NATH Sustainable Solutions announces release of a new video "Food for thought - Food waste the missing link in recycling"

Tarrytown, New York, October 26, 2011— NATH Sustainable Solutions announces release of a new video "Food for thought - Food waste the missing link in recycling". It is a good opportunity to share the video with colleagues, friends and family. It is important to continue diverting food waste from landfill. Click below to watch the video.

NATH Sustainable Solutions also wants to share some interesting figures about food waste and what the company is doing to help divert from landfill. The missing link in the recycling puzzle arena is food waste. Now, more than ever, companies and individuals should start looking at food waste as the way to reach zero waste and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

NATH Sustainable Solutions believes that treating organic waste onsite is the ideal option. There are many variables involved when putting together an organic waste diversion program. Each site is different, with its own nuances and challenges, facing many restrictions such as limited space, no green areas, only one feed stock, too much of one feed stock, labor, capital investment, etc. There are onsite sustainable solutions available for each site, no matter the complexity of your operation; it is only a matter of selecting the ideal solution for your site.

Managing Director of NATH Sustainable Solutions, Gerardo Soto, said "Landfill is a short-term solution that contaminates; it comes at a price both to organizations' bottom line and to the environment." That's why at NATH Sustainable Solutions the main focus is to divert organic from landfills, providing a number of onsite food waste solutions that not only treat waste by turning it into useful products but also save money in the process and provide environmental benefits.

Mr. Soto continues "There is little to no awareness of the damage caused when sending food waste to landfills. People hardly pay attention when discarding food waste; it is done automatically." In the United States people generate 31.7 million tons of food waste each year; that is 12.5% of the total waste stream

and the second largest component of the national waste stream. Only 2.6% of the food waste does not end up in landfills (1). Peter Marcalus NATH Sustainable Solutions NJ representative said “To put things into perspective, every day in the United States people generate approximately 86,900 metric tons of food waste; that is enough waste to fill 6,310 garbage trucks. Every day each person sends approximately 1/2 pound of food waste to the garbage; that is the equivalent of four small apples.”

Rotten food accounts for 34% of all methane emissions, and it is twenty times more damaging to the environment than CO_2. Landfills are the second largest single human source of methane emissions in the United States, accounting for 23% of all methane sources (2). Treating food waste onsite avoids the increased production of CO_2 from transportation and methane, leachate, and potential pollutant runoff into local water sources at landfills.

NATH Sustainable Solutions supports buying food locally rather than importing it from other states, eliminating the emission of thousands of tons of CO_2 per year required to transport food all over the United States. Mr. Marcalus continues “The distance that products travel from farms to the plates is insane. It is estimated that processed food in the United States travels more than 1,300 miles, and fresh produce travels more than 1,500 miles before it reaches its destination (3). In other words, it is the equivalent of someone in New York City ordering food in Dallas, Texas, and shipping to an apartment in New York every day. There is a big opportunity to make a difference in the way energy and water is used and greenhouse gases are emitted. Each consumer can make a difference when making that purchase decision.”

“One of the things that it is forgotten most often when talking about food waste is food waste reduction at source. If people are not able to measure what they buy, spoil, produce, eat, and leave over, it is hard to know where waste reduction is possible. It is vital to reduce food waste at its source as a first step before thinking about what to do with the food waste. The larger environmental damage happens after the consumption stage, where millions of tons of food waste per year are sent to landfills.” affirmed Mr. Soto.

There are technologies available to treat food and oil waste onsite that create value, turning waste into essential byproducts such as compost, sterile biomass, water, power, and heat. Most importantly, there is an opportunity to recover nutrients from food waste and generate electricity and heat from vegetable oil that otherwise would be lost when sent to landfills or to a rendering facility. Mr. Marcalus said ” Another alternative is sending food waste to a composting site; however, when a hauler has to transport food waste more than 100 miles, people have to use the same rational when buying food locally or from someone 100 miles away.”

For this scenario, it is important to consider hauling fees that have to be paid, forever a major factor when exploring using a hauler. Finally, if it’s an open site composting operation, there are CO_2 emissions that may exist. Yes, it is much better than sending it to landfill, but it’s probably not the ideal option.

Among all recycling processes (cardboard, plastic, glass, etc.), composting is the only natural way of recycling, which does not generate significant levels of CO_2, does not require significant power to transform waste into a new product, and does not emit potentially harmful byproducts. Composting can truly close the loop of recycling, using compost made from the food waste in garden beds and for landscaping on the same property where waste is generated. In the United States, by composting one day of food waste instead of sending it to a landfill, people can avoid generating greenhouse emissions, which is comparable to taking 4.5 million cars off the road for one day (4).

Corporate America and the government are focusing the majority of their funding and efforts toward recycling of cardboard and paper, plastic, aluminum, glass, and other materials, leaving the heaviest and most harmful waste, food waste, out of the recycling chain. Food waste is the last piece of the recycling puzzle; if people are able to recycle food waste, they can get closer to zero waste. Food waste, usually called wet waste, is the heaviest part of the waste stream. If people can remove wet waste from the waste stream, they can immediately save money by decreasing disposable costs, which are charged by weight, reduce CO_2 and greenhouse gas emissions, minimize vehicle traffic risks at the site, and reach sustainable goals, among many other positive things.

NATH Sustainable Solutions provides consulting services implementing cutting-edge sustainable solutions to universities, colleges, schools, hotels, nursing homes, corporate cafeterias, hospitals, supermarkets, and prisons, among other organizations. As consultants, the main focus is to help clients understand the facts about, the consequences of, and the solutions to treating food and oil waste. NATH Sustainable Solutions advises clients on implementing solutions that will help reach their environmental and corporate social responsibility targets, reduce carbon dioxide emissions, and provide environmental stewardship with clients, suppliers, and communities served. NATH Sustainable Solutions is expert in food and oil waste in the United States, providing unique sustainable solutions for any type of site.

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