

# SOIL CONTROL LAB

42 HANGAR WAY  
WATSONVILLE  
CALIFORNIA  
95076  
USA

Account #: 5110182-1/2-8025  
Group: Nov.15 A #22  
Reporting Date: November 19, 2015

Howard County DPW (Alpha Ridge LF)  
6751 Columbia Gateway Drive, Suite 514  
Columbia, MD 21046  
Attn: Jeffrey Dannis

Date Received: 05 Nov. 15  
Sample Identification: HO CO GRO 4Q PL Curbside 2015  
Sample ID #: 5110182 - 1/2

| Nutrients                                       | Dry wt. | As Rcvd.  | units    | Stability Indicator:                         | Biologically              |
|---|---------|-----------|----------|--|---------------------------|
| Total Nitrogen:                                 | 1.6     | 0.94      | %        | <b>CO2 Evolution</b>                         | Respirometry Available C  |
| Ammonia (NH <sub>4</sub> -N):                   | 170     | 99        | mg/kg    | mg CO <sub>2</sub> -C/g OM/day               | 1.8 2.7                   |
| Nitrate (NO <sub>3</sub> -N):                   | 100     | 60        | mg/kg    | mg CO <sub>2</sub> -C/g TS/day               | 0.85 1.2                  |
| Org. Nitrogen (Org.-N):                         | 1.6     | 0.95      | %        | <i>Stability Rating</i>                      | <i>very stable stable</i> |
| Phosphorus (as P <sub>2</sub> O <sub>5</sub> ): | 0.50    | 0.30      | %        | <b>Maturity Indicator: Cucumber Bioassay</b> |                           |
| Phosphorus (P):                                 | 2200    | 1300      | mg/kg    | Compost:Vermiculite(v:v)                     | 1:2                       |
| Potassium (as K <sub>2</sub> O):                | 1.3     | 0.79      | %        | Emergence (%)                                | 100                       |
| Potassium (K):                                  | 11000   | 6600      | mg/kg    | Seedling Vigor (%)                           | 111                       |
| Calcium (Ca):                                   | 2.9     | 1.7       | %        | <i>Description of Plants</i>                 | <i>healthy</i>            |
| Magnesium (Mg):                                 | 0.59    | 0.35      | %        | <b>Pathogens</b>                             | Results Units Rating      |
| Sulfate (SO <sub>4</sub> -S):                   | 130     | 75        | mg/kg    | Fecal Coliform                               | 52 MPN/g <i>pass</i>      |
| Boron (Total B):                                | 15      | 8.9       | mg/kg    | Salmonella                                   | < 3 MPN/4g <i>pass</i>    |
| Moisture:                                       | 0       | 40.9      | %        | Date Tested: 05 Nov. 15                      |                           |
| Sodium (Na):                                    | 0.048   | 0.028     | %        | <b>Inerts</b>                                | % by weight               |
| Chloride (Cl):                                  | 0.26    | 0.15      | %        | Plastic                                      | < 0.5                     |
| pH Value:                                       | NA      | 7.70      | unit     | Glass  | < 0.5                     |
| Bulk Density :                                  | 24      | 40        | lb/cu ft | Metal  | < 0.5                     |
| Carbonates (CaCO <sub>3</sub> ):                | 81      | 48        | lb/ton   | Sharps                                       | ND                        |
| Conductivity (EC5):                             | 3.5     | NA        | mmhos/cm | <b>Size Distribution</b>                     | MM % by weight            |
| Organic Matter:                                 | 45.8    | 27.1      | %        | > 50   | 0.0                       |
| Organic Carbon:                                 | 22.0    | 13.0      | %        | 25 to 50                                     | 0.0                       |
| Ash:  | 54.2    | 32.0      | %        | 16 to 25                                     | 0.0                       |
| C/N Ratio                                       | 14      | 14        | ratio    | 9.5 to 16                                    | 0.6                       |
| AgIndex   | > 10    | > 10      | ratio    | 6.3 to 9.5                                   | 4.3                       |
|   |         |           |          | 4.0 to 6.3                                   | 9.2                       |
|   |         |           |          | 2.0 to 4.0                                   | 16.2                      |
|   |         |           |          | < 2.0  | 69.7                      |
| <b>Metals</b>                                   | Dry wt. | EPA Limit | units    |  |                           |
| Aluminum (Al):                                  | 9200    | -         | mg/kg    |  |                           |
| Arsenic (As):                                   | 5.6     | 41        | mg/kg    |  |                           |
| Cadmium (Cd):                                   | < 1.0   | 39        | mg/kg    |  |                           |
| Chromium (Cr):                                  | 22      | 1200      | mg/kg    |  |                           |
| Cobalt (Co)                                     | 5.0     | -         | mg/kg    |  |                           |
| Copper (Cu):                                    | 32      | 1500      | mg/kg    |  |                           |
| Iron (Fe):                                      | 12000   | -         | mg/kg    |  |                           |
| Lead (Pb):                                      | 17      | 300       | mg/kg    |  |                           |
| Manganese (Mn):                                 | 340     | -         | mg/kg    |  |                           |
| Mercury (Hg):                                   | < 1.0   | 17        | mg/kg    |  |                           |
| Molybdenum (Mo):                                | 1.4     | 75        | mg/kg    |  |                           |
| Nickel (Ni):                                    | 10      | 420       | mg/kg    |  |                           |
| Selenium (Se):                                  | < 1.0   | 36        | mg/kg    |  |                           |
| Zinc (Zn):                                      | 69      | 2800      | mg/kg    |  |                           |

