

## **SWAC Subcommittee on Organics Recycling and Composting Meeting Notes from 9-25-07**

**Stakeholders Present:** Ann Berman, Mark Cooper, Janice Ehle/Meyer, Chris Field, David Goodemote, Michael Lefebvre, Kristina Stefanski, C.J. May, Abigail Maynard, Michael Maynard, Bill Nelligan, Virginia Walton,

**DEP Staff Present:** K.C. Alexander, David McKeegan, Gene MacGillis, Joe Schiavone, Yvonne Bolton

**Introductions:** Please see attached list for complete and revised member contact information.

### **Old Business: Status on Subcommittee Recommendations to DEP.**

- The use of an SEP to fund distribution of home composting bins received a favorable reaction from Robert Isner, Director of the Materials Management and Compliance Assurance Division. DEP would probably look for the recipient of the SEP to be an entity that would manage the details of the distribution, and would make bins available statewide. Two suggestions were the Cooperative Extension System, and Signature Marketing. Timing depends on availability of an SEP Project, having it in place by spring would be ideal.
- Writing a policy giving organics recycling permit applications priority was also given a thumbs-up. Drafting of such policy will begin shortly.
- The Home Composting, Grass Cycling, and Windrow Composting VHS videos have been transferred onto DVD as a means to preserve the programs, which were in an outdated format. Next step is to convert them to .wmv files and work toward posting on the web. Wesleyan University may be able to help with the conversion. A transcript will also need to be generated from the programs and posted on the web to accommodate the hearing impaired.
- Tess Gutowski will be sure to include organics, especially food waste and soiled paper, in the RFP for the Waste Characterization Study. The subcommittee will have an opportunity to review.
- No progress to report on the promotion of food banks as a source reduction strategy, or on encouraging CT compost facilities to register on [www.findacomposter.com](http://www.findacomposter.com)

### **New Business: Legislative concepts; NERC Event Composting Project**

- Conceptually, the ideas of 1) giving the Commissioner the ability to approve solid waste demonstration, and 2) providing a property or sales tax exemption for businesses that recycle source separated food residuals were looked upon favorably by the Commissioner's Office. This is not to say that these proposals will be included in the DEP's legislative package, just that they like the ideas. Clarifying BUD language and eliminating duplicative recycling/waste reporting may be included in a minor revisions bill.
- DEP will be working with the Northeast Recycling Council (NERC) on a grant they received to demonstrate event composting. Actual pilot will not happen until sometime in 2008 or 2009.
- DEP will be refilling the Environmental Analyst position in the recycling program. If you or anyone you know is interested, they must take the exam and be on a hiring list in order to be considered for an interview.

### **Discussion: Ideas for next meeting**

- Tour of Scotts yard waste composting facility in Lebanon (separate from scheduled subcommittee meeting)
- Biomass Projects (Organics to Energy Plants) – Where/what are they, and how will the ones proposed for CT impact our organics industry? Try to get speaker for Oct/Nov meeting.
- Biofuel (Alternatives to gasoline or diesel). Dr. Abigail Maynard of CAES summary of investigation of growing alternative crops in CT to produce oils for biofuel. Other staff to speak in general. Oct/Nov?
- Bioplastics – What are they and how could they impact plastics recycling and composting? Will our organics processors want to accept these products? If so, which ones? How do you tell one product from another? Is the life cycle analysis any different/better than for other packaging? Put links to the issues on the website?

**Next Steps:** Schedule tour of Scotts. Continue working on recommendations. Schedule speakers.

**Next Meeting:** Tuesday, October 23, 2007 at 10:30 following the main SWAC meeting. Room TBA.