COMPOST: The Quiet Hero

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Compost: The Quiet Hero
Welcome & Overview
According to the EPA, 31.8 million tons of food waste is generated per year, with 97.5% going to landfills.

Organic matter in landfills is the number one source of man-made methane gas, which is 20-25 times more potent than naturally occurring carbon dioxide.

The GHG impact of 31 million tons of food waste sent to landfills annually is the equivalent of taking 5.2 million cars off the road for one year.
Options for Organics

Source: U.S. EPA
Benefits of Compost

- Filters storm water ~ keeps pollutants out of surface water (rivers, streams, lakes)
- Restores soil ecology so it may produce food naturally filled with vitamins, minerals and other nutrients
Benefits of Compost

- Increases water retention ~ generally, soil mixed with compost requires 30% less irrigation
- Assists in erosion control

Sediment is the #1 source of water pollution ~ costs approx. $44 billion per year
Compost 101

Recipe: 1 part nitrogen (food) + 3-5 parts carbon (yard trimmings) = 2 parts compost

Commercial versus home composting

Uses: parks & recreation, department of transportation, landscaping, agriculture
Soil Rejuvenation

Soil is a living, breathing eco system

Compost provides the soil with organic matter and carbon:

- Food for the microbe community
- Provides structure and aerates the soil ~ important for healthy microbes & plants

MICROBES ROCK!
Basic Human Survival

Humans must:

1. Breathe Air
2. Drink Water
3. Eat nutrition

Without all three of the above

A HUMAN DIES!
Basic Human Survival

Compost:

- Cleans the air by food residuals NOT producing methane gas in landfills
- Filters storm water and prevents sediment from polluting surface water
- Creates & maintains healthy soil that produces nutritious food
Challenges for Composting

- Only approx. 300 permitted food composting facilities
- Classified as a MSW landfill
- Permits can take up to 18 months
- Zoning issues
- Counties can closed down composting facilities meeting state regulations
Collection Challenges

- Weight
- Wet Material
- Frequent Collection
- Limited Organic Collection Infrastructure
Types of Food Residual

- Pre-consumer
- Prep
- Post-consumer
- Curbside (residential)

Very different feedstocks
Contamination

- Training key for clean organic stream
- Management commitment to program
- Common contaminants
What do we do?

- Mobilize the foodservice industry to demand alternatives to landfills for organics
- Engage corporate and community leaders
- Use the power of consumer demand
Composting: The Business Case

Cost Savings:

- Reduced hauling costs, especially when coupled with common recycling
- Reduced purchasing when focus on amount/what is disposed of in operations

Customer Demands:

- Revenue Retention
- Revenue Generation
Employee Morale

- Employees are excited and proud to work for a company who operates with environmental integrity.
- Time will come when a major component in career/employment decisions.

Marketing and Public Relations

- The media loves to report on companies who are the pioneers trailblazing sustainable best practices.
The End Product: Compost

- Develop a strong demand for end product
- Quality product depends on recipe and consistency of the food residual & carbon stream
Our Quiet Hero opens the doors to expanding sustainable practices in corporate America.
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