

Organics Proposal Summary

The organics team is recommending increasing incentives for two organic management options:

- Anaerobic digestion for energy capture followed by composting/land application of digestates
- Direct composting and land application of organics

These are complementary technologies for dealing with a wide range of organic residuals including food scraps, yard waste, soiled paper, agricultural wastes, and food processing wastes.

By including both approaches in our recommendations, we provide a flexible strategy that has broad applicability for all regions of the state as well as a wide range of waste streams

This action will reduce greenhouse gasses by:

- Methane avoidance
 - Removing highly putrescible (food scraps, yard waste) wastes from landfills
- Source of green energy
 - Anaerobic digestion of organics
- Fossil fuel savings
 - Replacement of fossil fuel based synthetic fertilizers with organic sources of nitrogen, phosphorus and micronutrients
 - Potential reduction in N₂O emissions from use of organic fertilizers
 - Reduction in water use due to higher soil water holding capacity associated with use of organic soil amendments
- Increased carbon sequestration
 - Use of organic soil amendments can increase total carbon in soils

Highlights

Anaerobic digestion:

- Provide for feed in tariffs for electricity generated by anaerobic digestion
- Remove obstacles for wheeling power to potential purchasers
 - One utility may have a surplus of power to sell with no need or desire to buy renewable energy in general or power from anaerobic digestion in particular. In contrast, a neighboring utility may be aggressively in the market for all types of renewable power. Wheeling prohibits the utility from refusing to transfer green energy through it's grid to another utility that is willing to purchase that energy

Implementation Dates

Proposed changes to existing legislation re feed in tariffs can be ready by 9/1/2008

New legislation for wheeling requirements can be ready by 9/1/2008

Mechanism

Expand existing State feed in tariff program for solar energy to include energy from anaerobic digestion. In WA this is referred to as "renewable energy system cost recovery". RCW 82.16.110-140 and RCW 82.08.900 provides definitions of eligible anaerobic digestion processes

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=82.16>

Legislation could be drafted to require utilities to wheel the power for minimal charge to neighboring utilities for a modest fee.

Synergy with Other Proposals

There is currently a proposal to expand existing feed in tariffs for wind derived power, this could be added to that proposal for a broader green energy strategy

What Needs To Be Done

It is recommended that an analysis be made as to the status of the tax incentive, its effectiveness for anaerobic digesters and whether or not to expand the definition of anaerobic digesters to include waste water treatment facilities and food processor digesters.

EQUIP for Facility Development

This action will support a higher priority for use of Federal NRCS EQUIP funds to conserve and reuse organic matter in order to prevent losses of harmful carbon and nitrogen compounds to the atmosphere and to create sustainable uses of these materials. The conservation and reuse processes may include composting and anaerobic digestion of farm manures, and municipal organic refuse. These processes will create products that improve soil tilth and assist in topsoil stabilization and conservation, improve water and nutrient efficiency and sequester stable carbon in forest and agricultural soils, stream corridor stabilization projects, and in urban soils in parks, lawns, and gardens.

Highlights

Currently EQUIP funds have priority designations including composting, manure transfer and nutrient management, and an emphasis on various soil conservation practices such as mulching, stream bank and riparian zone improvements.

This proposal would provide higher priority support for federal EQUIP funds for organic material recovery processing and distribution methods that recover the intrinsic values within the organics, conserve nutrients for crop production, and prevent losses of gasses to the atmosphere from on farm practices, and recover energy and fuels. The increased priority would recognize the benefits of co-composting and co-digestion of farm manures and organic materials such as animal bedding with municipal sources of organics for mutual benefit.

Implementation Dates

Legislation is required to pass in the 2009 session with a targeted date for compliance/implementation by 2010.

Mechanism

Amendment to NRCS guidelines and priorities.

Synergy with Other Proposals

This action could be combined with recommendations from the agricultural and forestry sectors.

What Needs To Be Done

Work with NRCS to update the state priorities for deciding on which projects are funded.

Procurement and Markets

This action will increase the markets for recovered organic wastes throughout the State and increase the variety and volumes available of composted organic materials to Department of Transportation, as well as influence local and county purchasing specifications.

Highlights

Emphasize, update and increase the procurement goals for recycled content materials by all state and local agencies as provided in the 1991 law RCW 43.19A to specifically allow for the purchase of the following organic waste materials that are recycled and/or composted; yard debris, land clearing debris, food waste residuals, anaerobic digester solids, manures, biosolids, paper mill sludge and wood processing by-products.

Modify the established specification requirements by WSDOT for purchasing of composted materials so that they are not limited to a certain percentage of composted plant materials. This will allow a wider variety of composted products to be sourced locally to development projects, such as manures in Eastern Washington. The current language used in WSDOT specifications for erosion control and roadside planting was intended to meet the 1991 goals as codified under RCW 43.19A, of increasing the use of composted yard debris. The markets for composted yard debris is well established in regions that produce these products, however areas outside of these production centers show little use of composted organic wastes due to transportation costs.

Provide for a change in all recycled product procurement lists and sources to be inclusive of the other recycled organic waste feedstocks that are being extracted from the waste stream.

Implementation Dates

Legislation is required to pass in the 2009 session with a targeted date for compliance/implementation by 2010

Mechanism

Amendment to RCW 43.19A. Adjustment of administrative rules for WSDOT, GA, Ports, Colleges and all other departments that have land development projects.

Synergy with Other Proposals

This action could be combined with updating of overall procurement guidelines of recycled products for state and local agencies, as well as improve the information data base of available recycled products.

What Needs To Be Done

Draft legislative language to amend RCW 43.19A

Vet with stakeholders how to maximize procurement of recycled organic wastes and allow for performance goals of the end users of these products.