



**Sonoma
Compost
Company**

Organics Recycling Update



Who We Are



Alan Siegle, Partner/Controller, Operations Manager

Alan's agricultural experience began in Bennett Valley in 1977 where he operated a vegetable and flower farm which developed into a successful wholesale flower business. Currently, he is a partner in a family-owned 120 acre walnut farm in the Sacramento Valley.

At Sonoma State University, Alan taught Ecological Food Production at and oversaw compost operations at their campus gardens. In 1985, he collaborated with Will Bakx to develop Bennett Valley Farm Compost, a large scale compost operation that produced products to meet the soil amendment needs of local farmers and landscapers. In 1993 the partnership expanded into Sonoma Compost Company, a regional composting operation which sprang from desire of the community to develop a regional compost operation in Sonoma County.

"Being part of a small business that supports a rich and vibrant agricultural community is very satisfying. It has been especially important to me to develop an interactive relationship with our customers. Wonderful results include that we support our local community by providing quality products that folks want, that these materials help rebuild depleted soils, and that we are part of keeping an amazing resource from being landfilled."

Will Bakx, Partner/Soil Scientist, Technical Advisor

Will is co-founder and partner of Sonoma Compost Company and is the technical advisor for the company's composting operation. Will started his career in composting and sustainable agriculture in 1980 at Sonoma State University, where he managed the student Food Production Garden. During his tenure at Bennett Valley Farm Compost Company, he managed the composting operations and conducted a compost market study that identified the need in the community for quality soil amendments.



"Soil health is the foundation of a sustainable community. For us, to take organics that were previously destined to be landfilled and to transform these to rich, soil building products is very gratifying. When people use these products they reconnect to the land and experience the joy of growing food and beautifying their homes. It is a great reward to witness this work sprouting so much life."

Under his management, Sonoma Compost Company has become recognized as a model composting facility producing organic (OMRI Listed) and biodynamic (Demeter certified) materials for farmers and landscapers.

Will received a BA in Environmental Studies and Planning in 1985 and an MS in Soils Science from UC Berkeley in 1988. Since 2006 he has been adjunct faculty teaching Agricultural Composting at the Santa Rosa Junior College and serves as Chair of the SRJC Sustainable Agriculture Advisory Committee.

Dear Friends and Customers

Sonoma Compost Company launched our composting operation at the Central Disposal Site in 1993. Since then, we have worked with the community to divert nearly 1.5 million tons of yard debris and wood scraps away from disposal in the landfill and into quality, organic compost and mulch products used right here in Sonoma County.

Part of a public/private partnership, and under contract to the Sonoma County Waste Management Agency, Sonoma Compost Company has been a partner in developing an efficient and cost-effective composting operation that has been instrumental in helping the County meet State diversion goals of decreasing landfill disposal by 50%. Currently, Sonoma County diverts about 100,000 tons of material away from the landfill and into our composting operation where they are turned into soil building amendments used to enrich Sonoma County soils.

Beyond recognizing the importance of reducing waste in landfills, Sonoma Compost Company has always viewed yard debris as a resource to be utilized to nourish our local soils, not a waste product to be managed. As a result, our commitment has been to producing the highest quality composts and mulches in the industry and designing these products to meet the needs of Sonoma County growers. Our product line has been developed to provide a variety of materials that suit the grape grower, the small farmer, the landscaper and the backyard gardener.



How we came to be....

1985: Bennett Valley Farm Compost Company began an on-farm compost operation, producing soil amendments using agricultural by-products for small organic farmers and local growers.

1991: BVFC implemented a pilot yard debris program in Santa Rosa and Rohnert Park that laid the foundation for a regional compost facility.

1992: BVFC conducted backyard compost education programs for the Cities of Santa Rosa and Rohnert Park.

1993: Sonoma Compost Company was born when BVFC partnered with the SCWMA and Empire Waste Management to develop a county-wide regional compost facility to divert organics from the landfill.

1998: SCC assumed the yard and wood debris composting operation as sole operator.

2002: SCC collaborated with Healdsburg and Empire Waste Management to institute the County's first food scrap composting pilot project.

2004: SCC began providing ground yard debris to the Santa Rosa Laguna Treatment Plant for composting biosolids.

