



US Composting Council Newsletter • Winter 2015

From the Top of the Pile

Rod Tyler, President, US Composting Council



It's with great pleasure that we at the US Composting Council announce our expanded partnership with a mainstay of our industry, *BioCycle* Magazine.

BioCycle has helped grow this field with constant education and information for more than 55 years — practically two generations of composters! In addition, *BioCycle*, its writers and its leaders have had an irreplaceable influence on conferences, international events, and the industry in general. This has been vital for anyone interested in understanding and succeeding

in the organics business.

From process to product use, *BioCycle* regularly covers key items and topics that we all need to be successful. The enhanced partnership you will be hearing more about at the USCC's Annual Conference and Tradeshow in Austin allows us to more closely align our missions. Alignment includes many of the projects and education in which *BioCycle* regularly engages, and for USCC, it creates synergies for communications, education events, and creating a larger, more informed constituent base.

I personally "grew up" in the composting industry reading *BioCycle* Magazine as soon as it hit my desk. For those of you just getting started in this industry, I highly recommend you consider doing the same.

BioCycle Welcomes Compost Communicator

The US Composting Council's *Compost Communicator* newsletter will be published in *BioCycle* once every quarter, starting with this inaugural 2015 Winter issue. Incorporating the newsletter into *BioCycle* is one of the new features in a recently renewed partnership between *BioCycle* and USCC.

NEWS

Member News

Denise Houghtaling of **MW Horticulture Recycling** (www.mwhorticulture.com) shared that the Ft. Myers (FL)-based company is launching a new product ... a veggie blend made from its horticulture compost along with peat moss and vermiculite. The blend is sold by the bag.

Dirt Hugger successfully closed a Kickstarter campaign for \$65,000, which provided the gap financing to build a new facility in Klickitat, Washington. Although the second phase of construction won't be completed until spring, the new facility is operational and processing incoming feedstock. Once fully constructed, Dirt Hugger's new facility will be an in-floor ASP facility with 40,000 tons/year capacity.



Meet The New USCC Board

Three new perspectives will come to the US Composting Council Board of Directors along with four returning board members as the group convenes in January in Austin, TX.

Clayton Leonard, New Earth Inc., was appointed to fill a slot being vacated by a departing board member; Tim Goodman, Natureworks, and Robert Michtisch, a professor at the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point Soils Department, were elected to openings on the USCC Board. Patrick Geraty, St. Louis Composting, Wayne King Sr., Erth Products, Jeff Ziegenbein, Inland Regional Compost Authority and consultant Matt Cotton will return to the board for another term.

The board members take on their new roles January 1, 2015.

"We are thrilled to have these new voices and experts on the board," says Rod Tyler, President of the Council. "They will strengthen a board that is already committed to moving the industry and the use of compost forward in the U.S. at a time when communities everywhere are turning to composting as the next-wave solution for waste minimization."

Election "turnout" by the USCC's 800 members was at an all-time high, with a 58 percent increase in participation over past averages. "Our industry is strong, and our association reflects that," said interim Executive Director Al Rattie.

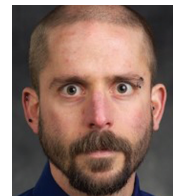
The board also elected its new officers, who will begin their terms January 1: Presi-



Clayton Leonard



Tim Goodman



Robert Michtisch

dent—Rod Tyler, Filtrexx, Inc.; Vice President—Patrick Geraty, St. Louis Composting; Treasurer—Brian Fleury, WeCare Organics; Secretary—Rhodes Yepsen, Novamont; and immediate Past President Lorrie Loder, Synagro. "We are appreciative of all of the hard work provided by departing board members," added Tyler. Three members left the board, including Ron Alexander, R. Alexander and Associates; Mike Whitt, consultant; and Sally Brown, University of Washington.



NEWS

Member News

The USCC is excited to announce Caterpillar Inc. as its first benefactor member. The involvement of Caterpillar will bring resources to the organization and support for members through sponsorship, safety education and exclusive member purchasing programs. “The opportunity to participate in research and support the key trade association in the compost industry will benefit Caterpillar Inc., the network of Caterpillar dealers, our customers and the communities we live in,” says John Janes, Caterpillar’s landscape industry manager. “The sustainability focus of the USCC aligns with Caterpillar Inc.’s focus on leveraging technology and innovation to increase efficiency and productivity with less impact on the environment and helping our customers do the same — enabling their businesses to become more productive by providing products, services and solutions that use resources more efficiently.” Caterpillar will be at COMPOST2015 with a tradeshow booth and Cat equipment being demonstrated — and sponsoring the Conference at the Bronze level. Caterpillar will also help the USCC launch a new initiative that expands member purchasing benefits, which will be introduced at the Conference. Janes notes that Caterpillar is passionate about becoming involved in compost equipment safety training.

