

Customer Testimonial

SUPPRESS[®]

ORGANIC ODOR CONTROL



Interviewer: Tim Ross, PE, Westbridge Environmental Products Manager

Interviewee: Mary Matava, Owner/ Operator/ Agronomist

Agri-Service Compost Facility, Oceanside, California - 2/13/98

Why do you need odor control at your compost facility?

Because it smells! There are several different sources of odor that we've identified. The first one is the incoming green waste and we can generally control that by grinding it as soon as we receive it. Grinding aerates the green-waste and if we can get it into windrows right away, we don't have an odor problem there. We generally do not have an odor problem in the windrow piles because they are turned regularly and after the first few turnings, there are no noxious odors.

About how high are you keeping your windrows?

They are about six feet.

They were getting up higher during the summertime, right, when I was out here before – 8-foot maybe?

Right. And even when they were 8 feet, that was not a big source of odor generation. The biggest source of noxious odors on site has been when we spread compost after it has been stockpiled for four to six months in large piles. After going through the windrow composting stage, which lasts about six weeks, it's stockpiled and then it is spread several thousand yards at a time.

Do you screen your compost for fines before stockpiling or is it straight out of the windrows?

It is straight out of the windrows into a big curing pile or a big stockpile. That stockpile could be 14-15 feet high and several thousand cubic yards. Spreading is being done for remediation at a site adjacent to our compost operation, but by the time they get around to using the stockpiled material the interior of the pile is very anaerobic. Anaerobic compost has strong alcohol-type odors associated with it. So what would happen is the spreading would occur, and in the early evening through the early morning when we don't have a lot of wind, the odors collect in the draw areas on the other side of the facility and can be extremely offensive. So what we are doing now is spreading smaller quantities at any one time, keeping it under 500 yards and then immediately after spreading, spraying it with SUPPRESS®. There were no detectable odors on or off-site after that. Another source of odor is from rain where we have a lot of run-off inside the containment pond. We use that run-off to irrigate the windrow piles. Since that water source has a very strong smell, there again we are using the SUPPRESS®.

It seems that a key player in the generation of odors is the development of anaerobic conditions, for example, with standing water and large compost piles where air cannot penetrate to the center.

Exactly.

The green-waste. How would you characterize the green-waste odor?

The green waste odor is not that bad. It's coming off the packer trucks, the curbside collection trucks. Much of the time there is grassy material that sits in green waste containers for several days. Most people do their yard work over the weekend, so by Friday it has been in the green waste container for almost a week. Then it goes into a packer truck and it gets compressed even more so when it comes off the truck it smells. But again, when we have gotten behind we've used the SUPPRESS®.

What type of delivery system do you use?

We're using a micronizing sprayer. The trade name on it is Herbie and it's battery operated. It has a six-liter container and we estimate how much SUPPRESS® we would use to make 2,000 gallons (the volume of storage in a water truck) at the recommended concentration. We then add that amount of concentrated product,



dilute with water in the micronizing sprayer, and use that volume to cover the same area, as we would have with the 2,000-gallon truck. We have found that very useful.

So you have found using SUPPRESS® has helped you, where in its absence you have seen odors.

Oh yeah, absolutely! The first time that we used SUPPRESS® we had some water that had collected off-site, but it was an area where they had spread compost and then it turned into a pond and there were some odors being generated. I literally walked through the pond, because it was real shallow, just in my Wellington boots. I just poured the SUPPRESS® in and just mixed along as I walked through it. It was within a matter of measurable time that you could see that the odor was going away. It was a real strong odor when standing in it; there was no mistaking it. The elimination of the odors was really quick. To give you an example, I have been able to smell some off-site odors, not necessarily bad odors, but tree trimming types of odors, eucalyptus-type odors off-site in the past and I can still smell some of it. But since I started using the SUPPRESS® I haven't smelled the noxious, anaerobic, alcohol-type smells.

As long as you are talking about examples of how the product works, how about talking about when you were getting odor complaints from your down-wind neighbors. You actually went to go see what their complaining was about and that's when you realized how bad it was.

It was bad! It was bad!!

That was coming from where the spreading operation was?

Yeah. It was really bad.

And you went out and used the SUPPRESS® spray?

Yeah, we went out and sprayed what they had spread because we weren't doing the spreading. I went out there and sprayed and the following day I went out there and didn't smell any more offensive odors. Now, a part of that is the function of time, that the smell dissipates over time, but it was a dramatic difference.

Between the day before you applied and the day after?

Yeah. It was noticeable.

Have you ever used any other odor control products in the past?

Yes.

And what was your experience with those?

They weren't worth it. Really expensive.

And not much results?

One of them was pretty good but they wanted way too much money for it.

Have you tried any other products or just that one?

Oh, I've tried a bunch of different products and I can't even remember what they all are.

None of them worked very well?

None that I would consider working with. But as far as having odors, you know, up until the spreading, I didn't think we had a big odor problem. Once, we were in kind of a drought situation where we didn't have a lot of water and two, they weren't spreading it. It wasn't until they started spreading on the north side of the property that they got so close to homes that it really was an issue with interrupting people's lifestyles.

So you'd never had any complaints before that spreading operation?

Well, we have one guy that complains about everything. He complains about us if the city is down working on the street and he hears a truck back-up alarm. The complaints I was talking about were legitimate.

Would you recommend the product to others?

I have. Absolutely. And the reports I got back were that they have had very similar results. It was on a spreading operation and they felt it controlled their odors in a very short period of time.

Thanks for the information, Mary. Since you have worked with these products in

the field, I really wanted to document your experiences.

Yeah, that's fine. I feel real comfortable about endorsing your products. You know the very first day that we used the SUPPRESS® on the confinement pond situation, even my motor operator was there with me and he said, "What is that stuff?" The weird thing about it was it created dispersion in the water and you could see a tannish color forming within the water. So what is it?

It's an organic extract, fermentation product and organic surfactant all in one. What it is doing is binding the odors and then stimulating the bacteria that are already present in the water to eliminate future odor generation.

Very interesting, keep up the good work.

Thanks again for all the information.