

Florida Organics Recycling Center for Excellence (FORCE) – SW204
YEAR 2 QUARTERLY REPORT
For the Period Ending March 31, 2003

1.0 DESIGN

1.1 Engineering, Planning, Construction, and Inspection:

Sumter County and Kessler Consulting, Inc. (KCI) staff monitored the digester, maintaining it in preparation for operation by occasional turning of the empty digester to keep proper lubrication levels, monitoring fluid levels, and making notations of adjustments to be made by the vendor.

1.2 Plan Certification and Permitting:

The application for the operating permit was submitted to DEP's Southwest District office on February 21, 2003. The application addresses operating procedures for the compost material from the time it enters the digester through final screening and testing. The proposed time for material to reside in the digester is 24 to 72 hours.

2.0 CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE

2.1 Modular Office Space (trailer):

Former UF/IFAS Project Manager Dennis McConnell and FORCE Project Manager Miriam Zimms conducted an inventory, on February 18, for the purpose of cataloging the fixtures and equipment in the FORCE office, laboratory, and farm site in preparation for transferring the fixtures and equipment from UF/IFAS to FORCE.

2.2 Demonstration Farm Site Preparation and Maintenance:

On February 18, former UF/IFAS Project Manager Dennis McConnell delivered to FORCE Project Manager Miriam Zimms documentation for the following projects: Forestry, Compost Use on Residential Development Sites (modular office and laboratory), and Schematic Map of Forty Acre Demonstration Site.

2.3 Installation and Maintenance of Digester:

No activity to report for this period.

2.4 Laboratory:

See Section 2.1, above.

2.5 Irrigation System and Maintenance:

See Section 2.1, above.

3.0 OPERATION

3.1 Process Technology Procurement and Testing:

Follow-up with potential vendors of innovative technologies continued by KCI. As a result of a contact made at the FORCE Dedication Ceremony in October 2002, Project Director Garry Breeden and Project Coordinator Miriam Zimms met with a representative of Advanced Reduction Technologies at Sumter County Public Works on February 19.

In January, Project Manager Miriam Zimms attended the United States Composting Council Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada. Miriam Zimms visited every vendor at the show and introduced the FORCE project and discussed the future Technology Showcase to be housed at FORCE. The Exhibit Hall proved to be a very good technology and information review for the FORCE project.

Sumter County has been working with a representative of RKB Enterprises regarding an inoculants to be used in the original digester. Possible areas of review are odor, temperature, and recipe mix attributes.

3.2 Feedstock Procurement/Processing:

No activity to report for this period.

3.3 Administrative Costs – Supplies and Travel:

No activity this period.

4.0 MARKET DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION, AND TRAINING

4.1 Educational Analysis and Outreach, Website

The FORCE website, www.floridaforce.org, continues to be updated as warranted, along with the brochure, and both of these activities are accomplished by Kessler Consulting, Inc. The FORCE brochures were most recently distributed at the U.S. Composting Council's Annual Conference in January, and at SWANA International's Waste Reduction, Recycling, and Composting Symposium in February.

Components of the "in-process" compost bibliography were distributed to the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) to obtain their feedback and input in their respective industries. Discussions continued with UF/IFAS to help direct and monitor the completion of the UF/IFAS first round version of the bibliography. UF/IFAS delivered the final first round version of the Bibliography in Excel format. Although Gladis Zinati initiated the bibliography, Erik Spalvins and Eugene Shaner completed the majority of the work production for this deliverable. The next step for Sumter County will be the

development of a web interface for the bibliography.

Miriam Zimms met with a representative of the Southeast Rural Recycling Assistance Program to provide a tour of the FORCE site and discuss the possibility of holding a workshop at the FORCE site in the next quarter.

The FORCE toll-free telephone line and website e-mail link continue to be monitored by KCI. Inquiries are answered or referred to other individuals, as appropriate.

The USCC listserv is monitored by KCI regularly for items of relevance to the project. Additionally, industry journals and the Florida Clipping services are monitored for articles of relevance to the project and appropriate articles distributed to the TAG members.

4.2 Technical Advisory Group (TAG) Committee Meetings:

The Technical Advisory Group met on February 5, 2003 at The Villages in Lady Lake, Florida. Dean Richard Jones of the Office of Dean for Research at UF/IFAS attended to express IFAS's continued support and interest in the project and to summarize recent discussions with the County about establishing a new relationship with the County for activities IFAS will be involved with.

Additionally, input was solicited from the TAG concerning the Year 3 Operating Plan & Budget and recommendations for research projects that will be of help to the various industries. No comments were received from the TAG regarding the Operating Plan & Budget and the TAG approved all documents. The status of projects-in-progress was reviewed, and proposed projects were briefly reviewed and discussed.

TAG members are in communication with one another and with FORCE project team members as topics arise of relevance to the project. An item of brief discussion late in the quarter was poultry and arsenic. Miriam Zimms contacted the Florida Poultry Federation TAG member who in turn provided research documentation that Ms. Zimms forwarded to the DEP.

4.3 Market Development:

An education and marketing project was recently initiated entitled: Develop Marketing Materials for Organics Markets Demonstrating Erosion and Control Benefits. Members of the Organics Committee of RecycleFlorida Today, Inc. through a \$7,000 FORCE award are currently in the process of initiating and conducting this project. The project will be reimbursed based on tasks completed.

Project Director Garry Breeden attended the compost training session at UF/IFAS Southwest Florida Research & Education Center, in Immokalee, Florida. He networked with other attendees and listened to issues and challenges faced by compost producers, marketers, and end-users in Florida.

Project Coordinator Miriam Zimms and Mitch Kessler, both of Kessler Consulting, Inc., attended the U.S. Composting Council Annual Conference in January 2003. A presentation given by Mitch Kessler about Sumter County composting included prominent mention of the FORCE project. Ms. Zimms and Mr. Kessler networked with conference attendees and attended ad-hoc meetings on behalf of FORCE for the purpose of making FORCE a more visible entity to the national composting community and bring awareness to this community of the unique nature of composting in Florida.

Ms. Zimms attended the Council's Board Meeting, the Standard Testing Assurance(STA) Program and Composting Training Certification Committee Meetings. At all meetings, Ms. Zimms reference FORCE and discussed possible ways in which FORCE could work with USCC on various committee items relative to Florida's organic industry needs and demographics.

Mitch Kessler of KCI attended the RecycleFlorida Today Issues Forum in St. Augustine, Florida in January 2003 to network with attendees to bring more visibility and market the FORCE project to the Florida recycling community.

Miriam Zimms and Mitch Kessler attended the SWANA Waste Reduction, Recycling, and Composting Symposium in Orlando, Florida, in February 2003, networking with conference attendees for the purpose of bringing more visibility to the FORCE name and mission. Ms. Zimms is the Vice Director for SWANA International's Waste Reduction, Recycling, and Composting division. Ms. Zimms moderated a session on composting and discussed the FORCE project, and most specifically Florida's organic industries headway with the Florida Department of Transportation for utilizing compost in various aspects of projects.

Some marketing publicity resulted from the FORCE dedication ceremony that took place on the FORCE site on Oct. 9. *The Villages Daily Sun* included mention of the dedication ceremony. In February KCI was contacted by a writer for *Florida Specifier* as a result of the press release mailed to that publication about the dedication ceremony. An article about the FORCE project, featuring a front-page photograph of the digester, appeared in the March 2003 issue of *Florida Specifier*.

4.4. *Conferences and Meetings:*

Travel expenses for the marketing endeavors at conferences listed below where not charged to FORCE by KCI or Sumter County.

An abstract about the FORCE project was submitted in February as a presentation proposal to the Sustainable Land Application Conference sponsored by IFAS. The abstract was accepted.

4.5 *Demonstration Farm Operations*

The County is in the process of drafting and finalizing an RFP for research, demonstration, education, marketing, and outreach (RDEMO) for the FORCE project. This RFP will target the needs of Florida's agricultural and public and private sector organics industry, including the research suggestions of the

FORCE TAG. The RFP is expected to be issued in the next quarter. University researchers, scientists, and industry professionals will be eligible to propose projects. It is anticipated that these RFPs will be up to \$25,000 for RDEMO.

5.0 EVALUATION, MONITORING, AND TESTING

5.1 SAC Protocol Development:

No activity to report for this period.

