
MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 3, 2018
TO: USCC Market Development Committee and USCC Executive Committee
FROM: Ron Alexander (RAA), USCC Market Development Committee Co-Chair & Industry Liaison to AAPFCO
RE: Update from the AAPFCO Summer Annual 2018

The 2018 AAPFCO Annual meeting was held in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida from August 1st to 4th. Control Officials from 30 different states and Canada attended. The meeting was well attended; including 56 Control Officials, 111 Industry Liaison and 9 guests.

Welcome, Opening Comments, Roll Call and Vote

Under the new AAPFCO meeting format, after the Role Call, to determine which states are in attendance and to make sure that they have a quorum, voting by the membership takes place. This is the formal vote by the membership on issues approved by the committees (and the Board) to go 'tentative' or 'official' at the previous meeting. This is when the status of new items and modifications are formalized (approved) or voted down by the membership.

During this vote, the old 'composting' definition was removed from the Official Publication. This was planned and part of the approval process for the new "compost" definition. Changes to the list of allowable compost claims (benefits) also went 'official' during this session.

Terms & Definitions Committee

Many fertilizer related definitions were discussed during the recent committee meeting; but none directly related to compost.

Other related terms that were voted by the membership to go to official status were:

- T-71 Slow Release Fertilizers - fertilizers in a form that release, or convert to a plant-available form, plant nutrients at a slower rate relative to an appropriate reference soluble product.
- T-103 Controlled Release Fertilizers - a Slow Release Fertilizer that is engineered to provide nutrients over time at a predictable rate under specified conditions.

So, if a compost is registered as a fertilizer, it can claim that it supplies 'slow release nutrients', but not 'controlled release nutrients'. This outcome should be deemed to as acceptable by most.

Other related terms that were voted by the committee to go to official status were:

T-100 Humic Substances – constituents of soil organic matter and the aquatic environment, consisting of complex heterogeneous mixtures of carbon-based substances formed by biochemical reactions during the decay and transformation of plant and microbial remains. They are primarily composed of three main fractions, called humic acids, fulvic acids, and humin, which are operationally defined by their solubility in dilute alkali and acid solutions. Sources of humic substances are commercially harvested from terrestrial deposits of which include, but are not limited to, Leonardite, oxidized lignite, oxidized sub-bituminous coals, humalite, carbonaceous shales (including humic shale), peat, and sapropel.

It is unknown at this point whether this definition would disallow compost from claiming that it contains humic acid. However, several states already do allow compost to claim a humic acid content, as long as test data can illustrate this fact.

It should also be noted that a series of microbes (e.g., Trichoderma) are being formally defined by a subcommittee with this committee.

Uniform Bills Committee

There were no real issues at the committee meeting that affected compost.

Environmental Affairs Committee

Two presentations were completed during the committee meeting. One related to nitrate movement in Florida waters and one related to phosphorus regulation in the future (which was completed by the USCC representative). The phosphorus presentation suggested that the AAPFCO get more proactive in slowing the expansion of poorly thought out phosphorus regulation. Further, it was suggested that more be done to allow low water extractable phosphorus claims to be made on product labels; such as compost claiming nutrient content. There was mild support for these efforts, but a Task Force was created to explore related concepts. Further, the USCC representative was able to acknowledge that many states would indeed allow this additional information to be placed on the label, if it was truthful and the data was not placed within the guaranteed analysis box. It would be deemed as another labeling claim

The AAPFCO 2019 Winter-Annual meeting is scheduled for February in Albuquerque, New Mexico.