Analyst: Assaf Sadeh



\*Sample was received and handled in accordance with TMECC procedures.

Account No.:  
5110182 - 1/2 - 8025  
Group: Nov.15 A No. 22

Date Received  
Sample i.d.  
Sample I.d. No.

05 Nov. 15  
HO CO GRO 4Q PL Curbside 2015  
1/2 5110182

**INTERPRETATION:**

**Is Your Compost Stable?**

|  |                          | Biodegradation Rate of Your Pile |                         |            |                    |
|--|--------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|--------------------|
| Respiration Rate                       |                          | +++++++                          |                         |            |                    |
| 1.8 mg CO <sub>2</sub> -C/<br>g OM/day |                          | < Stable                         | > < Moderately Unstable | < Unstable | > < High For Mulch |
| Biologically Available Carbon (BAC)    | Optimum Degradation Rate | +++++++                          |                         |            |                    |
| 2.7 mg CO <sub>2</sub> -C/<br>g OM/day |                          | < Stable                         | > < Moderately Unstable | < Unstable | > < High For Mulch |

**Is Your Compost Mature?**

|                        |  |               |        |        |              |
|------------------------|--|---------------|--------|--------|--------------|
| Ammonia/NitrateN ratio |  | +++++++       |        |        |              |
| 1.7 Ratio              |  | VeryMature> < | Mature | > <    | Immature     |
| Ammonia N ppm          |  | +++++++       |        |        |              |
| 170 mg/kg<br>dry wt.   |  | VeryMature> < | Mature | > <    | Immature     |
| Nitrate N ppm          |  | +++++++       |        |        |              |
| 100 mg/kg<br>dry wt.   |  | < Immature    | > <    | Mature |              |
| pH value               |  | +++++++       |        |        |              |
| 7.70 units             |  | < Immature    | > <    | Mature | > < Immature |
| Cucumber Emergence     |  | +++++++       |        |        |              |
| 100.0 percent          |  | < Immature    | > <    | Mature |              |

**Is Your Compost Safe Regarding Health?**

|                         |            |                       |     |  |  |
|-------------------------|------------|-----------------------|-----|--|--|
| Fecal Coliform          |            | +++++++               |     |  |  |
| < 1000 MPN/g dry wt.    |            | < Safe                | > < | High Fecal Coliform                    |  |
| Salmonella              |            | +++++++               |     |  |  |
| Less than 3 /4g dry wt. |            | <Safe (none detected) | > < | High Salmonella Count(> 3 per 4 grams) |  |
| Metals                  | US EPA 503 | +++++++               |     |  |  |
| Pass                    | dry wt.    | <All Metals Pass      | > < | One or more Metals Fail                |  |