5.2 Feedstock and Products Testing:

No activity to report for this period.

5.3 Environmental Monitoring

On February 18, former Project Manager Dennis McConnell delivered to Project Coordinator Miriam Zimms documentation that defined a Bioassay. UF/IFAS staff is developing a manuscript that evaluates the varied rates of compost application to Florida's sandy soils.

6.0 PROJECT MANAGEMENT

6.1 Personnel:

Erik Spalvins, Extension Educator, has left the employment of UF/IFAS to return to graduate school. Additionally, Eugene Shaner, the Farm Manager, is no longer associated with the project. Currently the official points of contact for the FORCE project are Christine Waddill, Dean for Extension, for bringing closure to deliverable items and Dean Richard Jones and Julie Cole for invoicing documentation. Dr. McConnell is still the contact for his expertise and association with the project these last two years.

In the next quarter, Sumter County intends to hire a Project Manager (Superintendent) under a new Sumter County department called FORCE. This position will have the functions of managing the FORCE project and working directly for Garry Breeden, FORCE Project Director. Much of the work the County expected and intended UF/IFAS staff to perform, will be performed by this new position (e.g. grant writing, additional funding, facilitator between TAG members and research projects, oversee technology center, and FORCE tours, FORCE liaison to state organic community and national organic community). This person will be housed at the FORCE modular office in Lake Panasoffkee, Florida.

6.2 Administrative Fees – Indirect Costs:

UF/IFAS bills for its indirect costs through its invoices to the County.

6.3 Annual Work Plans and Budgets:

A draft of the Year Three Operating Plan was prepared and was transmitted to the DEP Project Manager on February 21, 2003. The purpose of the Operating Plan is to provide the Department with the performance criteria for the project and is intended to be a working document. The operating plan describes the necessary tasks for Year Three of the project. The Year Three Budget and the Projected Activities for Years 4-5 were also submitted to DEP. It is anticipated that the County will submit approximately four of UF/IFAS invoices for reimbursement next quarter.

6.4 Project Coordination and Administration:

As mentioned in previous quarterly reports, Sumter County encountered a significant roadblock in late 2002 with the resignation of Co-Director Wayne Smith following the issuance of a stop work order by Sumter County to UF/IFAS staff. Significant efforts during the current reporting period involved numerous discussions with UF/IFAS to determine the level of University interest in remaining involved with the project and to determine a suitable partnership that will be amenable to both the University culture and the reporting requirements necessitated by the grant contract. DEP staff (notably the Solid Waste Bureau Chief) participated in some of these discussions, which were held in various locations around Florida including Bushnell, Lake Panasoffkee, Tallahassee, Gainesville, and St. Augustine. Dean Richard Jones of IFAS Office of the Dean for Research, and Dean Christine Waddill, Dean for Extension, committed to bringing closure to the previous contractual relationship and moving forward to establish a new relationship. The existing contract with the University was terminated by the County on 12/31/03.

KCI continues to expend considerable time and effort coordinating with the appointed IFAS contact, Julie Cole of IFAS Sponsored Programs, and with former Project Manager Dennis McConnell. These efforts involve assisting in the reconciliation of UF invoices and budget tracking spreadsheets, reviewing travel documentation, properly reviewing UF/IFAS invoices that have been revised, monitoring the status of deliverables, and reporting items due to the County by IFAS, and the inventory of fixtures and equipment mentioned in Section 2.1. Ms. Zimms of KCI has prepared much and organized documentation received from UF/IFAS for the County's approval. Ms. Zimms has also prepared follow-up documentation from meetings with UF/IFAS staff to document various activities and transition items.

The County and its subcontractor, KCI, reviewed DEP's response to the 12/31/02 quarterly report and reimbursement request. The County is currently in the process of preparing a response. The County and KCI have held discussions with DEP staff regarding due dates for various annual project documents.

FORCE continues to pursue potential legislative and private sector funding. Certain project proposals that were submitted under the state's Innovative Waste Reduction/Recycling Grant program may or may not have viability, depending on the legislature's decision on grant funding. In any event, other avenues of funding are being vigorously investigated, including additional legislative funds, and other Federal grants.