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JOINT POSITION - COMPOST TO SOILS

Australia currently generates 12.9 million tonnes of organics (National Waste Report 2018), of which 7.9 million tonnes is food waste ([National Food Waste Baseline Report 2019](#)). Organics, if cleaned of contamination, can be a high quality resource which can restore soils, improve food plus fibre production and mitigate damaging climate change. In order to stimulate organics recovery in Australia, industry is asking Government to;

1. Provide programs to develop markets for compost.

Further development of urban municipal and commercial markets has the potential to utilise large volumes of compost. Markets must be sourced for this material. Key markets include mine site rehabilitation and urban redevelopment. However, long term, agriculture will be the largest market for compost, improving soil carbon, providing healthy soils and sustainable food production. Coordinated research and action that links organics diversion with the direct solutions of compost and soil carbon in agriculture is required to support market development.

2. Create a national plan for siting and protecting organic recycling facilities.

In order to meet the recycling targets proposed in the State and National Waste policies, Australia will need many new organics recycling facilities. The creation of organics recycling facilities requires appropriate sites and surrounding land buffers which protect these assets for the life of the infrastructure.

3. Assist with programs to reduce contamination in municipal and commercial waste derived compost.

Compost derived from household and commercial bins can be contaminated with plastics and other undesirable materials. Through improved education and product stewardship, contamination can be reduced and clean materials produced. Certified compostable products provide an opportunity to reduce the impact of plastic contamination and assist additional organics diversion.

4. The creation and enforcement of consistent regulatory standards for organics processing .

While most operators manufacture high quality organic products - the presence of substandard products and facilities can undermine the market and damage consumer confidence. Therefore, the creation and enforcement of national product quality and operational standards is necessary.

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