**Does Your Compost Provide Nutrients or Organic Matter?**

|  |                                    |                          |                               |   |                                  |                          |
|--|------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Nutrients (N+P2O5+K2O)                           |                                    | +++++++                  |                               |   |                                  |                          |
| 3.4 Percent<br>dry wt.                           |                                    | <Low                     | > <                           | Average                                   | > < High Nutrient Content        |                          |
| AgIndex (Nutrients / Sodium and Chloride Salts)  | $((N+P2O5+K2O) / (Na + Cl))$       | +++++++                  |                               |   |                                  |                          |
| 11 Ratio   |                                    | Na & Cl                  | > <                           | Nutrient and Sodium and Chloride Provider | > < Nutrient Provider            |                          |
| Plant Available Nitrogen (PAN)                   | Estimated release for first season | +++++++                  |                               |   |                                  |                          |
| 4 lbs/ton<br>wet wt.                             |                                    | Low Nitrogen Provider> < | Average Nitrogen Provider     | > <                                       | High Nitrogen Provider           |                          |
| C/N Ratio  |                                    | +++++++                  |                               |   |                                  |                          |
| 14 Ratio   |                                    | < Nitrogen Release       | > <                           | N-Neutral                                 | > < N-Demand                     | > < High Nitrogen Demand |
| Soluble Available Nutrients & Salts (EC5 w/w dw) |                                    | +++++++                  |                               |   |                                  |                          |
| 3.5 mmhos/cm<br>dry wt.                          |                                    | SloRelease> <            | Average Nutrient Release Rate | > <                                       | High Available Nutrients         |                          |
| Lime Content (CaCO3)                             |                                    | +++++++                  |                               |   |                                  |                          |
| 81 Lbs/ton<br>dry wt.                            |                                    | < Low                    | > <                           | Average                                   | > < High Lime Content (as CaCO3) |                          |

**What are the physical properties of your compost?**

|                               |  |                       |     |   |                      |
|-------------------------------|--|-----------------------|-----|---|----------------------|
| Percent Ash                   |  | +++++++               |     |   |                      |
| 54.2 Percent<br>dry wt.       |  | < High Organic Matter | > < | Average   | > < High Ash Content |
| Sieve Size % > 6.3 MM (0.25") |  | +++++++               |     |   |                      |
| 4.9 Percent<br>dry wt.        |  | All Uses              | > < | Size May Restrict Uses for Potting mix and Golf Courses |                      |

Account No.:  
5110182 - 1/2 - 8025  
Group: Nov.15 A No. 22

Date Received  
Sample i.d.  
Sample I.d. No.

05 Nov. 15  
HO CO GRO 4Q PL Curbside 2015  
1/2 5110182

**INTERPRETATION:**

**Is Your Compost Stable?**

Page two of three

**Respiration Rate**

1.8 Low: Good for all uses mg CO<sub>2</sub>-C/g OM/day

The respiration rate is a measurement of the biodegradation rate of the organic matter in the sample (as received). The respiration rate is determined by measuring the rate at which CO<sub>2</sub> is released under optimized moisture and temperature conditions.

**Biologically Available Carbon**

2.7 Low: Good for all uses mg CO<sub>2</sub>-C/g OM/day

Biologically Available Carbon (BAC) is a measurement of the rate at which CO<sub>2</sub> is released under optimized moisture, temperature, porosity, nutrients, pH and microbial conditions. If both the RR and the BAC test values are close to the same value, the pile is optimized for composting. If both values are high the compost pile just needs more time. If both values are low the compost has stabilized and should be moved to curing. BAC test values that are higher than RR indicate that the compost pile has stalled. This could be due to anaerobic conditions, lack of available nitrogen due to excessive air converting ammonia to the unavailable nitrate form, lack of nitrogen or other nutrients due to poor choice of feedstock, pH value out of range, or microbes rendered non-active.

**Is Your Compost Mature?**

**Ammonia:NitrateN ratio**

1.7 mature

**Ammonia N ppm**

170 mature

**Nitrate N ppm**

100 mature

**pH value**

7.70 mature

Composting to stabilize carbon can occur at such a rapid rate that sometimes phytotoxins remain in the compost and must be neutralized before using in high concentrations or in high-end uses. This step is called curing. Typically ammonia is in excess with the break-down of organic materials resulting in an increase in pH. This combination results in a loss of volatile ammonia (it smells). Once this toxic ammonia has been reduced and the pH drops, the microbes convert the ammonia to nitrates. A low ammonia + high nitrate score is indicative of a mature compost, however there are many exceptions. For example, a compost with a low pH (<7) will retain ammonia, while a compost with high lime content can lose ammonia before the organic fraction becomes stable. Composts must first be stable before curing indicators apply.