2006: SCC began working with local agricultural operations to assist in disposing of compostable agricultural by-products in a sustainable and economic manner.

2006: Compost operations expanded to include vegetative food scrap composting for all County residents.

2009: SCC worked with SCWMA and the City of Sebastopol to conduct a successful residential "all-food scrap" composting pilot for City residents.

2011: In collaboration with the City of Sonoma, SCC to instituted the first municipal commercial food scrap composting program in the County.



Local Business/Local Benefits

Sonoma Compost Company embraces the principle of supporting local businesses. We understand that a healthy local economy relies on local businesses to produce quality products made of local goods and utilizing local support services. What better place to demonstrate these principles than here in Sonoma County?

Locally-owned businesses provide community jobs, support local non-profits and provide our local flavor, character and personality. Local businesses assure more consumer options and the convenience, and goods and services at lower prices than large-scale competitors.



“Hauling materials for Sonoma Compost keeps half of my 25 drivers busy.”
Toby Giacomini,
Toby’s Trucking



Sonoma Compost Company contracts with local haulers for all of our deliveries and wherever we can, we use local vendors such as bookkeeping services, print and sign shops, insurance and other

support services. In addition, we wholesale our products to local soil dealers, and local landscaping companies utilize our products as part of their business.

Sonoma Compost Company further supports cottage industries by providing inexpensive recycled dimensional lumber for local craftspersons and builders.

The recycled feedstock used in our operation is generated and processed in Sonoma County and is used to replenish Sonoma County soils and businesses.



“In Sonoma County, the circle of use and reuse is best demonstrated at Sonoma Compost.”
Jim Torrens, Two Rock Enterprises

“As a member of Sonoma County GoLocal Co-op, Sonoma Compost exemplifies the GoLocal mission in action. It’s easy to see that Sonoma Compost’s products and services provide direct environmental benefits to our region. But Sonoma Compost has a further depth of commitment to the GoLocal mission by consistently using local vendors to support local jobs, utilizing local trucking contractors for deliveries, by partnering with government agencies to help provide creative solutions to our regional municipal needs, and by their extensive partnerships with local schools and organizations.”
Janeen Murray,
Board Member,
Sonoma County GoLocal Co-op

Municipal Partnerships

The Sonoma County Waste Management Agency (SCWMA) is a Joint Powers Authority comprised of representatives from each of the nine cities and the County of Sonoma.



Sonoma Compost Company operates under contract to SCWMA and has been a collaborative partner in developing and expanding programs to assist in meeting local AB939 diversion goals since the inception of the yard debris program in 1993.

Through the Sonoma County organics recycling program, Sonoma County has diverted nearly 1.5 million tons of yard debris and wood scraps since 1993. As part of our ongoing commitment to the community and the environment, Sonoma Compost Company has taken a leadership role in identifying and implementing new programs that direct discards from the landfill and into the organics recycling program wherever possible.



Before and after images from a Mulch Madness landscape renewal in the City of Petaluma.

Collaborative Partners:

Some of the projects Sonoma Compost Company has participated in with member cities:

City of Sonoma:

Sonoma Compost was integral in helping the City of Sonoma establish the first commercial food scrap program in the County. Presently nearly every commercial kitchen in the City is directing food scraps to composting instead of to the landfill! The City Council affirmed the program by establishing a rate structure that encourages businesses to participate.

City of Petaluma:

We provide significant support to the City of Petaluma's "Mulch Madness", a successful lawn-to-water-conserving landscape program. Over 300,000 square feet of lawn have been removed in the City and converted to water efficient landscapes and food production gardens!

City of Santa Rosa:

Sonoma Compost Company provides a "bulking agent", to the City of Santa Rosa's Laguna Wastewater Treatment Plant for blending with biosolids. This is an integral part of assuring an efficient and cost effective waste water treatment operation for the four member cities, Santa Rosa, Rohnert Park, Sebastopol and Cotati.

Fostering Goodwill...

Last year, Sonoma Compost Company donated over 850 cubic yards of compost and mulches to 92 school, community and kitchen gardens. Our intent is to support youth and the community in establishing a more direct link to soil health and the food we consume. Participating in growing healthy and nourishing produce can provide a lifetime of benefits in improved eating habits. Supporting the formation of school and community gardens in Sonoma County is key to this goal. What better place to demonstrate soil building and food self sufficiency than right here in our own community?

Each year Sonoma Compost Company conducts tours, workshops and classes. In addition, SCC attends community events to share information on topics ranging from backyard and vermi-composting to how the application of compost can help rebuild depleted soils.

Community Resource Website
www.sonomacompost.com
The Sonoma Compost website is loaded with valuable information regarding the use of our products and serves as a resource for issues pertinent to growers and composters.



Getting the Word Out

Tours • Presentations • Classes • Demonstrations

Sonoma Compost Company is a valuable resource both locally and to the broader community.

In the recent past, SCC has provided compost site tours to local school children from the Bay Area, elected officials from around the State, and international delegations from Japan, Australia, the Philippines, the Ukraine and Germany.

Sonoma Compost Company provides compost presentations locally to Master Gardeners, garden clubs and agricultural and sustainability associations, as well as providing periodic updates about the compost program to Chambers of Commerce, Rotary Clubs, Granges and other community groups.

The SCC resident soils scientist teaches classes at SRJC and to community groups on topics such as Organic Viticulture, Integrated Pest Management, Introduction to Sustainable Agriculture, Soil Ecology, Backyard Composting, On-Farm Composting, Composting at Schools, Composting with Worms, and Biodynamic Composting .

SCC participates on community events such as Ag Day, Earth Day, and other local fairs and forums such as the International Heirloom Expo.

Sonoma Compost Company was recently awarded the Green America "People & Planet Award" in recognition for being one of one of America's best green small businesses.

The award recognized SCC as being an innovative business that integrates environmental and social considerations into its business strategy, and is active in serving the local community.

SCC is doubly pleased to donate our \$5000 prize to an amazing local nonprofit. Daily Acts will utilize this contribution to continue their good work encouraging changes in daily actions to create a greener, more self-sustaining community.



...Through Commitment to Community

“Sonoma Compost has been a key partner in helping the Ceres Community Project develop our new Community Garden as well as the gardens at our new building. They have been a big “yes” for whatever we need -- providing over 100 cubic yards of organic compost and mulches as well as arranging for delivery of the many loads of donated material. Because of their help, we now have a thriving garden that provides vibrant, fresh produce for our clients dealing with serious illness, and that also provides an opportunity for the teens we work with to learn about growing local food. Sonoma Compost is a generous partner with an amazing commitment to community.”

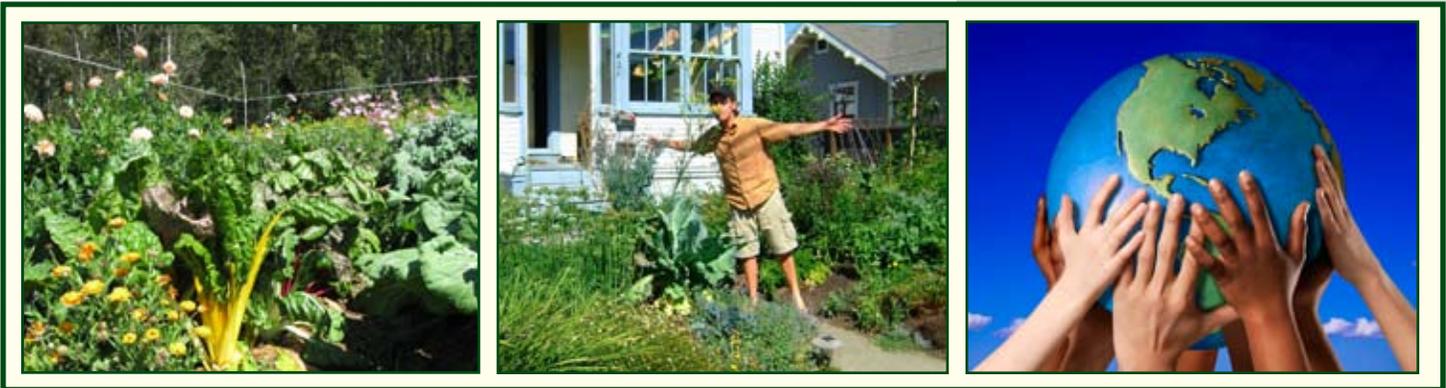
Sara McCamant, Garden Coordinator
Ceres Community Project

“As if being a great local green business that makes amazing organic and locally recycled compost and mulches wasn't enough, Sonoma Compost goes above and beyond in serving our communities. Sonoma Compost has consistently stepped up to support Daily Acts, our partners and countless other good causes. In efforts such as the 350 Home and Garden Challenge and in being a major advocate for saving water and getting more people growing food, Sonoma Compost is always the first one willing to step up, take action and do whatever they can to make our communities more rich and resilient.”

