

#### 4. NEW ZEALAND STANDARD FOR COMPOSTS AND SOIL CONDITIONERS

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##### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. This report was considered by the Subcommittee on 7 February 2005 when Chris Purchas of the Ministry for the Environment addressed the Subcommittee to request a financial contribution from the Canterbury Waste Subcommittee for a programme to develop a New Zealand Standard for compost and soil conditioners. Consideration of the report was postponed until the following meeting.

##### **BACKGROUND RECEIVED FROM THE MINISTRY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT**

2. "In discussion with a range of key stakeholders with an interest in the diversion of organic waste from landfill and processing of organic waste for beneficial reuse it is clear that the absence of a nationally consistent standard for compost and soil conditioners is a gap in the overall framework for the diversion and beneficial use of organic waste. There are other issues that require addressing including clearly articulating the cost-benefits of using compost and providing guidance for organic waste processors and regulatory authorities on best practice.
3. While the Ministry clearly has a role in working with a range of stakeholders on addressing these issues, we are unable to fully fund standard development. In this context the Ministry for the Environment has commitment from a range of stakeholders including local authorities and compost manufacturers to a total of (including the Ministry's likely contribution) around \$22,000. The estimated cost of adapting the Australian Standard for Composts, Mulches and Soil conditioners is \$35,000. For further background a copy of the Standards New Zealand proposal for the adaptation of the Australian Standard is attached.
4. The Ministry for the Environment would welcome the opportunity to attend the next meeting of the Canterbury Waste Working Group to discuss the development of a New Zealand Standard for composts and soil conditioners in more detail. Other topics that could be covered that may be of interest to the Subcommittee could be the Ministry's broader organic waste programme and recent waste management planning initiatives."

##### **FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

5. A contribution to the project is possible from the current 2004/05 budget.

##### **STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS**