

**First Meeting of the VI Composting Committee of the VI Recycling Partnership
Thursday Dec. 2 (Telephone Conference Call)
Meeting Notes**

In attendance:

- ◆ Claudia Gutierrez, EPA Region 2 (meeting facilitator)
- ◆ Jason Budsan
- ◆ Benita Martin
- ◆ Jim Doersam, P.E.
- ◆ Susan Parten, P.E.

A.) Introductory comments (Susan P.):

This is the first of a series of meetings of the VI's Composting Committee, working in cooperation with the VI Recycling Partnership.

Our specific goal, or mission is to bring about comprehensive organics composting operations on both St. Croix and St. Thomas (with the St. Thomas operation including compostables from both St. John and Water Island).

The composted products from those operations would be of 2 types:

- 1) Composted product that is usable for edible crops and gardens; and
- 2) Composted product usable for non-edibles, such as nurseries, trees, lawns, etc.

Based on the waste materials quantities outlined in the Dec. 2009 Gershman, Brickner & Bratton, Inc. Waste Stream Characterization Study report to the VI WMA, we anticipate that these composting operations will be able to process at least about 40-50% of the VI's total municipal solid wastes.

Obviously, the importance of that is very great, in terms of producing beneficially re-usable products and materials that would otherwise be landfilled or disposed of in some other manner. It is also very important in terms of favorable economic implications, since the type of composting operations we're starting to plan can be done at much lower overall costs than other non-landfilling waste management approaches.

B) Brief Introductions from Committee members:

- ◆ Benita Martin: Involved with several related community program initiatives, including We Grow Food, Inc.; currently does small scale composting, farming, and educator within the broader VI community;
- ◆ Jason Budsan: President of EAST, currently engaged in recycling activities, and involved with a number of environmental and related community program initiatives.
- ◆ Susan Parten, P.E.: Civil engineer and STT property owner; Provides engineering services to communities, developers and property owners to implement sustainable

resource management practices, including solid and liquid waste management systems.

- ◆ Jim Doersam, P.E.: Nationally recognized composting expert; has designed and prepared operational plans for numerous large-scale composting operations, and been involved with writing of manuals of practice and state regulatory requirements for composting operations; Has started up and managed several large scale organics composting operations, including community education and marketing for the sales and distribution of composted product (varying grades of product, including for both edible and non-edible crops).

Both Ms. Parten and Mr. Doersam are Advisory Board members for UVI's new Caribbean Green Technology Center.

C) Discussion:

Referring to the 3-page document describing preliminary planning elements for STX and STT composting operations, there was a discussion about suitable sites. It was discussed and agreed that it's best to locate both types of composting operations on the same site for several reasons. Those include the fact that much of the same feed stock (e.g., brush) will be used for both types of composted product. Also, it's important to maximize use of expensive equipment needed for these large-scale operations, and have the ability to use the same equipment for both categories of operations on each site (composted product for edibles, and for non-edibles).

For St. Croix, it's estimated that about 8 acres of active composting / processing area will be needed;

For St. Thomas, it's estimated that about 6 acres active processing area will be needed.

Those figures *do not include* areas needed for buffer zones (from adjacent properties or the public), or stormwater retention and treatment facilities. Those additional areal needs would be based on location and detailed analyses for each site.

Because of site permitting requirements for processing certain categories of wastes (e.g. municipal wastewater sludge, grease trap wastes, etc.), an optimal location would be at centralized wastewater treatment plant site, if there's adequate acreage/space available at any of these existing facilities/sites.

Benita and Jason offered to explore these possibilities further.

The next meeting (tel. conference call) was scheduled for December 15, 2:00 pm (VI time). Susan P. will send out call-in number and instructions again.

Below are the goals we've outlined for the next 2-3 months, and names of committee members who've volunteered to work on each item:

Goals For Next Eight to Twelve Weeks (2-3 Months):

1. Verify above estimates, at least on a preliminary planning basis; [Susan P. / Jim D.]
2. Identify equipment makes/models, and associated costs; [Susan P. / Jim D.]
3. Estimate costs for labor needs; [Susan P. / Jim D.]
4. Determine feasibility of locating composting operations at landfill sites (STT and STX), and identify possible alternate sites if landfills not feasible; [Jason / Benita]
5. Estimate on-going operational costs; [Susan P. / Jim D.]
6. Based on targeted (and most likely feasible) sites, estimate site preparation/start-up costs.[Will wait on this until site selection is further along.]
7. Identify possible funding sources/mechanisms [Jason / Benita / Mark L.]
8. Begin developing preliminary recommendations for tipping fees to composting operations, based on operational costs. [Susan P. / Jim D.]