

Horticultural Weed Barrier Mats From dairy Manure – Phase 2 FNE04-515

Freund's Farm, Inc.
Matthew Freund
PO 636
East Canaan, CT 06024
860-824-7524
Benjamin.Freund@Snet.net

Goals

Refine the process for manufacturing self-fertilizing horticultural weed control mats out of dairy manure.

Farm Profile

230 mature dairy cattle rotationally grazed on 400 acres. 775 total crop acres including 200 acre woodlot and 175 acres of corn for silage. Barns and home heated by methane digester.

Cooperators

Dr. Medwick Byrd, North Carolina State University is testing fibers and will eventually produce mats for field testing.

Perry Gardner is project engineer.

Patricia Millner is technical advisor from USDA Maryland and will run field tests.

Matthew Freund is production farm manager and overseer of project.

Project Activities

Manure fibers have been analyzed through feeding changes. Processes are being developed to treat waxed cardboard in economic fashion so that it may be used as pulp source. This aspect has been the major project delay. Shippers have been contacted. NCSU needs to decide on a final package and produce the contracted mats.

Approximately 15000 lbs of manure fiber needs to be shipped to North Carolina from Connecticut. Field trials will then be conducted to prove the effectiveness of the mats.

Results

To date we are waiting for NCSU to finish its testing work so we can proceed with manufacture and testing.

Conditions

So far conditions are normal and results should be valid.

Assessment

Once complete we hope to show the viability of manure based mats competing with plastic covers.

Outreach

We have been cited in several magazines and newspapers. Local NRCS, Extension, and the Department of Environmental Protection are all aware of the project and are following the results closely. Hopefully we will have successes to share in season. At that time a field day will be planned.

Respectfully submitted,

Benjamin Freund
2/28/05