

---

---

## MEMORANDUM

---

---

**DATE:** August 06, 2003  
**TO:** USCC Board of Directors  
**FROM:** Ron Alexander, USCC Market Development Committee & Industry Liaison to AAPFCO  
**RE:** Update from the AAPFCO Annual Meeting

---

### *Uniform Bills Committee*

The Uniform Bills Committee met to continue its discussion of the uniform regulation of compost products, among other subjects. Teresa Crenshaw, the Committee's Chair, started by outlining the history of the USCC's efforts with AAPFCO. She outlined the problems with trying to regulate compost within the Uniform Fertilizer and Soil Amendment Laws, and described why the organization felt it was important to present (and regulate) compost as a soil amendment with innate nutrition – and to allow for the legal disclosure of nutrient content. In support, the State of Idaho presented their upgraded Soil and Plant Amendment Law which allows compost to identify its nutrient content, with the understanding that 'any nutrient claims, verbal or written, are estimates and not guaranteed.' We then presented examples from the states of Minnesota and New York that illustrated how the regulation of compost by state DOAs was being usurped by environmental regulation and the support of recycling. The idea of the presentations was to illustrate that certain states have taken action to deal with the appropriate regulation of compost, while others have had it forced upon them. The point was understood, as was the fact that it was AAPFCO's responsibility to address this issue. Following further discussion, it was suggested that we (the USCC) develop some suggested language, with assistance from the Committee Chair, that could be used in an SUIP that would address this issue. This text will be modeled after the Idaho Law. This was the overall goal of our presentation to the Committee.

### *Environmental Affairs Committee*

The Environmental Affairs Committee's By-Products and Recycled Materials Subcommittee met to discuss several issues, with SUIP #25 - Heavy Metals in Fertilizers, microbial screening and verification of claims for composts (and related products) being the most relative to the USCC. Prior to the meeting, several editorial changes were made to the SUIP to better clarify their usage in evaluating fertilizer quality. Since these modifications were considered to be only editorial in nature, a vote was taken by the entire AAPFCO voting membership to move the SUIP 'official' status. The motion was carried and the SUIP will be published in the next AAPFCO Official Publication as such. This will now allow for wider scale usage of the SUIP by State Department of Agriculture (DOA). The SUIP lists compost as an exempted product.

At the Subcommittee meeting, questions were also posed regarding potential biological contaminants in compost, and other organically based products (e.g., manure, biosolids), and what should be considered as

verifiable claims (benefits) of these products. We provided information regarding PFRP and how they are used with organically based products. We also informed the group that no federal regulations exist regarding pathogens in manure based products. We further suggested that the organization invite Pat Millner of the USDA to outline the research and current stance of the USDA regarding pathogen related to risk in horticultural and agricultural products. I will make contact with Pat on behalf of the group. A discussion regarding verifiable compost claims then ensued. We stated that both the USCC and National Bark & Soil Council have mentioned in the past that well-documented and acknowledged benefits of soil amendments should be automatically accepted by State DOAs, and not require further research by product manufacturers. After further discussion, we offered to provide a list of compost benefits that R. Alexander Associates, Inc has recently negotiated with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture.