



US Composting  
Council®

# US COMPOSTING COUNCIL **2013-14 ANNUAL REPORT**



NATURE'S  
WAY TO  
**GROW**

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The US Composting Council (USCC) is a national, non-profit trade and professional organization promoting the recycling of organic materials through composting. The USCC is the only national organization committed to the advancement of the composting industry.



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## FROM THE PRESIDENT...



As the US Composting Council moves closer to a quarter-century of advocating, educating and gathering a network of professionals, our organization and membership continues to build strong momentum toward sustainable organics management and use of those products for future generations.

Our programs, advocacy efforts and initiatives have been seeing an all-time high in interest. Allied organizations that previously focused on other elements of the solid waste stream are increasingly turning to organics in reframing our solid waste management picture. As the longtime leaders in organics recovery issues, we spent the year partnering with and welcoming organizations who see the potential in both diverting valuable organics from disposal, and moving compost towards a growing range of soil recovery and health projects.

We are proud to bring you this summary of our activities during the past fiscal year, which for the USCC began April 1, 2013 and ended March 31, 2014. You'll hear about our newest chapters and committees, training programs, the completion of a state Model Compost rule, the Million Tomato Campaign; lobbying efforts at state and federal levels, and growing interest in tested and proven compost through our Seal of Testing Assurance program.

— Lorrie Loder, *President*

## BOARD AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE\*

**President:** Lorrie Loder, *Synagro*  
**Vice President:** Rod Tyler, *Filtrex International*  
**Treasurer:** Patrick Geraty, *St. Louis Composting*  
**Secretary:** Brian Fleury, *WeCare Organics*  
**Immediate Past President:** Frank Franciosi, *Novozymes*

Ron Alexander, *R. Alexander Associates*  
Sally Brown, *University of Washington*  
Matt Cotton, *Integrated Waste Management Consulting*  
Wayne King Sr, *ERTH Products*  
Heidi Ringhofer, *Western Lake Superior Sanitary District*

Paul Sellew, *Harvest Power*  
Michael Whitt, *Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community*  
Chuck Wilson, *A-1 Organics*  
Rhodes Yepsen, *Novamont North America Inc.*  
Jeff Ziegenbein, *Inland Empire Utilities Agency*  
Eliot Epstein, *Epstein Environmental Consultants, LLC Board Member Emeritus*  
Mike Manna\*, *Organic Recycling Solutions LLC*  
Carrie Gregory\*

\*Term ended December 2013



# THE FINANCIAL PICTURE

## VISION

We believe that the recycling of organic materials is central to achieving healthy soils, clean water and a sustainable society.

We will work to achieve this vision by:

- Educating professionals, policy-makers and the public;
- Serving as an advocate to promote composting;
- Encouraging and promoting research and adoption of best management practices;
- And bringing together organics management and allied professionals, generators of organic residuals, policy-makers, regulators, and product users to pursue this vision.

## HISTORY

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 achieves this mission by encouraging, supporting and performing compost related research, promoting best management practices, establishing standards, educating professionals and the public about the benefits of composting and compost utilization, enhancing compost product quality, and developing training materials for composters and markets for compost products. USCC members include compost producers, marketers, equipment manufacturers, product suppliers, academic institutions, public agencies, nonprofit groups and consulting/engineering firms.

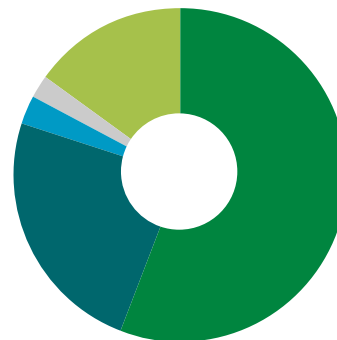


*BioCycle*, a premier industry periodical, is the official magazine of the Council.

## MISSION

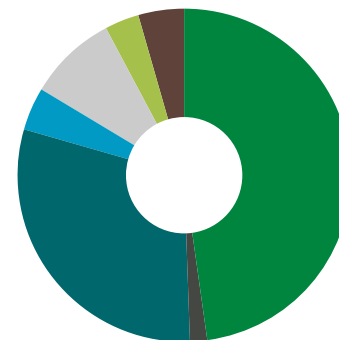
The US Composting Council (USCC) advances composting and promotes compost use to enhance soils and provide economic and environmental benefits for our members and society.