“This is a partnership that will have a large impact on our organization and our members,” says Leanne Spaulding, USCC membership director. “We are thrilled to welcome Caterpillar to the USCC family during this wave of expansion in our Council and the industry.”

“This is a partnership that will have a large impact on our organization and our members,” says Leanne Spaulding, USCC membership director. “We are thrilled to welcome Caterpillar to the USCC family during this wave of expansion in our Council and the industry.”

2015 USCC Award Winners

A South Carolina program leading the way to markets and food scraps composting, a longtime industry advocate dedicated to composting education and a researcher who has brought her studies to multiple audiences are among those receiving recognition for their achievements. Awardees are nominated by peers and honored each year at COMPOST2015, the US Composting Council’s Annual Conference and Tradeshow. This year’s program will be held at the Austin Renaissance Hotel during the Closing Plenary on January 22, 2015 at 4:30 p.m.

- **Composter of the Year** will be awarded to Charleston County (SC) Environmental Services’ Bees Ferry Compost Facility, which processes 60,000 tons/year of yard trimmings and food scraps. Bees Ferry is one of the region’s first food scraps recyclers.

- **The Clean Water Award**, bestowed on researchers or organizations whose projects improve water quality through the use of organics, or increase awareness of the link between quality soil, compost and water quality, will be given to Dr. Peter J. Stofella of the University of Florida. Dr. Stofella, director of the Indian River Research and Education Center, focuses his team’s research on use of compost as a horticultural substitute to minimize leaching of phosphates, nitrogen and heavy metals into groundwater and surface water runoff.

- **The Rufus Chaney Award** will go to Jean Bonhotal, who has dedicated her career at the Cornell Waste Management Institute to research and technical assistance

to a range of audiences, including youth, college students, farmers and solid waste managers. The Rufus Chaney award is reserved for recipients who excel in research and education.

- **The Hi Kellogg Award** for outstanding service to the composting industry will be awarded to longtime composting champion Frank Franciosi, who has worked in the compost industry as a manager, trainer, USCC officer, legislative advocate and founding member of the USCC’s North Carolina Chapter.

- **The H. Clark Gregory Award**, which recognizes grassroots education and awareness of composting, will be given to Joseph Jenkins, an author and composter known for his expertise on human excrement composting. He is credited with coining the term Humanure through his writings, speaking and teaching and has been interviewed extensively about his composting “loos” or toilets.

- **Composting Program of the Year** award, created to recognize composters of less than 10,000 tons of feedstock, will be given to NYC Composters, New York City’s compost outreach and collection program. Through its initiatives, 1,784,012 pounds of organics were collected and composted throughout the city in FY2014.

For more information or to attend the Awards Ceremony on January 22, go to www.compostingcouncil.org/awards or contact Samantha Stallybrass, education coordinator; for information about the Conference and Tradeshow, go to www.compostingcouncil.org/COMPOST2015.

USCC—BioCycle Synergies to Grow in 2015

The US Composting Council and *BioCycle* magazine have elevated their partnership for 2015, bringing additional resources to USCC members and subscribers and strengthening the burgeoning composting industry. “This partnership will directly tap the resources and outreach of both organizations,” says Rod Tyler, President of the USCC. “The close relationship we have already enjoyed will become even stronger so that we can minimize duplication of efforts and maximize the exposure of composting in the U.S.”

Adds Nora Goldstein, Editor of *BioCycle*: “These are exciting times for the composting industry, especially with recently adopted state policies that are accelerating diversion

of organics from disposal, and growing market demand for quality compost. Working collaboratively with the USCC will help both of our organizations service the industry’s information and networking needs.”

BioCycle, with its decades-long history as the information source on composting and organics recycling, will be in an even better position to communicate the advocacy and education initiatives underway at USCC, the national trade group for compost manufacturers. USCC, through providing its members even greater access to *BioCycle*’s depth of resources, can connect members more deeply with the information that they need.

Specific partnership enhancements include:

- Moving the Council’s newsletter, *The Compost Communicator*, to a quarterly, in-magazine format supplemented by bimonthly e-bulletins from the USCC;

- Providing every USCC member (not only first-year members) with a subscription to *BioCycle* magazine, giving all USCC members access to the latest case studies, research and other information;

- Access for USCC members to *BioCycle*’s rich database of archived material on a myriad of composting techniques, policies and issues.

The Partnership will be officially unveiled at the USCC Member Meeting at COMPOST2015.