**Cucumber Bioassay**

100.0 Percent

Cucumbers are chosen for this test because they are salt tolerant and very sensitive to ammonia and organic acid toxicity. Therefore, we can germinate seeds in high concentrations of compost to measure phytotoxic effects without soluble salts being the limiting factor. Values above 80% for both percent emergence and vigor are indicative of a well-cured compost. Exceptions include very high salts that affect the cucumbers, excessive concentrations of nitrates and other nutrients that will be in range when formulated to make a growing media. In addition to testing a 1:1 compost: vermiculite blend, we also test a diluted 1:3 blend to indicate a more sensitive toxicity level.

**Is Your Compost Safe Regarding Health?**

**Fecal Coliform**

< 1000 / g dry wt.

Fecal coliforms can survive in both aerobic and anaerobic conditions and is common in all initial compost piles. Most human pathogens occur from fecal matter and all fecal matter is loaded in fecal coliforms. Therefore fecal coliforms are used as an indicator to determine if the chosen method for pathogen reduction (heat for compost) has met the requirements of sufficient temperature, time and mixing. If the fecal coliforms are reduced to below 1000 per gram dry wt. it is assumed all other pathogens are eliminated. Potential problems are that fecal coliform can regrow during the curing phase or during shipping. This is because the conditions are now more favorable for growth than during the composting process.

**Salmonella Bacteria**

Less than 3 3 / 4g dry wt. Salmonella is not only another indicator organism but also a toxic microbe. It has been used in the case of biosolids industry to determine adequate pathogen reduction.

**Metals**

Pass

The ten heavy metals listed in the EPA 503 regulations are chosen to determine if compost can be applied to ag land and handled without toxic effects. Most high concentrations of heavy metals are derived from woodwaste feedstock such as chrome-arsenic treated or lead painted demolition wood. Biosolids are rarely a problem.

**Does Your Compost Provide Nutrients or Organic Matter?**

**Nutrients (N+P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>+K<sub>2</sub>O)**

3.4 Average nutrient content

This value is the sum of the primary nutrients Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Potassium. Reported units are consistent with those found on fertilizer formulations. A sum greater than 5 is indicative of a compost with high nutrient content, and best used to supply nutrients to a receiving soil. A sum below 2 indicates low nutrient content, and is best-used to improve soil structure via the addition of organic matter. Most compost falls between 2 and 5.

Account No.:  
 5110182 - 1/2 - 8025  
 Group: Nov.15 A No. 22

Date Received: 05 Nov. 15  
 Sample i.d.: HO CO GRO 4Q PL Curbside 2015  
 Sample I.d. No.: 1/2 5110182

**INTERPRETATION:**

**AgIndex (Nutrients/Na+Cl)**

11 High nutrient ratio Composts with low AgIndex values have high concentrations of sodium and/or chloride compared to nutrients. Repeated use of a compost with a low AgIndex (< 2) may result in sodium and/or chloride acting as the limiting factor compared to nutrients, governing application rates. These composts may be used on well-draining soils and/or with salt-tolerant plants. Additional nutrients from another source may be needed if the application rate is limited by sodium or chloride. If the AgIndex is above 10, nutrients optimal for plant growth will be available without concern of sodium and/or chloride toxicity. Composts with an AgIndex of above 10 are good for increasing nutrient levels for all soils. Most composts score between 2 and 10. Concentrations of nutrients, sodium, and chloride in the receiving soil should be considered when determining compost application rates. The AgIndex is a product of feedstock quality. Feedstock from dairy manure, marine waste, industrial wastes, and halophytic plants are likely to produce a finished compost with a low AgIndex.