### TOTAL INCOME



- Goal 1: Promotion
- Goal 2: Standard Setting
- Goal 3: Advocacy
- Goal 4: Education
- Goal 5: Governance
- Goal 6: Operations
- Goal 7: Research

### TOTAL EXPENSE



	Total Income	Total Expense
Goal 1: Promotion	2%	10%
Goal 2: Standard Setting	15%	4%
Goal 3: Advocacy	0%	5%
Goal 4: Education	56%	38%
Goal 5: Governance	0%	3%
Goal 6: Operations	24%	35%
Goal 7: Research	3%	5%

*\*Note: The USCC ended the fiscal year more than \$62,000 ahead of budget expectations.*

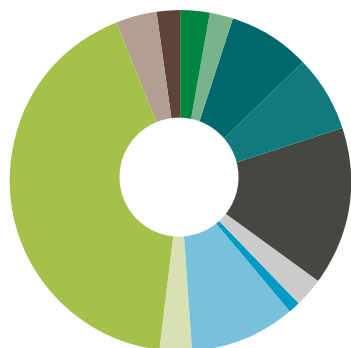
USCC financials are healthy and have allowed us to increase our focus on members, advocacy and programming.







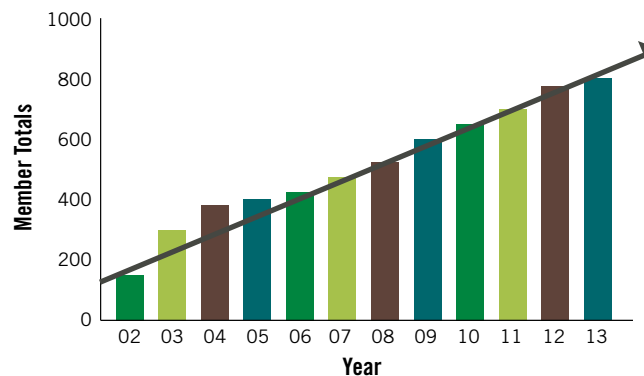
**Membership has steadily grown** as the USCC responds to the interest in organics diversion and compost marketing as the voice of compost manufacturers. Watch in 2014-15 as we simplify our membership categories, increase our membership benefits and expand our circle to include allies in both expanding collection of organics, critical compost use in both public and private sector watershed management, land reclamation and public works projects.



### 2013 MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

- Benefactor (0%)
- Corporate (3%)
- Farm Composter (2%)
- Friend of Composting (8%)
- Government (7%)
- Individual (15%)
- Large Business (3%)
- Large Government (1%)
- Medium Business (10%)
- Non-Profit (3%)
- Small Business (42%)
- Student (4%)
- University (2%)

### MEMBERSHIP GROWTH



**804**  
MEMBERS

### 2013 INDUSTRIES REPRESENTED

- Academic/Research (8%)
- Compost Industry Affiliate (2%)
- Compost/Mulch Producer (40%)
- Consultant (7%)
- Equipment Manufacturer/Product Supplier (14%)
- Hauler (1%)
- Individual (12%)
- Industry Media (0%)
- Non-Profit (4%)
- Other (5%)
- Public Agency (6%)
- Testing Laboratory (1%)



### CHAPTERS AND COMMITTEES

- Association of Compost Producers (CA)
- North Carolina Composting Council
- Minnesota Composting Council (formed 2013!)
- Maryland/DC Committee (formed 2013)
- Coming in 2014-15: Virginia!



**MEMBERSHIP**

**IT TAKES A VILLAGE**

# PROVIDING THE KNOW-HOW

## COMPOST TECHNICIAN TRAINING

Custom compost business training to 24 staff members of a California company to provide cross training that gives all staff from ground level up a broad understanding of a successful composting business.

## COMPOST OPERATIONS TRAINING COURSES

The USCC Compost Operations Training Class was an incredible opportunity for me to learn an extensive range of subjects pertinent to running a composting facility. In one short week, I gained the knowledge to confidently begin my quest to open my own commercial-scale composting facility.

– Eric Walter, Crozet, VA



US Composting Council  
Composter Training Program

4 COURSES  
PEOPLE TRAINED 110



## CURB TO COMPOST TOOLKIT

A facilitation of donations and grants by the Composting Council Research and Education Foundation now provides municipal waste managers an overview of organics recovery, with basic data and examples of outreach materials to aid in the development of a residential food scrap collection program that will be administered by a city and/or municipal waste management district already collecting yard debris.



## 2013 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

This year's conference included the always popular Equipment Demo Day, networking sessions for chapters, pre-conference trainings and regular conference sessions. A special California addition was CompostCon, a festival-setting celebration of composting put on by the Association of Compost Producers, the USCC's California chapter.