Trathen Heckman
Director, Daily Acts

Together we are
Community...

Sonoma Compost regularly supports community programs



“Sonoma Compost and the Climate Protection Campaign have worked together for years to develop and implement solutions for reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the solid waste sector. Sonoma Compost’s technical expertise is invaluable for finding ways to keep organics out of the landfill so that they don’t produce methane, a dangerous greenhouse gas. The company has been a strong financial supporter of the Climate Protection Campaign’s Business for Clean Energy program since its inception.”

Barry Vesser
Climate Protection Campaign



Industry Leader

Because our award-winning approach to yard debris is the production of quality products while protecting the environment, private industry and governmental jurisdictions around the State look to the experience and perspective of Sonoma Compost Company for guidance and direction in developing methodology for program development. As the industry grows and evolves, it is important that we have regulations and practices that ensure responsible operations and support a healthy compost infrastructure.

Sonoma Compost Company participates in numerous State stakeholders workgroups to provide input on statewide rules affecting composting operations including water quality, pesticides, air quality and compost regulations. The SCC focus is develop regulations that protect the environment while supporting a viable composting industry.

“Sonoma Compost grew from a good idea in the early 1990s to become the significant regional compost manufacturing business that today is an important resource for Sonoma County. There are over 100 permitted compost facilities in California. Of those, only a few rise to the top as examples of doing it right. Sonoma Compost has set the standard for how a compost manufacturing business should be run. Sonoma Compost is an important resource for the compost industry, actively working with state regulators and trade associations to help nurture, grow, and protect the compost industry.”

*Matthew Cotton
Integrated Waste Management Consulting,
LLC*

We appreciate Sonoma Compost’s active participation in the California Organics Recycling Council. They have been instrumental in working to safeguard the compost industry and improve regulations that protect the environment and produce quality compost for a healthy future. The Board relies on composters like Sonoma Compost to provide operational experience and insight that will assure we are considering customer needs, and protecting against potential pitfalls to a sustainable organics industry.

*Michele Young,
California Organics Recycling Council, Chair*

“The Miramar Greenery, a commercial compost facility operated by the City of San Diego, has sent many staff to learn from the experience of SCC. Will Bakx and SCC have been excellent hosts throughout the years, allowing San Diego staff to learn firsthand from their experience creating high quality compost. SCC has regularly and openly shared processing techniques that other companies would consider trade secrets. San Diego appreciates that the business model of SCC allows for sharing because a core belief of the co-owners is that the success of other facilities leads to success for the entire organics recycling industry.”

*Renee Robertson
Environmental Specialist
Miramar Greenery, San Diego*

Diversification Programs and Local Partnerships

Sonoma Compost Company has been a collaborative partner with the County and Cities of Sonoma County to develop effective and cost-efficient organics diversion programs. As of 2012, Sonoma Compost Company recycles 100,000 tons of material annually, turning materials that were once landfilled into valuable soil building amendments.

Food Scrap Processing and Composting

Sonoma Compost Company partnered with local haulers to implement the first food scrap collection pilot program in the County. This program in Healdsburg led to the implementation of a county-wide vegetative food scraps collection program for residents, an “all-food scrap” pilot program in Sebastopol and most recently, a commercial vegetative food scrap collection program in the City of Sonoma. SCC has been instrumental in identifying and overcoming potential obstacles by providing education and support to participating restaurants, markets and other commercial food providers.



Composting Agricultural By-products

Sonoma Compost Company partners with agriculture, to identify agricultural by-products as potential feedstock for the compost operation. SCC conducted a pilot program to assess the utilization of chicken feathers in compost and the project went full scale in October of 2006. This partnership has saved poultry processors higher transportation and disposal costs, while providing a valuable nitrogen amendment to the compost.



