboratories, St. Louis County, Tricon Precast Ltd, XACT Systems, Inc.

**First Annual Member to Member Drive Comes to a Close**

**Winning Team: The Central US Team**  
**Winning Individual Team Members:**

**Tim Goodman, Central Team;**  
**Matt Cotton, West Team**  
**Members Signed Up During Reconnect Period: 135!**



Thanks to all of our Reconnect Team members for their efforts during our first member-to-member drive, Reconnect2016. The calls and emails of our 40 team members reached dozens of people who learned more about the USCC and our mission of healthy soil, entrepreneurship and moving the compost industry forward in the U.S.

“The power of having members talking about their organization to potential members is something that no dollar value can ever match,” said Frank Franciosi, USCC Executive Director. “It’s your organization, and there is no one better to tell others about how we help the industry but our own members.”

Beth Leamond, a community composter associate member from Maryland, noted: “I am eager to be a part of the US Composting Council. This was a good way for someone like me who is starting out in the compost business to be involved.”

Tim Goodman of Natureworks, said: “Volunteering was a way to help bring a diverse group of stakeholders (composters, markets, municipalities, regulators, and other associated industries) back to the organization or, in some cases, to the organization for the first

time. The continuing growth of composting, especially in areas such as food scraps management, offers benefits such as improving soil health, protecting and conserving water resources, reducing GHG emissions, and providing an option for diverting valuable organic materials from landfills. It will take all the stakeholders mentioned above working together to grow the industry and reap the benefits. What better organization than the USCC to provide that platform for growth.”

The membership drive brings the Council into our Los Angeles 25th Annual Conference with nearly 800 members, which means more business transactions, networking and best-practices exchanges at the Conference. A membership drive is in the planning for 2017. Stay tuned!

**Reconnect Team Members:** Amy Freeman, Barb Eckstrom, Ben Fischler, Beth Leamond, Bob Yost, Brian Fleury, Clayton Leonard, Dan Matsch, Dan Noble, Kim Duffrin, Fengyu Wang, Gary Bilbro, George Chatigny, Greg Gelewski, Greg Evanylo, Heidi Ringhofer, Hilary Near, Jack Hoeck, Jeff Ziegenbein, Jeff West, Joe Dinorscia, John Janes, Joe Way, Katherine Sullivan, Kathy Richardson, Kellie Kish, Lora Hinchcliff, Lorrie Loder-Rossiter, Luis Chamorro, Mark Davis, Matt Cotton, Patrick Geraty, Robert Michitsch, Sarah Martinez, Susan Thoman, Tim Goodman, Todd Williams, Tom Campbell, Wayne King.

**USCC Officers**

*(continued from top)*

- The 2017 officers are:
- **Jeff Ziegenbein**, Inland Regional Compost Authority, Vice President
  - **Joe DiNorscia**, Laurel Valley Soils, Treasurer
  - **Bob Yost**, A-1 Organics, Secretary
  - **Wayne King Sr.**, EARTH Products, Immediate Past President

The Officers joining the 2017 slate of Board members are listed below. The term of the new Board begins January 1, 2017.

- **Matt Cotton**, Integrated Waste Management Consulting
- **Brian Fleury**, WeCare Organics
- **Greg Gelewski**, OCRRA
- **Patrick Geraty**, St. Louis Composting
- **Tim Goodman**, Natureworks
- **Clayton Leonard**, New Earth



**New Officers John Janes and Joe DiNorscia**

- **John Janes**, Caterpillar
- **Robert Michitsch**, University of Wisconsin
- **Sarah Martinez**, Eco-Products
- **Susan Thoman**, Cedar Grove Composting

“On behalf of the US Composting Council Board of Directors, I would like to thank the outgoing Treasurer, Clayton Leonard of New Earth for his dedicated service this past year to the organization and the membership,” added Loder Rossiter.



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

# Compost Supply, Glen Ellen, Illinois

Silver STA Member

*Compost Communicator talked with Lynn Herliem to find out what's up at Compost Supply.*

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

**Compost Supply:** Our mission is to provide our customers with USCC's Seal of Testing Assurance (STA) approved and OMRI [Organic Materials Research Institute] listed compost that meets the highest standards we can achieve.

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

**Compost Supply:** Building the value of STA approved compost. Many new composters have entered the market, and they do not hold to these standards, as reflected in their price point. The end market is the key to growth.



Compost Supply team members are Don Heyden, Jeff Herliem, Brian Havenga, Ron Vaughan, and Doug Ohme.

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

**Compost Supply:** The compost discussion list. We have been able to ask specific questions and have received a multitude of responses.

**CC: If you could sit down with another member to discuss any issue, what would**

**it be and why?**

**Compost Supply:** Food scrap composting. We currently compost approximately 50 to 100 tons of vegetative food scraps per week. I know that in every conversation I have about food scrap composting, meat and bones come up. So

with the potential for bacterial contamination is there a safe way to compost these products? With food scrap composting in its infancy, I think this is an important topic.

**CC: What do you think is a key challenge to the successful future of the composting industry in the U.S.?**

**Compost Supply:** Education is the key to our success in the composting marketplace. I applaud the USCC for its efforts to offer the classes that are provided to their members.

## USCC Chapters

### California

Dan Noble, Executive Director  
danwyldernoble@gmail.com

### Colorado

Dan Matsch  
dan@ecocycle.org

### Maryland-DC

Brenda Platt  
bplatt@ilsr.org

### Minnesota

Ginny Black  
ginny\_black@yahoo.com

### North Carolina

Rhonda Sherman, President  
Sherman@ncsu.edu

### Virginia

Gary Gittere  
ggittere@mcgillcompost.com

## USCC Takes A Seat At The ASTM Table



The US Composting Council is now an official member of the American Society of Testing Materials (ASTM) committee that certifies plastics as compostable. Associate Director Cary Oshins will represent the USCC.

"Certifiers, like the Biodegradable Products Institute, rely on ASTM as the basis for their program," Oshins said. "It's important for us to be on this committee because our job is to represent the composting industry. After all, products that are being labeled as compostable are supposed to end up at a compost manufacturer. If our members are having problems with products that are passing the standard, the committee needs to hear about it. We have the advantage of not representing any specific technology or company, thus our opinion is highly valued."

The Committee, the D20.96 Environmentally Degradable Plastics and Biobased Products Subcommittee, is made up of 243 voting and nonvoting members who come from the major resin manufacturing industry, as

well as converters (form resins into products) and product suppliers. Academics and researchers are also on the committee.

The same committee also has standards for marine-degradable, anaerobic and landfill degradability, and related properties.

Oshins attended the ASTM meeting in Orlando, Florida in November, where he also accepted the chairmanship of a workgroup on defining the "practice" of "residential composting" (encompassing both home and backyard composting). Once that practice is agreed upon, then a test and standard can be developed to determine if a product would break down in a home setting. "As a long time backyard composter, I had a personal interest in seeing this standard developed," said Oshins. "My dream is to require all fruit and vegetable stickers to be certified home-compostable!"



Cary Oshins





## \$300,000 for an Even Bigger Idea on Compost

The Rathmann Challenge is seeking organizations that have a vision to expand the use of compost in the United States. Applications are now available for the 2017 Rathmann Challenge — Mitigating Climate Change by Expanding the Use of Compost. Challenge submissions open on February 15, 2017.

The Challenge is an opportunity for innovative thinkers who know how to implement a successful program. The first \$100,000 is awarded for past outstanding work and includes an exclusive opportunity to apply for an additional \$200,000 in support of an Even Bigger Idea®. Should an organization choose to put them together, it will have

\$300,000 to turn its vision into a reality.

The 2017 Rathmann Challenge seeks ideas on how to significantly expand compost use in the U.S. Examples include, but



are not limited to: Compost operator training, infrastructure development, market development, organic waste material management practices, practice adoption, professionalization of compost science, public

education and marketing, scientific research and soil management practices.

Launched in 2014, the Rathmann Challenge engages with those who have forward thinking ideas and are willing to challenge themselves and their professional colleagues to come up with a better solution. Providing opportunities for Even Bigger Ideas® is the primary objective of the Rathmann Challenge, which encourages those possessing the creativity, entrepreneurial ethos, and innovative spirit to make a positive difference in the world through their directed passion, new ideas, and energy to apply.

Learn more at the website: [www.RathmannChallenge.org](http://www.RathmannChallenge.org).

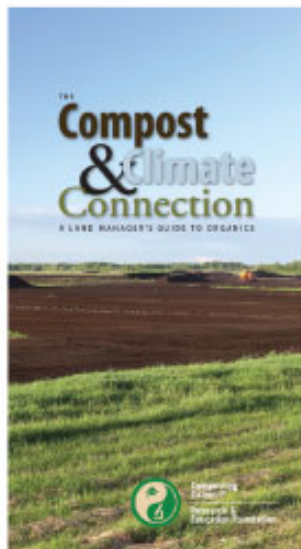
## New Foundation Publication Features Compost and Climate Impact

Part of the mission of the Composting Council Research and Education Foundation (CCREF) is to encourage educational opportunities on composting and organics recycling. In that light, the Foundation's new publication,

*The Compost & Climate Connection*, is now available. The new resource examines the relationship between how recycling nutrients can impact the carbon cycle. Here's a brief excerpt from the publication:

*Every day we 'waste' tons of food scraps, yard trimmings, and other organic (carbon based) materials. How we manage these materials can have a significant impact on climate change. Diverting them from landfills reduces the amount of methane that is released to the atmosphere. Composting them to produce stable soil products provides for healthier soils that not only store more carbon (another way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions), it makes our soils more productive and more resilient to the changes that are already occurring. Recognizing and taking advantage of the resources in our 'waste' is a tool that can be used by individuals, communities, and municipalities as a means to both combat climate change and strengthen our society.*

Attendees of the USCC Annual Conference can receive free copies of the new publication at the CCREF Booth; and it will be available for sale after February 2017. More information on the publication will appear on CCREF's website soon, [compostfoundation.org](http://compostfoundation.org), where excerpts will be available.



## Composting Collaborative

(continued from top)

posting Task Force. The Collaborative provides a platform where resources can be provided, initiatives identified, collaborations encouraged, duplication avoided, and gaps recognized and filled.

What's The End Product?

The goal is to close the gap between the demand for composting services and capacity (availability of compost manufacturers). The audience includes generators of compostables, collectors, regulators, composters, compost users, and key influencers. They will be reached through:

A website that is the resource hub in four major areas: Technical, Market, Policy and Social.

Support of existing and potential groups' initiatives by creating an online matrix of projects.

GreenBlue is providing the initial staff and funding the development of the website.

The ongoing funding model, which will probably be a combination of memberships and sponsorships, is under study. Face-to-face meetings are scheduled for January 23 at COMPOST2017 in Los Angeles; and on April 3 at BioCycle EAST COAST17 in the Baltimore region.



Frank Franciosi, USCC Executive Director, at the Collaborative meeting.



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