125 EXIBITORS  
57 COURSES & SESSIONS

933 ATTENDEES

1300 PEOPLE TRAINED ON COMPOST MANUFACTURING & ISSUES







# BUILDING AN INDUSTRY



## MAINTAINING INDUSTRY STANDARDS FOR COMPOST TESTING

### Leading Public Confidence in A "Growing" Product

USCC continues to respond for Seal of Testing Assurance Program (STA) demand as the number of places where compost is used and sold grows – including government agencies that require the use of STA products.

Companies in the STA Program = 193

Compost Products = 266

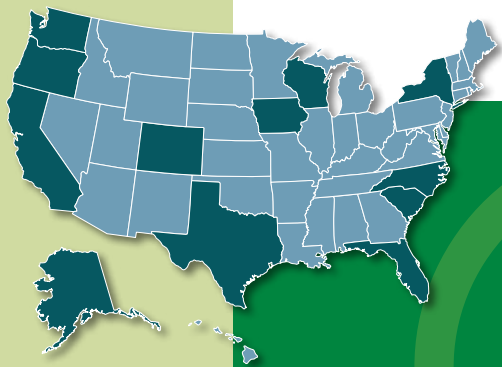
Compost in the STA Program =  
Approx. 3.7 MM tons  
Approx. 7.5 MM CYs

States with STA participants = 35

Labs in STA Program = 13

### STATE AGENCIES REQUIRING STA LABELED COMPOST ONLY

- CalTrans TX DOT
- CO DOT WIDNR
- FL DEP WIDOT
- NC DOT IA DOT
- OR DOT NY DOT
- SC DOT AK DOT



# ADVOCACY IMPACT: WE SPEAK AS AN INDUSTRY

## ADVOCACY IMPACT: WE SPEAK AS AN INDUSTRY

One of the roles of USCC that members rank high in importance is the ability to make a difference as a group. Whether it is your board members speaking to the New York City Council or the Administrator of the EPA, or rank and file members responding to calls to comment on regulations or legislation.

### 2013-14 IMPACTS:

**November 2013:** USCC Board Member Mike Manna testified at a hearing before the New York City Council on the city's food scrap diversion program, which subsequently passed.

**February 2014:** USCC met with Michael Taylor, Deputy Commissioner for the FDA, about desired modifications to the Food Safety Modernization Act. Throughout the spring, discussions continued with comments added from USCC members through FDA's site.

**March 2014:** USCC provided comments on state-level regulations and bills in Maryland, Rhode Island and Minnesota.

**March 2014:** USCC began a Fight Persistent Herbicides campaign to lobby the USEPA, through additional meetings with Congressional representatives, to pressure the agency not to re-register these chemicals. Through contributions by USCC members, the lobbyist hired to facilitate the meetings continues to bring USCC to the table, and members are commenting on the re-registration process to add more information for the USEPA's consideration.

## 9 MAJOR ADVOCACY EFFORTS



# BUILDING A COMMUNITY



## COMPOST INDUSTRY MARKET STUDY

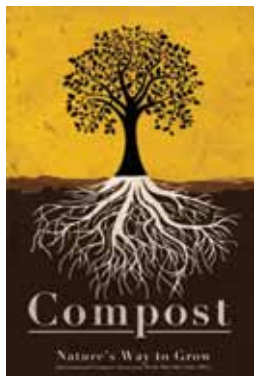
In 2013 the USCC began gathering the first-ever research data on the size of the composting industry. In response to increasing requests for economic statistics, this information will show the growing credibility of compost manufacturing. Watch next year for increasing drill-downs on the data gathered so far:

**3,500** COMPOSTING FACILITIES  
ACROSS THE UNITED STATES

A GROWING NUMBER  
PROCESS YARD DEBRIS:

**14%**  
COMPOSTING  
FOOD SCRAPS

**6%**  
COMPOSTING  
BIOSOLIDS & MANURE



## INTERNATIONAL COMPOST AWARENESS WEEK | MAY 6-12 2013

- 150+ poster contest entries
- 1985 posters, 200 calendars, and 140 t-shirts distributed

