

Healthy and Sustainable Gardens Program

- Recycled Organic Compost and Mulch Offer

In the Northern Region of Melbourne, 42,000 tonnes of domestic organic waste was diverted from landfill in 2003/04. This equates to approximately 23% of the municipal waste stream being diverted from landfill and being processed into organic mulch or compost for various markets or being used for rehabilitation of landfill and extractive industry sites.

To contribute to the development of a sustainable organics processing industry and to support water conservation programs, in Spring 2005 the Metropolitan Waste Management Group (formerly Northern Regional Waste Management Group) and its member Councils offered residents the opportunity to purchase recycled organic mulch and compost for use on their gardens.

Key aims of the trial Healthy and Sustainable Gardens Program included partnership building between key stakeholders in the compost supply chain, encouraging sustainable gardening practices with the use of recycled organic material and demonstrating environmental leadership.

Objectives

- To help foster markets for the recycled mulch and compost produced from the community green waste stream (as part of the Region's commitment to its processing partner to encourage use of recycled product through its member Councils)
- Introduce the recycled product to retail garden centres not previously aware of the product
- Through customer demand, establish ongoing retail outlets for the product throughout the Region, and

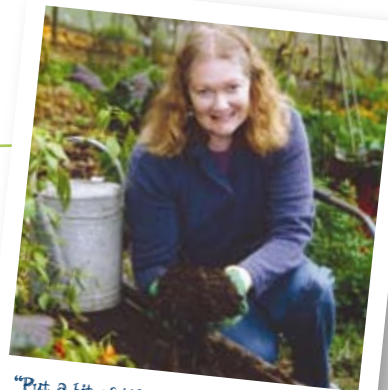
- Encourage sustainable gardening practice (low waste, low chemical fertilisers and low water gardens).

Objectives were achieved through:

- High profile marketing of the promotion
- Attractive 'one off' pricing of the product
- Free delivery offer of bulk product
- Simple ordering systems and efficient timely delivery
- Targeting people who would not normally use mulch on their garden perceiving standard purchase and delivery costs to be too costly, and
- Targeting annual mulch users currently unaware of product/ quality and environmental benefits of the recycled product.

Over the two months that the promotion ran 2,483m³ of compost and 2,591m³ of mulch was supplied to seven participating garden centres. This converted to approximately 24 000m³ of loose kerbside green organics that was recycled and supplied back to the residents, or to put it another way, the equivalent of about 200,000 120 litre MGB collections.

By purchasing products produced from residential green waste and using them on gardens, residents are helping the environment and closing the loop on recycling. Using recycled green waste is one of the most natural and environmentally friendly ways to improve soil, which in turn makes plants stronger and healthier. In addition to this, using recycled mulch can reduce garden water use by 30 per cent!



"Put a bit of life back into your garden!"
Wendy Mather, Food Farm

Metropolitan Waste Management Group

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