

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL
AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
REPORT 21
MAY 12, 2021

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COMITÉ DE L'AGRICULTURE ET
DES AFFAIRES RURALES
RAPPORT 21
LE 12 MAI 2021

EXTRACT OF DRAFT MINUTES 22
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL
AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
MAY 6, 2021

EXTRAIT DE L'ÉBAUCHE
DU PROCÈS-VERBAL 22
COMITÉ DE L'AGRICULTURE ET
DES AFFAIRES RURALES
LE 6 MAI 2021

PELLETIZED BIOSOLIDS

ACS2021-OCC-ARA-0001

CITY WIDE

That Ottawa City Council direct the General Manager, Public Works & Environmental Services (or his designate) to write to the Ministers of OMECP, OMAFRA, as well as the CFIA, in consultation with the Mayor and rural Councillors, to outline key concerns and potential considerations from Ottawa's perspective to help inform the development of the Best Management Practices aimed at pelletized biosolid producers and local farmers.

Moved by: Councillor G. Darouze

That the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee approve the addition of this item for consideration by the committee at the 6 may 2021 meeting, pursuant to section 89(3) of the procedure by-law.

CARRIED

Moved by: Councillor G. Darouze

WHEREAS the City of Ottawa's Biosolids Program was introduced in 1992, and is a critical step in Ottawa's wastewater treatment process, consisting of secondary treatment and dewatering, followed by anaerobic digestion where solids are heated and broken down, producing methane for energy and creating reusable biosolids; and

WHEREAS the Biosolids Beneficial Use Program is a major advantage to agricultural land in Ottawa, and is considered the most sustainable way for the City to reuse waste as a local resource, offer cost savings and environmental benefits, and minimize the carbon footprint for a greener city; and

WHEREAS the biosolids program is a leader in biosolids management and follows several environmentally proactive policies and practices, optimizing the beneficial use of biosolids through local agricultural land application; and

WHEREAS the City of Ottawa Biosolids Beneficial Use Land Application Program is governed by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA), the Ontario Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks (OMECPP), the Environmental Protection Act and the Nutrient Management Act, as well as the City's own policies and protocols; and

WHEREAS there has been a recent emergence of a new biosolids product offered by private sector companies - commonly known as pelletized biosolids - which differs from typical biosolids as they have been treated to further reduce pathogens through heat drying, while Ottawa's biosolids follow more strict provincial reuse and handling rules due to higher levels of bacteria, requiring additional care; and

WHEREAS the increased usage of these pelletized biosolids in recent years by local farmers has resulted in an increase in resident complaints relating to the associated odours; and

WHEREAS pelletized biosolids are classified as fertilizer products under the Canadian Fertilizers Act, regulated by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA); and

WHEREAS the City of Ottawa does not have jurisdiction over the sale and use of commercial fertilizers by the public, nor to take action in response to odour complaints associated with the use of these private products; and

WHEREAS City staff continue to engage with the Province and the Water Environment Association's Residuals and Biosolids Committee to collaborate with the industry, producers and farmers to follow best management practices on farms when using biosolid products to protect public health and the environment; and

WHEREAS it is Provincial jurisdiction to enforce and respond to odours reported as environmental spills on farms, coordinate site inspections, and provide communications to the public;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Ottawa City Council direct the General Manager, Public Works & Environmental Services (or his designate) to write to the Ministers of OMECP, OMAFRA, as well as the CFIA, in consultation with the Mayor and rural Councillors, to outline key concerns and potential considerations from Ottawa's perspective to help inform the development of the Best Management Practices aimed at pelletized biosolid producers and local farmers.

CARRIED