

Jane Thery

Founder and Chair

Maryland Horse Council Farm Stewardship Committee

**Maryland Horse Council Representative, State of Maryland House Bill 171,
“Yard Waste, Food Residuals and Other Organic Materials Diversion and
Infrastructure Study Group”**

**Comments for the September 25, 2018 Meeting on the
“Limited Food Waste Composting Act.” Frederick County**

September 23, 2018

Composting is an effective way to generate quality soil enhancements from horse manure and bedding. Promotion of composting and the sale of composted products is good for the environment and provides the option of a value-added agricultural product for our Maryland horse farms. The following points are from the perspective of managing horse manure in the state to the advantage of horse farms and the environment. The recycling of composted horse manure and bedding to provide locally-sourced nutrients for Maryland soils is of interest to the Maryland Horse Council.

The management of food waste is related as regulations for Maryland Department of the Environment Composting Type 2 materials which include both food scraps and animal manures. As the science of composting practices supports, different composting materials and methods require different approaches and therefore different regulations. For example, composting horse manure requires different treatment than composting cow manure. Effective rules and regulations need to have overarching principles and site and materials specific rules for set-up, operation, inspection and reporting. The challenge is to make these clear, user-friendly, consistently applied and validated within the local community.

There are more horses per square mile in Maryland than any other state in the USA. Frederick County has many beautiful horse farms and horses for sport, recreation, therapy and companionship. On average, each horse produces 55

pounds of manure every day. All farms with eight horses or more are required to have a nutrient management plan by the Maryland Department of Agriculture. Manure management is reported including haul-off, on-farm use, storage, etc. Promoting quality composting increases the use of this locally-supplied nutrient for our Maryland soils, including those in Frederick County.

The Maryland Horse Council Farm Stewardship Committee supports:

- ✚ Clear and consistent laws, rules, regulations, exceptions and promotional programs for the composting, use and sale of soil amendments containing horse manure
- ✚ Technical and financial assistance for on-farm composting for on-farm use
- ✚ Promotion of the use of horse manure in commercial composting facilities
- ✚ User-friendly rules for on-farm composting and sale of compost
- ✚ User-friendly rules for using horse farm properties for commercial composting
- ✚ Recognition of horse manure as a local compost input and natural nutrient
- ✚ Financing and promotion assistance for products using Maryland horse manure as an input
- ✚ Facilitation of compost sales to successfully compete with similar products from other states

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