

---

---

## MEMORANDUM

---

---

**DATE:** February 24, 2015  
**TO:** USCC Market Development Committee and USCC Executive Committee  
**FROM:** Ron Alexander (RAA), USCC Market Development Committee Member & Industry Liaison to AAPFCO  
**RE:** Update from the 2015 AAPFCO Winter Annual Meeting

---

The AAPFCO Winter Annual 2015 meeting was held in Jacksonville, Florida from February 14<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup>. Overall, there was very good attendance at the meeting (considering that it was the 'winter' meeting), with Control Officials attending from 24 different states.

One of the most exciting things that went into effect at this past AAPFCO meeting was the organization's new voting process. This new process allows Board and membership voting at both the February and August meetings, as well as electronic voting. This can change the approval process from a minimum of 24 months to a minimum of 7 to 15 months.

### **Terms & Definitions Committee**

Fertilizer and soil amendment related definitions were the primary items discussed at the recent committee meeting. Four definitions were discussed that have some relevance to the composting and organics recycling industry. The 3 terms, "humic substances", "hydrophobic fulvic acids" and "fulvic fraction" that were approved by the AAPFCO membership to be moved to "official" status, were discussed again. This is because the organization is trying to determine how to categorize them within the Official Publication. It is important to know that there are new approved test methods for quantifying these substances. The speed at which they will be used by the industry and required by the states, is unknown. That said, technically, the terms can now be placed on product labels.

The membership left the term "biochar" in tentative status.

### **Environmental Affairs Committee**

A report on the status of the Food Safety Modernization Act was provided. During the public review period, the FDA decided to remove any required waiting period for the harvest of crops treated with composted manure. Although the raw manure waiting period before harvest (9 months) was not removed from the regulation, that part of the regulation will not be implemented until field research can be completed. It was suggested that this could take up to 5 years.

The committee chair discussed the development of a subcommittee to provide input on the reuse of specific 'beneficial use byproducts' (e.g., cement dust, wood ash, drill cuttings). A USCC representative will serve on this subcommittee.

## **Uniform Bills Committee**

The 'State-by-State Labeling Regulation Inconsistencies' working group has begun its efforts. The USCC representative provided the committee chair with a list of labeling inconsistencies, as did a few others. Results for a working group of this nature could help compost manufacturers selling product over a multiple state region, or nationally.

The resolution regarding turfgrass phosphorous legislation, which the USCC supported and which did not get approved, was brought up again for discussion. Its failure in being approved was attributed to a first time electronic voting process, and discussions are taking place in order to appropriately reintroduce the resolution.

The Globally Harmonized System (GHS) Labeling resolution was also approved at the meeting. The GHS was introduced by OSHA in order to harmonize data within Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) with data used in similar forms internationally. The international form format will need to be implemented in the US in 2015. This will affect compost products that use MSDS sheets.

---

The AAPFCO 2015 Annual meeting is scheduled for August, 2015 in Denver, Colorado.

### **BACKGROUND DATA**

**Phosphorus Restriction Resolution** - Pertains to states considering the implementation of phosphorous restrictions (bans) on turf. There are now 15 states that have done so. Compost is included in several of these restrictions if it is registered as a fertilizer. However, the main issue is with the states that disallow the use of any phosphorous in turf maintenance, not the states that require 'low P' fertilizers. This is because this stance is agronomically unsound, and if it leads to a reduced turf density over time, then it could even lead to more runoff and environmental damage. There were a few comments made that may be worked into the final resolution in the near future, so that an official vote can be taken at the next AAPFCO meeting.

**Food Safety Modernization Act** - Pertains to the Food and Drug Administrations proposed regulation which would change the way in which raw manure products can be used in the production of vegetable and fruit crops that are eaten raw. Probably the most relevant part of the proposed regulation to compost manufacturers and other organic recyclers, is the requirement to complete pathogen treatment of manure before application (e.g., composting), or wait 9 months in between application and harvest on land where unprocessed produce is grown. It also requires a shorter waiting period for manure based compost.