

In this issue – World's first nappy composting plant opens: Disposable nappies – the facts: HotRot office has the Trots: Our suppliers – Beck & Caul

World's first nappy composting plant opens

The Huggies Envirocomp Solution – the world's first commercial nappy (diaper) composting plant, utilising HotRot technology, was recently opened by New Zealand's Environment Minister the Hon Dr Nick Smith.

Representatives from local and central government, business leaders, representatives from the College of Midwives and the Royal NZ Plunket Society, the local community, and a large national media contingent joined HotRot at the opening to congratulate Envirocomp Directors Karen and Karl Upston on establishing what is thought to be a global first.

The opening is the culmination of more than 2 years of hard work by all involved since the original composting trial in 2007. (See March and July 2007 HotOff-the-Press newsletters). A young, motivated and environmentally conscious couple combined forces with leading edge HotRot and other NZ designed and manufactured technology, a global nappy manufacturer, local councils, and local investors to make it happen.

Minister Smith said: 'New Zealand prides itself on two things – firstly that we're clean and green, and secondly that we are practical and able to do the Kiwi ingenuity thing. This project brings these together. This is one of those great Kiwi ideas that I hope is not just going to be infectious in New Zealand but will also spread to other countries.'

During the initial trial Karen and Karl Upston were amazed by the number of people waiting for this type of service to be made available and prepared to travel and pay for it. People want to use disposable nappies but they don't want to have to feel guilty about it.

'These days our lives are busier and we live in a more disposable world. Mums are going back to work sooner and when they get home from work they want to spend quality time with children not washing nappies,' says Karen.

The plant will initially compost 2.5 tonnes of waste per day or the equivalent of 15,000 nappies and is able to quadruple its intake to meet demand. Envirocomp will also process adult incontinence products, and offers a user pays pick up and compost service in pre-paid bags. 'The initial demand is exceeding our expectations,' says Karl, 'and we are having to work hard to get fully operational in time to meet this demand.'

Look out for our next HotOff-the-Press to update yourself on the first compost production. Further details can be found on the Envirocomp and Huggies websites:

<http://www.envirocomp.co.nz>

<http://www.huggies.co.nz/OurProducts/TheEnvironment/Huggies-Envirocomp.asp>



NZ Minister for the Environment Nick Smith - nappy composting is 'one of those great Kiwi ideas'



Disposable nappies – the facts

- In one year, one child's disposable nappies amount to 360 kg.
- The average baby goes through 5000 nappy changes before being toilet trained.
- In New Zealand, 96% of nappy changes are disposables and these comprise 1.9% of waste to landfill.
- Sustainability of cloth and disposable nappies is similar. Disposables use raw materials, but cloth uses energy, water and detergents in washing.
- For one child over two and a half years the environmental impact of nappy wearing is roughly comparable with driving a car between 1300 and 2200 miles.
- Disposables are made of super absorbent materials, wood pulp, plastics, adhesives and elastic.
- When composted, the contents of the nappies are broken down and pasteurised. As for the constituent parts, the wood pulp degrades, but the other components are unchanged in the short term.
- The super absorbent polymers are the same as those used in horticulture for increasing water retention in soil. They therefore are a useful compost enhancer.
- The contents of disposable nappies are effectively raw sewage. Land filling this material is inappropriate.

HotRot office has the Trots

Our July Team Building event for the HotRot staff was one that took everyone by surprise - a visit to an equine establishment called 'The Horsepower Experience'. I usually relate horsepower to four wheels and a rumbling V8, so four legs and a mane were going to offer a somewhat different interpretation.

My previous horse encounters consisted of impromptu bareback attempts in my pre-adolescent days. These escapades were short lived due to being promptly thrown off so the horse could continue its preferred grazing. Needless to say, I was a bit nervous about what was to come. As it transpired, there was no need for concern.

Each of us was paired with a horse via ballot under the instruction of an experienced driver who guided us through the hands on, full pre-race procedure with regard to grooming and harnessing our steeds. A specially built dual seat sulky was then hitched behind. All of the horses have had track race experience and although retired, still love to race. We donned our silks and helmets and were off for a four lap warm up before the two lap 'HotRot Guineas'.

This is where it got interesting. There is only one place those horses wanted to be – in the lead. Racing is wheel to



wheel close quarter. Keeping the horses in check until the right time for a move up takes some skill. Wind in your face, dust, panting and the eagerness of the horses to lead make this a real buzz.

Returning to the stables afterward was time to unharness and give the horses a well deserved warm shower and dry off. A quiet drink and nibbles (for us) finished off a great afternoon which gave us all an insight to the 'business end' of harness racing.

Great storytelling by our production engineer Vic Savage!

Introducing our suppliers – Beck & Caul

It's always a major learning curve for a PR company to get a solid understanding of a client's business in order to provide the right support. This was never more relevant than with the total hands on approach shown by Beck & Caul in the development of HotRot's worldwide markets.

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Indeed, it was literally hands on as Beck & Caul staff sampled the texture of the initial premium compost discharged from one of our first large commercial units commissioned in Christchurch. Right from the earliest composter prototypes, their team came up to speed on the business of organic composting, on HotRot's innovative world beating technology, on the key benefits and advantages over other systems and on the pressing environmental need to provide efficient solutions for processing organic waste.

As our marketing partner, Beck & Caul has developed our brand and associated promotional collateral, making a valuable contribution towards establishing our global reputation. For details of their services: <http://www.beckandcaul.co.nz>

New additions to the global HotRot team

Welcome to the two latest members of the global HotRot team, Farma ROT in Poland, and Closing the Loop in South Africa. There is a growing awareness of sustainable organic waste disposal and potential reuse in these markets and both Farma ROT and Closing the Loop see a lot of long term potential as this awareness converts to action. They have chosen HotRot as their technology of choice, to assist them get an strong and credible foot-hold in their respective markets.

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GROWTH FROM WASTE

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