A Tale of Two Composters

First USCC Mentoring Project Draws to a Close



Corinne Coe and Scott Woods

Six months ago, Corinne Coe of Georgia, and Scott Woods of Delaware, had never met, even though they both have composting and consulting in their wheelhouse. Now, not only is Scott coaching Corinne in their new mentor-mentee relationship, they are even launching a project together which would bring sustainable composting solutions to Atlanta.

Corinne is cofounder and co-owner of Terra Nova Compost, an international compost-focused agricultural education and consultation organization, founded in Spring 2013 to literally and figuratively transform the earth through the art and science of composting.

Scott, CEO of Sustainable Generation, has merged what he learned from his experience as CEO of a major East Coast compost manufacturer with his knowledge about applying technology to create competitive business advantages.

Corinne and Scott are among the first pairs to pilot the Mentoring Program of the USCC's Young Professionals Group (YPG), begun late this summer. The first mentoring period is over and the organizers are evaluating the experiences of the five pairs to determine whether to continue the project. Explains YPG Chair Gary Nihart: "The program was designed to accomplish three goals: 1) Create relationships between leaders of today and young professionals who will be the leaders of tomorrow; 2) Provide support to young professionals looking for

professional advancement; and 3) Contribute to the development of a knowledgeable and skilled community surrounding the USCC and the composting industry."

Corinne, who entered the organics field mid-career, says she was interested in learning "to do what Scott does... build and implement composting sites/systems and offer training to the end user" through her company, Terra Nova Compost. "I hope and expect to learn the technical aspects of the composting methods Scott's company Sustainable Generation (SG) utilizes...(especially) the process itself of building out a completely functional site."

For his part, Scott notes having been successfully mentored several times throughout his career, the chance to "pay it forward" was a reason to join the program. "The mentor can share his/her experience with the mentee so that the mentee has the benefit of that knowledge ahead of time," he says. "This allows the mentee to make fewer mistakes and to make better decisions along the way."

Corinne and Scott began their conversation with phone calls in which they familiarized each other with their current jobs and past jobs. The discussions deepened when both were able to attend the *BioCycle* East Coast Conference in Baltimore in October 2014.

Corinne believes her decision to seek mid-career mentoring makes her able to better appreciate the elements of Scott's coaching. "Were I an industry novice, much of Scott's advisement and network would be meaningless," she explains.

Scott, who still stays in touch with his mentors through social and professional contacts, says there is a mutual working relationship for mentors and mentees. "I see the process as a journey, where we are deciding what we want and can accomplish together. We've mapped out initial key milestones which need to be accomplished in order for Corinne to achieve the future she envisions for herself, and how I can support her along the journey."

Are you interested in a mentor-mentee relationship? Stay tuned as the Young Professionals Group, chaired by Gary Nihart (garynihart@gmail.com) and supported by Membership Director Leanne Spaulding (leannespaulling@compostingcouncil.org) evaluates the first round of mentoring to see where the program goes!

NEWS

Compost Council Research and Education Foundation News

Professional Composter Certification is moving closer to reality with the awarding of a \$75,000 grant from the 11th Hour Project, a foundation that funds projects aligned with a goal of understanding the impact of human activity within the web of interdependent living systems. The grant allows USCC to develop a training program for a Professional Composter Certification Program. Trainees will receive the education and testing to be certified to run a modern composting facility at the Manager level. Watch for details as they develop!

USCC News

The work that the US Composting Council and our members have done to alert the U.S. EPA and Members of Congress to the risks to the industry posed by presence of persistent herbicides continues to bear fruit. USCC's campaign has been aimed at educating members of Congress about the threat of persistent herbicides, particularly clopyralid, picloram and aminopyralid. The goal is to discourage the U.S. EPA from renewing the registration of these chemicals unless they limit the persistence of these herbicides and/or limit the potential downstream impacts of their use.

That effort is having an impact: a recent meeting with EPA's pesticides office indicated that any *new* herbicides containing these persistent compounds are having their registration applications held up until the EPA's research is completed and recommendations based on the findings are made. Once the review study is complete, there will be an opportunity for USCC and its members to influence how these results are interpreted into regulatory action.

Thus far, USCC meetings have resulted in letters sent to EPA by Congressman Rick Nolan of Minnesota, Congressman Jim Moran of Virginia, Congressman Jim McGovern and Congresswoman Katherine Clark, both of Massachusetts, and Congressman Hal Rogers and Andy Barr of Kentucky. Congresswoman Chellie Pingree of Maine, Senator Patrick Leahy of Vermont and Congressman Jose Serrano of New York questioned EPA on the subject in agency budget hearings.

Member submissions for *Compost Communicator* can be emailed to Linda Norris-Waldt at the USCC: lnorriswaldt@compostingcouncil.org