

COMPOSTING

ACE POULTRY WASTE COMPOSTING

ACE Poultry Farm Monroe, Orange County

OBJECTIVES

- Produce a dry, high-quality compost to sell, using a coverall building;
- Increase energy savings by reducing use of under-house ventilation fans;
- Develop and implement a poultry manure management facility that can be operated year-round.

OVERVIEW

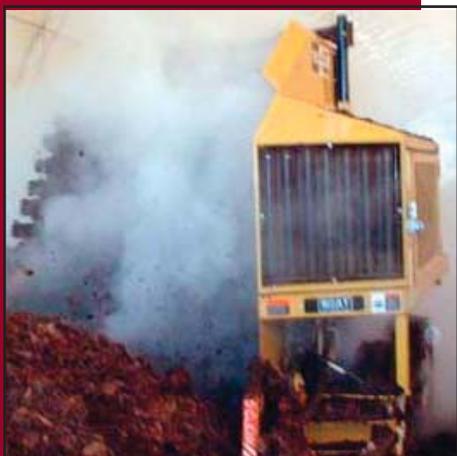
ACE Farm, in Monroe, is a family owned and operated enterprise with 130,000 laying hens producing 39 million eggs per year. Each year, these chickens also produce over 3,000 yards of manure that must be constantly managed. The objective of this New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) project was to compost 3,000 yards of chicken manure in an economic and environmentally friendly manner. A steel-framed, fabric-covered building was constructed for composting two rows of 50% chicken manure and 50% leaves. Each row is approximately 290' x 12' x 4' high. This allows ACE Farm to compost 500 yards per row, yielding 1,000 yards per batch. Early in the compost process the rows are turned with a Scat Compost Turner up to four times a week. Later, toward the end of the 10-to 12-week cycle, the turning is reduced to twice a week. The compost is then stacked to cure for at least 3 months. After curing the compost is screened and sold either as compost or mixed with soil and marketed as topsoil.

OUTCOME

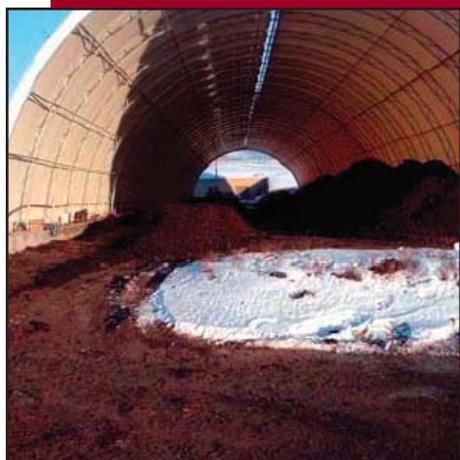
The building and Scat Turner have allowed compost to be made in all weather conditions. Compost moisture and runoff are much more manageable than on an outside pad. Labor costs are reduced and compost brings a better price because it is drier and easier to work with. The best market appears to be for topsoil, but ACE is still considering erosion control as a secondary market. In Spring 2003, ACE Farm, with the Orange County Soil and Water Conservation District, applied a compost/seed mixture to a roadside embankment to demonstrate soil stabilization of the slope. High salt content has recently become an issue of concern as a result of composting under shelter, which prevents leaching. Steps are being taken to address this issue.

Contact Information:

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Steam rises from active poultry compost windrow at Ace Farm.



Covered compost facility built with NYSERDA funds.

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