



**US Composting
Council®**

US Composting Council Position Statement: Compost Claims of Food Scrap Dehydrators

Composting is a production process that requires specific parameters to be met in order to call a product “compost” for beneficial use in plant and soil management. In fact, The American Association of Plant and Food Control Officials (AAPFCO) defines compost as the *“product manufactured through the controlled aerobic, biological decomposition of biodegradable materials. The product has undergone mesophilic and thermophilic temperatures, which significantly reduces the viability of pathogens and weed seeds, and stabilizes the carbon such that it is beneficial to plant growth. Compost is typically used as a soil amendment but may also contribute plant nutrients.”*¹ The material produced by some systems can be useful in the composting process, but their output does not qualify as compost under this definition.

The US Composting Council advocates for the commercial composting industry, which represents billions of dollars of investment and livelihood of those employed in the industry. We have a strong interest in protecting the industry from false and confusing claims for devices that are marketed as composting equipment or composting units (“composters”), when indeed their outputs are not the finished compost product — per the AAPFCO definition — that is ready for immediate application.

These devices are sized for home and commercial use and marketed as “composters” whether for in-home use or in commercial/institutional settings. They accept food and other organic waste, and heat, dehydrate, and mechanically break down these materials. **While the resulting product can look somewhat like compost, they fail to meet the AAPFCO definition, and more importantly, cannot be used in the same efficacious way. Marketing these devices as “composters” and further suggesting the resulting material may be used in applications suitable for compost is misleading, confusing to the public, and damaging to the composting industry.** A negative consumer experience from using the output of devices calling themselves “composters” will impact sales of “true” compost (by the AAPFCO definition).

In summary, those technologies whose output is accurately defined as dehydrated or pretreated materials, (which can be useful feedstock for the composting process or other applications), should not have “compost” in their product name and marketing materials or imply in their product descriptions that they produce compost.

¹ American Association of Food and Plant Control Officials, 2022 75th Edition Publication
<https://www.aapfco.org/publications.html>