Currently wineries, and potentially apple processors and breweries, can direct vat wash water to SCC for use as an irrigation substitute. This provides a substantial cost savings for local businesses and provides an environmentally friendly means of maintaining moisture requirements in compost piles.



Wood Debris and Firewood Recycling

Sonoma Compost Company sorts all incoming lumber and culls all reusable dimensional lumber for reuse. By “high-grading” this materials, and making it available at affordable prices, we support local enterprise. In addition, logs from yard debris are cut into rounds and split as firewood for sale to the public.



Quality Products made with Care

Sonoma Compost Company operates on the premise that rebuilding healthy soils for agriculture is also closely connected to helping reduce waste and to sustaining the environment. SCC demonstrates ongoing flexibility by adapting to local conditions and feedstock streams, maximizing diversion opportunities while developing science-based, high quality soil amendments. SCC operates the only “closed-loop” recycling program in the County - yard debris that is generated here is recycled here and returned to local soils to complete the recycling loop.

Sonoma Compost Company products are made from recycled yard trimmings, vegetative food scraps and agricultural by-products that are carefully selected to produce the highest quality compost available.

Incoming material is sorted, cleaned, and ground. Moisture is adjusted for optimal composting conditions before the material is placed in a windrow for processing. Temperatures and composting conditions are carefully monitored to assure that weed seeds are killed and pathogen reduction requirements are met.

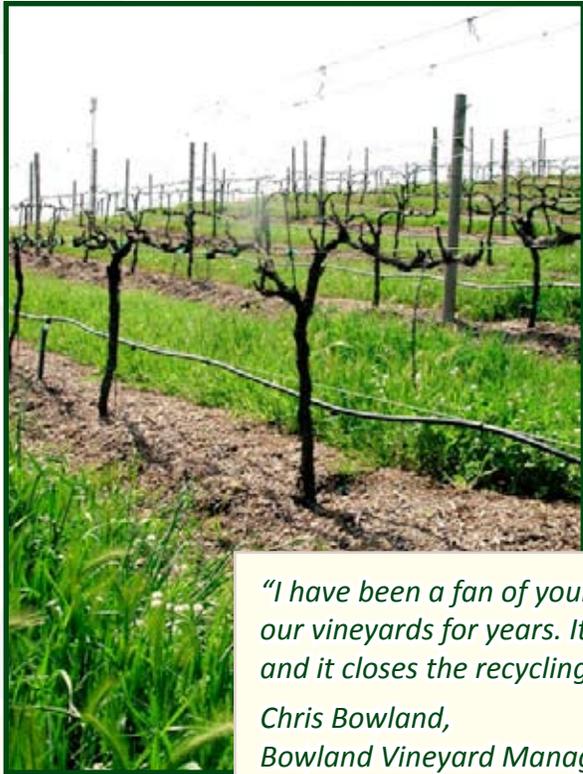
Compost is turned 10-14 times during the curing process to assure mature, finished compost that is ready for immediate application.

Sonoma Compost Company specializes in a variety of compost and mulch products for vegetable gardens and farms, flower gardens, native plantings, vineyards, orchards and berry farms, as well as for erosion control.

Sonoma Compost Company produces seasonal and specialty products such as Christmas Tree Mulch, BioDynamic Compost, topsoil and potting mix.



Building Soils Around the County



"I have been a fan of your compost for our vineyards for years. It's cost effective and it closes the recycling loop."

*Chris Bowland,
Bowland Vineyard Management*



"We use Sonoma Compost products in our kitchen garden as well as in our vineyards. Financially, it makes sense to use Sonoma Compost and to support other local businesses."

*Eytan Navah,
Lynmar Estate Winery*



"We were looking for a material with more texture than typical screened compost. Your vineyard mulch was perfect for our fall orchard and vineyard application and made a visible contribution to the water holding capacity of our soils in the following season."

*Jeffrey Creque, Ph.D.
Agro-ecology and Mill Supervision,
McEvoy Ranch*



"Of all the compost companies in Sonoma County, no one comes close to the quality that Sonoma Compost generates... without Sonoma Compost, these gardens wouldn't exist."

*Paul Kaiser,
Singing Frogs Farm*



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