The Florida Organics Recycling Center for Excellence (FORCE) is a joint partnership between the Department of Environmental Protection, Sumter County, and public and private researchers.

ForceMatters produced by Kessler Consulting, Inc.
Florida Composting Regulatory Report

This report provides an analysis of several states’ solid waste regulations for organics recycling facilities for the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). While FDEP staff is aware of the need for revising Florida’s compost regulations, they currently do not have the time and resources needed to take on such a task. It is hoped that this report will 1) support the conclusion that Florida’s organics recycling regulations need to be updated, 2) help FDEP establish a schedule for revising the compost regulations and 3) provide useful information during the regulatory revision process.

The scope of this report’s is limited to organics recycling facilities that are regulated under solid waste rules; it contains a comparison of the following states’ regulations regarding organics recycling: CA, ME, MA, NJ, NY, NC, VA, & FL.

Ultimately, the information in this report and the discussion it may generate will help establish Florida composting regulations that further enhance diversion and proper management of organic wastes as well as encouraging growth and diversification of the organics recycling industry in Florida.

The report, funded through FORCE and completed by Kessler Consulting, Inc., will be available to the public after the first quarter of the new year.

Sumter County Facility – Update

The Sumter County Commission recently approved several actions for consideration. Among them, an RFP for privatizing the operations of the County’s solid waste and recycling facility, the continuation of planning, permitting and retrofitting the existing facility, and the continued use of the digester for FORCE-related activities.

FORCEMatters will keep you updated on the latest developments in Sumter County in future issues.

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Sumter County Facility Featured in BIOCYCLE Magazine

Congratulations to Sumter County, FORCE, and FORCE project consultant Miriam Zimms for the August 2005 BioCycle article on the Sumter County/FORCE composting facility. The three-page article detailed the design of the operations at the facility, which contain upfront separation of recyclables with intensive composting of MSW and biosolids, information on future facility retrofits, as well as details on past and current R&D projects funded through FORCE.

To request a copy of this article, contact FORCE project specialist Stacie Stokes at 1-800-566-4413.
FORCE RESOLUTION
The accomplishments of FORCE, Sumter County, and our project participants have been recognized by the State of Florida with Senate Resolution No. 2760, which was presented to the Sumter County Board of County Commissioners on July 26, 2005. Drafted by State Senator Paula Dockery and adopted by the Florida Senate, the resolution commends the Sumter County Commission for outstanding efforts to reduce solid waste and improve soil and groundwater in the state, through FORCE.

Congratulations!

State Senator Paula Dockery presents the FORCE Resolution to the Board of County Commissioners

Efforts Underway to Recover Reusable Tsunami Debris
While the tsunami that hit the Indian Ocean last December has come and gone, the effects of the storm are still being felt. In Banda Aceh alone, residents are dealing with more than 13 million cubic yards of debris.

In an effort to manage this debris, the United Nations Development Program initiated a recovery program that will eventually employ up to 30,000 people. In addition to providing employment to those unemployed by the storm, the Recovery Program will also provide vaccinations, clothing, and health and safety training to its employees.

The Recovery Program will target plastics and metals for recycling, organic waste for composting, concrete and stone (crushed) for use in future construction, as well as other reusable materials. The compost produced by the Program will be used to fill areas eroded by the storm.

For more information about this recovery program please visit the UNDP website at: http://www.undp.org/tsunami/indonesia.htm

Article Source: http://www.undp.org/tsunami/indonesia.htm

14th Annual USCC Conference and Tradeshow
The U.S. Composting Council will hold its 14th annual conference and tradeshow at the Park Plaza Hotel, in New Orleans, on January 22-26, 2006. The conference is open to all interested individuals and there are still opportunities to become an exhibitor or sponsor.

For more information on registration or becoming an exhibitor visit: www.compostingcouncil.org or call (631) 737-4931

Before and After Pictures of the Devastation

Some of the Various Types of Debris to be Recovered
Group Seeks Uniform Legislation and Regulation of Compost

The Association of American Plant Food Control Officials (AAPFCO) is an organization of fertilizer control officials from each state in the United States, Canada, and Puerto Rico; who are actively engaged in the administration of fertilizer laws and regulations.

As most of you are aware, at the current time it is very difficult for compost producers to make claims as to the benefits of their product or the nutrients levels contained therein. AAPFCO, with assistance from the U.S. Composting Council, is working hard to change all that.

They have been working with the Uniform Bills Committee for several years to develop a uniform regulation, pertaining to the sale of compost. The development of this new language, which would be added to the Uniform State Fertilizer Bill, would allow for both soil amending and nutrient claims to be made about the compost. The draft language, has been approved by the AAPFCO board and will be voted upon by the entire association this month.

AAPFCO is also creating a list of scientifically verified compost benefits that could be used by compost producers nation-wide. The acceptance of these benefits, or labeling claims, would reduce the negotiation phase that composters must undergo when trying to have their product labeled for end use.

The following thirteen compost benefits, which have been approved by the Environmental Affairs Committee of AAPFCO, represent a minimum list of allowable product claims. This list may also be added to by manufacturers with verifiable research data.

For more information on AAPFCO and the progress of the Uniform State Fertilizer Bill please visit: http://www.aapfco.org/

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Verified Benefits of Compost Utilization

1. Improves soil structure and porosity – creating a better plant root environment.

2. Increases moisture infiltration and permeability, and reduces bulk density of heavy soils – improving moisture infiltration rates and reducing erosion and runoff.

3. Improves the moisture holding capacity of light soils – reducing water loss and nutrient leaching, and improving moisture retention.

4. Improves the cation exchange capacity (CEC) of soils – improving their ability to retain nutrients for plant use.

5. Supplies organic matter.

6. Aids the proliferation of beneficial microbes.

7. Supplies beneficial microorganisms to soils and growing media.

8. Encourages vigorous root growth.

9. Allows plants to more effectively utilize nutrients, while reducing nutrient loss by leaching.

10. Enables soils to retain nutrients longer.

11. Contains humus – assisting in soil aggregation and making nutrients more available for plant uptake.

12. Buffers soil pH.