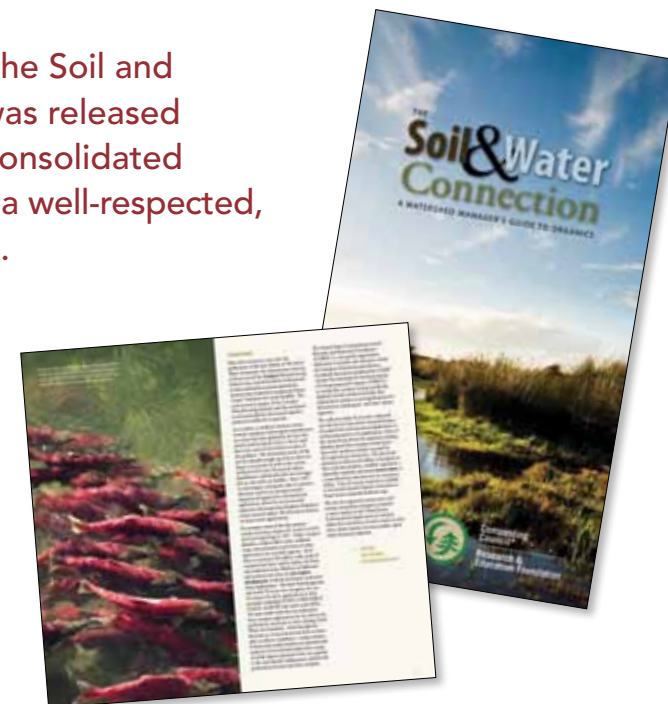
## THE SOIL AND WATER CONNECTION

Whether it's the California drought, economic pressure to develop brownfields, or the Million Tomato Campaign, USCC is helping the world to improve our soil in a sustainable way. The Market Development Committee, Composting Council Research and Education Foundation and International Compost Awareness Week committee all pursued projects featuring compost's role in healthy soil and water.

The Market Development Committee has begun a sustained educational campaign, launched at the January USCC Conference in Oakland, to educate landscapers, landscape architects, stormwater and erosion control managers, and soil scientists about the benefits of using compost in their projects with presentations, webinars, brochures and other outreach efforts.

The new edition of the *Soil and Water Connection* was released in 2014 containing consolidated scientific research in a well-respected, updated publication.

The guide, outlines science-based best management practices to water, soil and forestry managers for compost use and is for sale in the USCC web-based store.





# BUILDING A COMMUNITY



## MILLION TOMATO CAMPAIGN

The first-ever Million Tomato Compost Campaign was a signature USCC project from April through October 2013. The goal was to boost awareness of compost's benefits. People across America learned about soil health and compost's role in producing healthy, fresh food for local food pantries, growing awareness of the importance of compost along the way. The campaign united compost manufacturers, chefs, community gardens and food pantries to build healthy soil for sustainably grown, local food.

**2888** CUBIC YARDS OF  
COMPOST DONATED BY

**85** COMPOST  
MANUFACTURERS

**223**  
COMMUNITY  
GARDENS  
GROWING

**1.2**  
MILLION  
TOMATOES!

## 2014-2015: EXPANDING COMPOSTING IN THE US

The framework for moving composting forward — legislative, regulatory, feedstock and marketing — is coming together like the pieces of an ever growing jigsaw puzzle.

This year, we'll be adding more pieces that fit even more neatly into the patterns that have begun in these areas.

- We'll push to expand markets for compost beyond use in soil health into water conservation, erosion control, stormwater management and green infrastructure.
- Look for a focus on the Northeast which is undergoing a rapid expansion of composting capacity due to legislative mandates. USCC will strategically focus on this region for training and education, as well as a summit to bring compost experts together to identify obstacles to compost expansion and recommend ways to overcome them.
- Investment in Increased Advocacy. We will continue the efforts to persuade the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) to stop reregistering pesticides that don't degrade in the composting process and so are no longer phytotoxic.
- Greater emphasis on compost quality to increase overall customer satisfaction and improve perceptions of compost buyers. The foundation of STA compost testing, the TMECC manual, is being reviewed, revised and updated by the original editor to maintain its status as the gold standard of compost testing.
- Strategic alliances will exponentially multiply our outreach efforts by taking advantage of collaboration with other organizations. The USCC is already working with Keep America Beautiful and the International Erosion Control Association. A draft agreement with AmericanHORT, the largest nursery and landscape association in the US, is currently under review. The American Biogas Council and Biocycle Magazine are already important partners.
- A widening of the USCC's reach. USCC's technological systems are getting a face-lift. Once implemented, compost professionals that come to USCC for products and services will find a more reliable, customer-friendly and efficient way to obtain what they want and need to keep their operations running at peak efficiency.

### STAFF:

**Alfred Rattie**  
*Director of Market  
Development & STA*

**Cary Oshins**  
*Director of Education  
& Annual Conference*

**Leanne Spaulding**  
*Director of Membership  
& Communications*

**Cherrie Yang**  
*Accounting Clerk*

**Delsie Hyson**  
*Database Manager*

**Samantha Stallybrass**  
*Education Program Manager*

**Linda Norris-Waldt**  
*Marketing Specialist*



[www.compostingcouncil.org](http://www.compostingcouncil.org)  
5400 Grosvenor Lane, Bethesda, MD 20814  
p. 301.897.2715 | f. 301.530.5072



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