**Plant Available Nitrogen (lbs/ton)**

4 Low N Provider Plant Available Nitrogen (PAN) is calculated by estimating the release rate of Nitrogen from the organic fraction of the compost. This estimate is based on information gathered from the BAC test and measured ammonia and nitrate values. Despite the PAN value of the compost, additional sources of Nitrogen may be needed during the growing season to offset the Nitrogen demand of the microbes present in the compost. With ample nutrients these microbes can further breakdown organic matter in the compost and release bound Nitrogen. Nitrogen demand based on a high C/N ratio is not considered in the PAN calculation because additional Nitrogen should always be supplemented to the receiving soil when composts with a high C/N ratio are applied.

**C/N Ratio**

14 Indicates maturity As a guiding principal, a C/N ratio below 14 indicates maturity and above 14 indicates immaturity, however, there are many exceptions. Large woodchips (>6.3mm), bark, and redwood are slow to breakdown and therefore can result in a relatively stable product while the C/N ratio value is high. Additionally, some composts with chicken manure and/or green grass feedstocks can start with a C/N ratio below 15 and are very unstable. A C/N ratio below 10 supplies Nitrogen, while a ratio above 20 can deplete Nitrogen from the soil. The rate at which Nitrogen will be released or used by the microbes is indicated by the respiration rate (BAC). If the respiration rate is too high the transfer of Nitrogen will not be controllable.

**Soluble Nutrients & Salts (EC5 w/w dw - mmhos/cm)**

3.5 Average salts This value refers to all soluble ions including nutrients, sodium, chloride and some soluble organic compounds. The concentration of salts will change due to the release of salts from the organic matter as it degrades, volatilization of ammonia, decomposition of soluble organics, and conversion of molecular structure. High salts + high AgIndex is indicative of a compost high in readily available nutrients. The application rate of these composts should be limited by the optimum nutrient value based on soil analysis of the receiving soil. High Salts + low AgIndex is indicative of a compost low in nutrients with high concentrations of sodium and/or chloride. Limit the application rate according to the toxicity level of the sodium and/or chloride. Low salts indicates that the compost can be applied without risking salt toxicity, is likely a good source of organic matter, and that nutrients will release slowly over time.

**Lime Content (lbs. per ton)**

81 High lime content Compost high in lime or carbonates are often those produced from chicken manure (layers) ash materials, and lime products. These are excellent products to use on a receiving soil where lime has been recommended by soil analysis to raise the pH. Composts with a high lime content should be closely considered for pH requirements when formulating potting mixes.

**Physical Properties**

**Percent Ash**

54.2 Average ash content Ash is the non-organic fraction of a compost. Most composts contain approximately 50% ash (dry weight basis). Compost can be high in ash content for many reasons including: excess mineralization (old compost), contamination with soil base material during turning, poor quality feedstock, and soil or mineral products added. Finding the source and reducing high ash content is often the fastest means to increasing nutrient quality of a compost.

**Particle Size % > 6.3 MM (0.25")**

4.9 May restrict use Large particles may restrict use for potting soils, golf course topdressings, seed-starter mixes, and where a fine size distribution is required. Composts with large particles can still be used as excellent additions to field soils, shrub mixes and mulches.

**Particle Size Distribution**

Each size fraction is measured by weight, volume and bulk density. These results are particularly relevant with decisions to screen or not, and if screening, which size screen to use. The bulk density indicates if the fraction screened is made of light weight organic material or heavy mineral material. Removing large mineral material can greatly improve compost quality by increasing nutrient and organic concentrations.

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Appendix:   | Estimated available nutrients for use when calculating application rates |
| Plant Available Nitrogen (PAN) calculations:            | lbs/ton (As Rcvd.)   |
| PAN = (X * (organic N)) + ((NH4-N) + (NO3-N))           |  |
| X value = If BAC < 2 then X = 0.1                       | Plant Available Nitrogen (PAN) 4.0                                       |
| If BAC =2.1 to 5 then X = 0.2                           | Ammonia (NH4-N) 0.20   |
| If BAC =5.1 to 10 then X = 0.3                          | Nitrate (NO3-N) 0.12   |
| If BAC > 10 then X = 0.4                                | Available Phosphorus (P2O5*0.64) 3.8                                     |
| Note: If C/N ratio > 15 additional N should be applied. | Available Potassium (K2O) 15.9   |