



US Composting
Council®



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**Composting and Anaerobic Digestion Industry
Poised to Expand in Massachusetts
As Consequence of Proposed Ban on Disposing Organic Materials
- Industry groups support proposed regulation -**

A consortium of industry associations announced today its support for the ban on the disposing of organic materials as proposed by the Massachusetts Department of Environment Protection (Mass DEP) on July 10, noting that this compelling policy will help the Commonwealth to achieve significant environmental, economic and social goals.

Called **FOOD (Focus on Organics Diversion)**, the consortium formed by the **American Biogas Council**, **the US Composting Council**, and **MassRecycle** together represent dozens of companies and local agencies already playing significant roles in the growth of alternatives to the disposal of organic resources such as yard debris and food scraps.

"Massachusetts has long been a leader in recognizing the value of organic material to reduce waste, create jobs and protect the environment," said **Lori Scozzafava**, Executive Director of the **US Composting Council**. "Its existing nation-leading yard debris composting program helped launch the state's composting sector, which already includes over 200 facilities employing hundreds of people."

Compost is a soil amendment that improves soil health, protecting against water pollution and droughts. One benefit of composting is its compatibility with anaerobic digestion, another microbiological process that breaks down organics materials to produce a biogas, with properties similar to natural gas.

"The proposed policy will extend Massachusetts' leadership by encouraging the beneficial reuse of food scraps and agricultural wastes" said Wayne Davis, Chairman of the **American Biogas Council**, and Vice-President of Government Affairs as Massachusetts-based (Waltham) Harvest Power. "Together with the state's wastewater treatment infrastructure, new anaerobic digestion projects will help achieve Massachusetts' goals for producing renewable energy in the form of clean biogas – a 21st century infrastructure for transforming discarded materials into resources."

“Massachusetts will benefit from the new regulation by managing its resources within the state,” said **Zoe Neale**, an officer of **MassRecycle**, the statewide non-profit recycling coalition that includes, in addition to individuals, municipalities and institutions, companies that provide a full range of services such as equipment, hauling and processing. “Food processors, institutions and other large-scale generators of organic resources – the regulation’s initial target – already are well-versed with the development of options rather than landfilling, have figured out the in-house logistics of managing wastes differently, and are benefitting from cost-competitive systems. Unlike the broader recycling sector that is global, or sending cash with our trash to landfills in other states, we can keep organic resources and jobs managing them in Massachusetts, replenishing both our soils and economy.”

As developed over the past year with assistance from a broad range of stakeholders, Mass DEP’s proposed regulation would be implemented in mid-2014; it would first target generators that produce over one (1) ton of organic waste per week, which would have to be directed to a composting, anaerobic digestion or animal-feeding operation. Household-generated food waste is not included in the proposed ban. Enforcement mechanisms will be developed in conjunction with industry stakeholders, but are not intended to be onerous.

“Regulations such as the one proposed by the Patrick Administration create new benchmarks for how states and cities can manage the wastes generated by our society, and stimulate investment in technologies and systems to achieve those goals. Compost manufacturers need an adequate and reliable supply of raw materials. The Patrick Administration’s proposed regulations are critical to stimulate investment in this growing sector,” said Scozzafava.

“In addition, Massachusetts’ commitment to an initial round of project financing will enable several projects already in the pipeline to be developed and become operational, leading the way for additional facilities around the state that will reduce the need for landfills and incinerators as the destination for our wastes,” added Davis. “While the exact number of facilities can’t be predicted, innovation will follow the adoption of progressive policy, as it has in Europe. There, the implementation of a phased-in ban on landfilling of organic waste has led to the development of a robust and cost-effective anaerobic digester sector.”

“Massachusetts leadership role in addressing the challenges and opportunities of organic wastes will be enhanced by this regulation; both Connecticut and Vermont have recently adopted legislation and are developing implementation regulations intended to achieve the same goals – initially targeting large-scale generators of resources that will trigger development of in-state facilities,” noted Zeale. “Well-operated composting and AD facilities can be good neighbors, too, bringing environmental and economic benefits to the communities they serve.”

Further information about the proposed regulation and how to comment on it can be found at www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/news/comment/.

About the American Biogas Council

The American Biogas Council represents 150 companies dedicated to maximizing the production and use of biogas from organic waste. Members include anaerobic digester developers/builders, engine and turbine manufacturers, farmers, wastewater utilities, landfill operators, engineering and law firms, financiers, non profits, universities and the entire biogas supply chain.

www.americanbiogascouncil.org. Follow the ABC on Twitter, <http://bit.ly/WrKI9B>.

About the US Composting Council

Established in 1990, the US Composting Council (USCC) is the only national organization in the United States dedicated to the development, expansion and promotion of the composting industry. The USCC is a non-profit 501(c)(6) organization that also directs the Composting Council Research and Education Foundation (CCREF), a 501(c)(3) charitable foundation, which administers public and private research and education activities. For additional information, visit

www.compostingcouncil.org. Follow the US Composting Council on Twitter, <http://bit.ly/T9RCdt>, and Facebook, <http://on.fb.me/WrK1Yt>

About MassRecycle – www.massrecycle.org

MassRecycle is the statewide coalition of individuals, municipalities, businesses, institutions and nonprofits dedicated to promoting and realizing the economic, social and environmental benefits resulting from reducing, reusing and recycling, and to increasing the utilization of recycled products.