Selling compost for (stormwater/landscape/ water conservation/hort/erosion etc.) uses: Quality matters!

- particle size
- C:N ratio
- pH
- maturity/stability
- contaminants
- weed seeds
- nutrients
- biodiversity (mycorrhizae, etc.)
- plant growth tests –
  fit product to intended use:
  physically, chemically, horticulturally

Know your market!

Bioretention soil mixes - for Low Impact Development (LID) stormwater swales and "rain gardens"

- 30-40% compost – ¾-½ screen, few particles smaller that ¼
  - Stable, mature, dependable quality (STA), fits plants to be used
  - Low contaminants (esp. concern with biosolids compost: need low metals (Cu), low soluble P, N, low endocrine disruptors; yard/food waste compost needs low pesticides, low plastic)
- 60-70% coarse sand
  - Few fines (<5% passing #200 sieve)
- Dependable infiltration
  - & detention volume (pore space)
- Dependable plant growth
  - fit compost nutrient profile to plant needs

Selling compost as landscape Soil Amendment
(for stormwater, water conservation, plant growth benefits)

- Maturity – dependable enhanced plant growth (STA!)
- Nutrient levels:
  - Low soluble nutrients for water quality, but
  - Turf needs N (with adequate P)
  - Trees & shrubs need C (stable N, P, K)
  - Balanced pH, high CEC

- Mulch – sell "overs" or minimally composted wood chip as high quality mulch; differentiate and explain mulch products
  - Uniform color
  - Disease control
  - High C, low N for weed control
  - Chunky 1" screen, few fines

www.seattle.gov/util/landscapeprofessionals

Selling compost for Erosion Control

- Larger particle size (1" screen)
  - Longer chunks tie it together, resist erosion
  - Higher initial porosity
  - Resists compaction and crusting
- Range of intermediate particle sizes, but few fines
- Low P, N, low metals (for water quality)
- Low plastic contam.
- Delivery:
  - blower trucks
  - readily available
  - builders can't wait!

Best Resources & Specs

- WA Soil BMP Manual
- Soils for Salmon background science
- Stormwater Manual for Western WA
- WA Low Impact Development Technical Manual
- USCC "Seal of Testing Assurance" compost specs & tests
- WsDOT "Soil Bio-engineering" specs
- Seattle's Green Stormwater Infrastructure specs
- Compost blanket, berm, and sock specs on EPA's NPDES menu of best management practices
- National **Sustainable Sites** www.sustainablesites.org

all linked from

www.SoilsforSalmon.org

www.BuildingSoil.org

Building Soil
Foundation for Success