

## **Prince William County Approves New Organic Waste Processing Facility**

At its January 20th meeting, the Prince William Board of County Supervisors authorized an agreement with Freestate Farms LLC, a local agricultural services and production company, to construct and operate a new facility to process yard waste, food scraps and wood waste at the County's Balls Ford Road composting facility, and to provide organics waste management services at that site and at the County's landfill.

When fully developed, the Freestate facility will recycle over 80,000 tons per year of organic waste into high-value compost, soil products, and non-synthetic fertilizers; it will also generate baseload renewable energy and environmental attributes; and it will produce sustainable and locally-grown fresh fruits and vegetables for sale back into the community.

After completion of the new facility, scheduled for July 2017, Freestate, in conjunction with its technology partners, will perform several new operations and double the throughput capacity of the current Balls Ford Road facility. New processes/operations include:

- Advanced Aerobic Composting of Yard Waste – A reversing aerated static pile composting system will process leaves, grass, and agricultural waste to produce high-quality nutrient-rich compost products. Process odors will be captured and scrubbed through biofilters.
- Anaerobic Digestion of Food Waste – A fully enclosed and airtight tank reactor will process food waste and other organic material (e.g., fats, oil and grease) into both high-quality nutrient rich fertilizer products and biogas (methane) for use in renewable energy applications.
- Combined Heat and Power Production – Raw biogas produced during the anaerobic digestion process will fuel a combined heat and power generator set to provide heat and power to the Balls Ford Road facility, with surplus renewable energy available for off-site uses, potentially including transportation fuel.
- Greenhouse Operation - Freestate will construct and operate an integrated commercial-scale controlled environment agriculture greenhouse at the Balls Ford Road site to sustainably grow fresh local produce using the renewable energy, compost, and fertilizer products generated on-site.

The state-of-the art Freestate facility will provide several benefits to the County:

- A long-term solution to yard and food waste management
- Foundation for developing a comprehensive County organic waste management program
- Increased organics processing capacity
- Waste diversion from landfill to extend landfill life (based upon the most recent County waste audit, approximately 30% of the waste entering the landfill is organic material that could be recycled)
- Increased County recycling rate
- Private investment in our community and 20-25 new jobs

Under the approved agreement, Freestate will process the organic material currently received at the Balls Ford Road and landfill facilities using existing processes beginning on July 1, 2015. Importantly, there will be no interruption in current services because construction of the new facility will be phased in over a two-year period, which will allow sufficient space for the existing operations to continue. The term of the agreement is 20 years with the option to extend for two five-year periods.

The Solid Waste Citizen Advisory Group was kept informed and educated throughout the procurement process. Following a full briefing of the proposed agreement prior to going to the Board of County Supervisors, the Group offered its unanimous support for the agreement.

For more information about this project and other Prince William County Solid Waste Division programs and services visit [www.pwcgov.org/trashandrecycling](http://www.pwcgov.org/trashandrecycling). For more information on Freestate Farms LLC visit [www.FreestateFarmsVA.com](http://www.FreestateFarmsVA.com)

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