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COMPOST  
PRODUCERS  
"We Build Healthy Soil"

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Inquiry  
International

September 29, 2010

**Stuart Buckner**

Executive Director  
US Composting Council  
1 Comac Loop 14 B1  
Rokonkoma, NY 11779

Dear Stu and the USCC State Relations Committee,

The Association of Compost Producers (ACP) is very interested in becoming an official "State Chapter" for the State of California, to the US Composting Council. We are submitting this letter under the USCC "Procedure for an Existing, 501(c)(3) non-profit (like ACP) to become affiliated with the USCC (as of July 2010)", and this letter constitutes a "Resolution of the ACP Board of Directors requesting such status to the Executive Director of the USCC," as per step #1 of this USCC procedure. It is accompanied by a more detailed proposal.

As outlined in this letter, USCC and its members in California will gain the benefits of:

- State representation from the largest state compost market in the U.S.
- ACP's 15 years of experience and relationships of representing composters within California
- Expansion of compost use volume and value in the California market
- CalRecycle working relationships developed by our members and professional staff
- A bridge from state compost market expansion to National support by USCC
- Tighter camaraderie both within California and between California and the rest of the country

**ACP Background**

ACP was incorporated in 1995, originally as an organization of private compost producers in Southern California to address issues related to competition and relationships between public and private producers in the region. In 2002, ACP amended its membership standards to include *both* public and private compost producers, in addition to equipment vendors, compost haulers and other associates to the compost industry throughout the entire state of California. As stated in our association's mission.

"The Association of Compost Producers (ACP) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, association of public and private organizations *dedicated to increasing the quality, value and amount of compost being used in California.* We do this by promoting activities and regulations that *build healthy soil*, benefiting people and protecting air, water and soil."

For a complete statement of our vision, mission and values, please see the attached document. Also, ACP has been publishing a monthly electronic newsletter for the past year that documents the issues and activities that ACP is actively engaged in on an ongoing, monthly basis (see recent copy attached).

In addition, for the past 8 years, ACP has been promoting and implementing US Composting Council membership as well as programs. Notably, we have promoted the USCC Seal of Testing Assurance (STA) in all of the work that we have engaged in with CalRecycle (formerly the California Integrated Waste Management Board) projects (e.g. Caltrans compost specifications, Agricultural Compost Specifications project, Local Government compost workshops and Compost Use to Enhance Water Quality project). In addition, we promote the USCC industry standards throughout all of our interactions with the CalEPA Air Quality Control District rule making processes, as well as the Water Resources Board and the Water Quality Control Board regulations and rule making processes.

### **Why ACP Wants to be the California State Chapter of USCC**

ACP members have been very supportive and active in furthering the causes of compost market expansion in California, and doing so with a close eye on implementing and extending the values and systems of the USCC, esp. the STA and ICAW programs and annual conferences. We believe it is in the best interests of both USCC and ACP, for ACP to be an official State Chapter of USCC.

The main reasons that we believe ACP should become a State Chapter are:

- **California is Big and Unique:** California as a state ranks in the top ten political economies of the world. It also has the largest agricultural economy of any state in the Union, by a factor of 2 over the next largest (Texas), with a year-round growing seasons and compost utilization. California also has the most commercial composters and produces more compost than more than half of all the other states *combined!*
- **ACP in Existence for 15 years:** ACP has been in continuous existence for 15 years, representing some of the composters of California. It makes sense that folding it into the USCC, will help to bring all its institutional experience to bear, to benefit USCC's presence in this important and unique market. ACP and USCC can now, in partnership, come to represent all the composters in this large state, leveraging the extensive experience of its Board, members and management, for the benefit of all California composters, organics generators, equipment and service providers and compost marketers in this State.
- **CalRecycle Working Relationship:** ACP members and principals have had an ongoing productive working relationship with the main organics agency in our state, CalRecycle. ACP Board, members and management continue to work with CalRecycle on implementing compost market expansion projects ongoing. USCC will benefit from being able to work through ACP to engage also with CalRecycle, without losing any of its current presence and existing relationships.
- **Bridge California Members to National:** While it is generally acknowledged that "all compost markets are local", even in California, getting all the composters to work together on state issues is a full time job for any organization. While ACP is devoted to doing this job, at the same time, it can provide USCC members in California a formal "bridge" to have members feel a sense of continuity between their "local" California market activities and seamless integration with the national activities and focus of the USCC. This will create a two way communication from State to National, and back; a positive result for any California composter member of USCC.

- Tighter Camaraderie between California Composters and National: Reciprocally, ACP can help to provide both "eyes and ears" as well as representation for the USCC and USCC members in other states of the Union. For example, if we adopt our proposed structure (see next section), every basic state member will get the monthly ACP Newsletter, and USCC Board, staff and other selected members will be able to receive that ongoing communication to keep abreast of the State Chapter's activities in California.
- Help in Chapter and State to Expand Local Compost Markets: As per ACP's mission, State Chapter members will benefit from ACP's ongoing mission to expand compost markets—compost quantity and quality, i.e. price!—in California, no matter their level of membership.

### How ACP Can Be a USCC State Chapter – Proposed Structure

The method for becoming and maintaining ACP State Chapter status within USCC can easily follow the procedure already laid out by USCC (referred to in the opening paragraph of this letter). Since ACP is already a non-profit, we would simply follow those guidelines. In addition, in our attached proposal, because ACP is already a *professionally run and managed association*, it has, historically, had a larger budget than what could be supported by only 10% of the USCC dues as outlined in the Procedure. So, as seen in our attached proposal, we propose adjusting the ACP dues to be more in line with the USCC dues structure.

Additionally, we propose to offer two levels of membership in ACP as a USCC State Chapter: 1) "Basic" and 2) "Supporting".

- Basic: The "Basic" level will be based on the 10% dues that ACP will be receiving, and
- Supporting: The "Supporting" level will be an additional dues amount based on the type of member that is joining, for which the ACP Supporting members will receive significant additional value, and access to being more fully engaged in California market expansion activities. The main feature of this will be special access to ACP's Local "Organics Marketing System," which makes operational ACP's mission for its Supporting members of supporting them to expand the quantity and quality (i.e. price!) of compost being sold in California.

We believe that the additional Supporting membership dues will be well worth the additional money, and it will be incumbent upon ACP to market the extra value to "upgrade" from Basic USCC State Chapter ACP members to becoming Supporting ACP/USCC State Chapter members. The job of this "upgrade" will fall on the ACP Board and management, *not* upon USCC.

### Conclusion and Next Steps

In summary, we trust that the USCC State Relations Committee and the USCC Board will see, as we do, that it makes good sense to make ACP an official State Chapter of USCC. Our members, and professional management, will continue to work diligently both at the national level, and the State level to promote compost utilization by all levels of users in all markets. We believe that USCC has laid out very reasonable and practical steps, starting with this request letter, as step #1. And our Board, members and management are prepared to follow and comply with the remaining steps outlined in the Procedures, already laid out by the USCC State Relations Committee.

Association of Compost Producers  
"We Build Healthy Soil"

We are all very eager to have your positive consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



Jeff Ziegenbein  
ACP President of the Board  
Deputy Director Operations  
Inland Empire Regional Composting Authority  
[www.healthysoil.org](http://www.healthysoil.org)



Dan Noble  
Executive Director

c Wayne King  
Frank Franciosi