

30th July, 2010

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## **A RESPONSE TO THE QLD GOVERNMENTS RENEWED WASTE STRATEGY**

Firstly I would like to congratulate those responsible for the compilation of such an outstanding and far reaching document. It is without a doubt the most stimulating document which I have seen in the 17 years I have been involved in the commercial composting industry.

I found the chapter **2. CHANGING THE FOCUS** to be particularly "ground breaking", if the changes can be put in place through legislation.

Composting is not a unique industry and it is by no means an exact science. To get composting right, requires assistance and understanding from DERM with a pro-active plan to work together for the best outcomes.

### **CHAPTER 3. THE VISION**

Essential teamwork by all involved in the waste elimination/waste recycling industry is necessary for this to be achieved. I have experienced a number of flaws in current practices and unless this is rectified it will inhibit the success of composting as a major recycling tool. Composting of organic waste streams has a greater market than supplying landscapers and retailers of packaged products.

The entire Queensland rural production industry needs organic compost and to get that material to that industry and allow the producers less reliance on chemical fertilizers (which are proven to have contributed to damage to the Barrier Reef) Government, Councils and Composters need to work in harmony or this will never happen.

Proven research by the food industry reveals major shortages of food will occur in the very near future. Queensland can ensure that it plays a major role in being able to be a supplier, regardless of weather conditions, to the rest of Australia and the world. Organic soil improvers made from recycled organic waste will improve the carbon content of farm soil and help retain moisture which will insure continuity of production.

Councils are still landfilling food waste - Biosolids, Septic and Greenwaste are but a few of the essential feed stocks used for large scale composting. All of those essential feedstocks are currently being transported hundreds of kilometres OUTSIDE of Council boundary's because Councils don't want composting within their Regions.

In many cases the increased transport costs are being paid for by rate payers and the additional road maintenance costs are carried by all taxpayers. The additional Health and Safety Costs caused by increased heavy transport on our roads are rather frightening to assess!

Over the past 17 years I have been involved in commercial composting in three different Regional areas of Queensland and each have had their own individual methods and policies. At the present I am involved in commercial composting in two regions in Queensland and I am overwhelmed by the differences in approach to the disposal of organic material.

### **3.2 Strengthening the Legislation.**

This is an exciting area for strengthening Legislation which will allow the Queensland Government to really set an example. By getting its own house in order the Government can show Industry how serious it is about recycling.

The waste levy is a start.

**The follow up is essential to ensure that existing practises in many rural areas are policed.**

It is too easy to dump "out of sight" in country areas, though the tracking system is in place to police it.

#### 4. Taking Action

I am filled with enthusiasm at the prospect of this Strategy becoming a reality.

The strategic Focus and Action plan provide a lot of hope to many people in the composting Industry who have felt neglected by the lack of partnership with anyone within the Industry. Because we are at the end of the so called food chain our profile is low and very few Government or Industry personnel include us in discussions or decision making and yet ultimately we do get rid of the problem, which no one really wants to know about.

The end product is beneficial to society. It will save money, it will save water, and it will reduce our carbon emissions. Recognition and teamwork will ensure that the benefits are shared by all.

Please note newspaper article attached to this letter below.

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# Food demand to outstrip supply

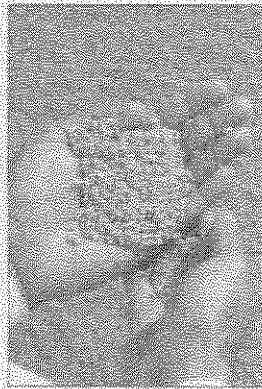
Brian Williams  
ENVIRONMENT REPORTER

FARMERS will be asked to double global food production in the next 50 years while using less water, land, energy, fertiliser and technology.

Pushed by a world population growing towards 10 billion, the impending crisis also is being driven by a culture of waste in which wealthy consumers such as Australians throw away half of all food produced.

In a just-released book, *The Coming Famine*, agriculture and science writer Julian Cribb predicts major food shortages.

He argues a confluence of scarcities of water, good land, energy, nutrients, technology, fish and stable climates will come into play as the world's population grows towards



**WARNING:** Food production must rise.

10 billion and demand grows for nutritious food.

Mr Cribb said he was not describing a Doomsday scenario, rather a call to explore the world's most urgent issue and to find solutions.

The abundance of food in the past generation has created a false sense of security and we have taken

our eye off what is possibly the most critical issue to the human future of all - is how we feed our vast population sustainably," he said. "While global food demand is set to double, just about everything needed to satisfy it is becoming much more scarce and costly."

"And while well-off consumers enjoy the cheapest food in history, they are throwing half of it away and paying farmers for it at rates that destroy large parts of global agriculture. We have created a culture of waste that cannot last."

Mr Cribb said the amount spent on agricultural research had been dramatically run down over the past 30 years by major Western producers such as Australia, the US and Germany.

This would gravely

affect technologies used to meet demand.

All of this would be complicated by restrictions in fuel supplies as peak oil took effect.

Although over-population was the main driver, an emerging issue was that populous nations such as China and India were eating much more protein as residents sought better living standards.

"We're going to have great difficulty meeting demand unless we take action now," Mr Cribb said.

Because they did not grow their own food, tomorrow's cities of 20, 30 or even 40 million people risked catastrophe if there was any disruption in food supplies.

Mr Cribb said many of the world's key food bowl regions were already critically stressed.