

## Organic Materials Sector Group Minutes, Wednesday 9 June 2021

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- Location:** Microsoft Office Teams
- Present:** Chris Purchas (Tonkin + Taylor), Daniel O'Carroll (Living Earth), Lisa Hack (SLR Consulting Ltd), Richard Fine (Biopak), Paul McGuire (Envirofert Limited), Kate Parker (Scion), Elena Izaguirre (Auckland Council), Liz Stanway (Xtreme Zero Waste)
- In attendance:** Sarah Pritchett (Facilitator) WasteMINZ
- Apologies:** Joe Buist (Revital Group), Daniel Yallop (Envirowaste)

Welcome and introduction from Kate Parker who has been seconded on to the committee in lieu of Dawn Smith who has changed jobs.

**1. Meeting open, apologies and agenda:**

**2. Previous minutes of 9 March**

*Accepted*

**3. Agenda items**

**Updates**

- **PFAS in compostable packaging (Sarah)**

PFAS is sometimes added to fibre based compostable packaging to provide water and oil resistance.

- A paragraph on PFAS has been put on the WasteMINZ' Organic Materials Sector Group page acknowledging that PFAS is an emerging issue overseas for compost that contains fibre based compostable packaging website.
- No update from Kim (due in July)
- Testing is underway for 3 commercial composting sites to have samples tested to determine presences of PFAS.

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- **Food Waste Summit focus (Sarah)**

Te Hui Moumou Kai o Aotearoa (New Zealand's first food waste summit) was held in Māngere on March 22. It was very well attended and feedback was positive, with people reporting they had made connections for potential collaborations. One of the themes to come out of it was how to get householders to value food by connecting them to the producer of food items so they realise how much work and resources goes into different food items. For the main Love Food Hate Waste campaign of the year in September, Sarah is talking to a couple of different organisations to collaborate on some online content that encourages householders to value their food beyond the monetary value.

- **Composting trials and research**

- Update from Scion and MPA –
  - Scion: The WMF-funded home composting trial is still in progress, with composting and sample analysis due to finish late July. The WMF funded home composting finishes end of July and the reporting is due to MfE by the end of August.
  - The Magazine Publishers Association have not yet begun their trials, but will follow Scions' protocols.

- Update from the Ministry for the Environment

**Research into home composting and compostable packaging**

The Ministry for the Environment is working with a market research company to investigate the extent of home composting of both food scraps and compostable packaging to understand willingness to compost and barriers and the impact of housing intensification. This research will be made public and is expected in July/August.

- **Clopyralid (Sarah/Chris)**

- A Consumer Magazine NZ [article](#) was published in May after Consumer NZ tested some commercial compost that consumers had reported had cause damage to tomato and other susceptible plants. The article drew on the previous work of WasteMINZ. The article reports:

“When we asked operators whether they were still testing for this contaminant, just 14 of 33 replied. Nine said they were testing. Five others advised they didn't process green waste, one of the main sources of clopyralid.”

One brand of compost was identified by Consumer has having clopyralid well above detection levels. This compost has since been pulled from the shelves but the Consumer article noted:

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“[The compost] contained material originally sourced from Meadow Mushrooms. Based in Canterbury, Meadow Mushrooms makes 1200 tonnes of compost a week to grow its mushrooms. The compost is made using wheat straw and chicken manure.”

This indicates that commercial composters who do not use greenwaste but include chicken manure or mushroom compost should also be testing for clopyralid. One of the committee members will work with Meadow Mushrooms to try and sort out this issue.

- An article has been written by Sarah Pritchett for the NZ Landscaper magazine to highlight how landscapers can help ensure clopyralid doesn't get into commercial compost.
- Chris will follow up with EPA and inform them that chicken manure *could* be a source of clopyralid in commercial compost (potentially from chickens pecking at grass, hay or straw that has been treated with clopyralid).

- **Assistance for councils looking into organic collections and processing (Sarah)**

- The consultant's list (WasteMINZ members) has been completed and will go to TAOs directly.
- Daniel Yallop has drafted the checklist and sent it to Liz and this has also gone to the TAO Forum.

- **CCC recommendations**

- CCC summary is mostly high level but specifically for the waste sector recommends that by 31 December 2022 the government should have finalised the revised waste strategy with goals to:
  - Reduce biogenic methane waste emissions to at least 40% below 2017 levels by 2035.
  - Ensure, by 31 December 2026, that all landfills (except farm fills) that accept organic waste have effective gas capture systems.
  - Prioritise and fund ongoing data collection across the waste sector.

- **Paper in composting and impact on carbon emissions reduction from different processing systems**

- Sector Group member Kaicycle is interested in investigating the potential of non-recyclable fibre waste streams for composting and is interested in any data on this issue, e.g. how much paper and cardboard is being landfilled around the country and is there a case for it as a compost input? Christchurch City Council looked at composting paper and cardboard but it did not stack up on a large scale as it creates issues such as too much carbon and a phosphorus imbalance. It also needs to be shredded which adds an extra process. It would be more likely to work for small scale community initiatives such as Kai Cycle where paper would provide a balance to the food waste. As some councils are choosing a food waste only system they may need additional sources of carbon.
- Kai Cycle will provide a case study on their trial before the next sector group meeting.

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- **Investigating emissions footprints of different organic waste processing methods**

A sector group member suggested that following on from the Committee's submission to the Climate Change Commission, a holistic research piece be instigated that includes the carbon impacts of applying organic products to soil, carbon savings from displaced synthetic fertiliser, transport, emissions embodied in infrastructure and looks at co-benefits like flooding mitigation with increased soil carbon, jobs created, impact on actions further up the waste hierarchy, etc. It could also include carbon sequestration benefits and whether carbon credits can be given through use of compost by farmers and landscapers etc. The committee will kick this off through a literature review on the topic followed up by seeking research partners if necessary to do NZ focused work.

- **Revolve article:** Lisa Hack will write an article for 23 July deadline

- **Ideas for organic materials sector group awards**

- Industry heroes – business or individual perspective
- Research recognition
- Research pitch idea – some funding towards it

#### 4. AOB

- **Submission to Packaging Forum Compostable Packaging Use Case**

Chris and Sarah will put together a submission from the Organic Materials Sector Group. The use case is broader than the WasteMINZ position paper. Reiterate position statement or suggest if there is a good case that a product is to be made compostable then all of them should be.

#### Action items from this meeting:

Date raised	Action Point	Deadline	Allocated to	Status
9/06/21	PFAS Testing offer - Sarah to follow up with Daniel and Liz	14/06/21	Sarah	In progress
9/06/21	Daniel to provide more information regarding Meadow Mushrooms to Chris to feed back to EPA	18/06/21	Daniel and Chris	In progress
9/06/21	Collate lit review on or collaborating with researchers – Lisa and Sarah	1/7/21	Lisa and Sarah	Meeting set
9/06/21	Sector group submission on Packaging Forum use case	18/06/21	Chris and Sarah	In progress
9/06/21	Sarah to circulate invite from CCC re their final recommendations	14/06/21	Sarah	Completed
9/06/21	<b>Revolve article:</b> Lisa Hack will write an article for 23 July deadline	23/07/21	Lisa	In progress

Finished 2.07pm.