

## Technology Brief

# On-Farm Composting Workshops

## Introduction

The Clean Washington Center initiated a series of half-day composting workshops throughout the state focused specifically on agricultural wastes and the farming community. Farmers were targeted because of the ongoing organic wastes they generate, the space and equipment they often already have on hand, and the generally less stringent permitting environment as compared to commercial composting facilities. Composting can transform a farmer's ongoing waste problem to a beneficial soil amendment which can even lead to an additional source of income.

## The Workshop

Presenters for each workshop were selected from a pool of agricultural extension agents, state university instructors, consultants specializing in compost, and practicing farmer-composters. The agenda of the workshop included presentations on the basic biology and mechanics of the composting process, managing materials and resources to make a high-quality compost, and incorporating the composting process into farm practices. A pilot composting setup was established in the vicinity of each workshop location, which allowed workshop attendees the opportunity to get a physical sense of some of the composting parameters discussed in the classroom.

## Resources

Two manuals on farm composting were presented at the workshop:

- (1) On-Farm Composting Handbook, Editor: Robert Rynk, Northeast Regional Agricultural Engineering Service, \$20.00. A comprehensive and detailed handbook geared toward the informed practice of composting; highly recommended for the serious agricultural composter.

## Key Words

<b>Materials:</b>	Compost
<b>Technologies:</b>	On-Farm
<b>Applications:</b>	Feedstock preparation, Composting, Curing, Screening, Storage
<b>Market Goals:</b>	Composting can reduce the volume of on-farm organic waste bound for landfills, thus reducing the tip fee
<b>Abstract:</b>	Compost can improve soil fertility, extend fertilizers, save water, suppress plant diseases, & boost soil tilth.

- (2) Basic On-Farm Composting, Clean Washington Center, free of charge to Washington Residents; \$10.00 outside Washington state. A primer on farm composting geared toward the farmer who is considering composting and wants an overview of the processes and procedures involved.

This technology brief was prepared by the Clean Washington Center. The Clean Washington Center is the Managing Partner of the Recycling Technology Assistance Partnership (ReTAP). ReTAP's mission is to advance industry's use of recycled materials through technology extension services. ReTAP is an affiliate of the national Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP), a program of the U.S. Commerce Department's National Institute of Standards and Technology. ReTAP is also funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the American Plastics Council.



Please call CWC at (206) 464-6282 with any questions. Staff engineers and a technical writer are available to help as needed.

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#### ***For More Information***

For a copy of the report, *On-Farm Composting Workshops (CM-97-3)*, use the CWC Publication Order Form or for more information call CWC at (206) 443-7746, email [info@cw.org](mailto:info@cw.org), or visit the CWC Internet Website at [www.cw.org](http://www.cw.org).

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