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1. **CORE assists in Organic CRC bid** - CORE is playing a key role in the bid for a Co-operative Research Centre (CRC) for Organic Food and Farming Systems. CORE is a board member designate and is on the bid team to provide marketing and commercial expertise and to represent the commercial interests of the organic input sector in Australia. This participation has been influential in broadening the scope from a “purist” organic focus, to include organic inputs into more conventional agriculture systems. The creation of this CRC will facilitate substantial growth in the organic growing sector and consequently will result in considerable growth demand for (recycled) organic input products. While the initial bid missed selection CORE is a member of the re-bid team which is currently preparing the new pitch strategy. Information will be posted to the CORE Website as it becomes available
2. **Queensland Organic industry Survey** - CORE has teamed with Brisbane City Councils’ (BCC) Economic Development Unit and the Organic Resources Group to survey the size and structure of the organics recycling industry in Queensland. The results indicated strong

growth in the organics recycling industry in QLD in the next few years. The information is designed to assist BCC determine the level of support and resources it needs to apply for the benefit of organic recycling in Brisbane. For more information contact CORE Central on 1300 88 55 66 or email: info@corebusinessnet.com.

3. **Compliance Agreement for Viticulture Market Entry** - CORE has developed a Compliance Agreement (CA) in conjunction with NSW Agriculture, which will be mandatory to gain access to the lucrative viticulture markets of the Hunter, Central West and Riverina areas. Under the current regulation (proclamation 28) it is illegal to supply composted products into phylloxera exclusion zones whether to viticulture or not. It has been 12 months since CORE started driving the CA process and it is hopefully nearing fruition. In June CORE is meeting with the Phylloxera Technical Reference Group of the National Vine Health Steering Committee in Melbourne to (hopefully) finalise the viticulture consultation process that will enable the implementation of the CA. Extensive resources have been applied to the CA process to support the implementation of the CORE Viticulture Action Agenda (VAA) Program.
4. **Viticulture Action Agenda Program** - CORE is continuing to implement the Sustainable Quality Viticulture (SQV) Strategy launched in 2002 at The Rothbury Estate by the Hon. Richard Face (Minister Assisting the Premier on the Hunter Valley). As many will know the four pillars of the Agriculture Action Agenda Strategy are Stakeholder Identification and Engagement, Needs Identification and Refinement, Systems Development and Implementation and Marketing. So far CORE has allocated \$84,950 to the Viticulture Action Agenda Program. More details about the strategy will be available on the new (soon to be launched) CORE Website.
5. **Viticulture Engagement Program- National** - Stage one of the SQV Strategy (Stakeholder identification and engagement), which commenced in October 2001, is currently being upscaled by CORE. This program is creating a strong base of growers on which to build sales in this market. So far the SQV Strategy program has attracted interest from over 60 wine grape growers in NSW, Victoria and South Australia. CORE has established collaborative relationships with regional, state and national viticulture organisations. Through these collaborative relationships CORE will soon be seeking expressions of interest from growers to join the program.
6. **Viticulture Engagement Program- NSW** - Following extensive submissions by CORE, Resource NSW (RNSW) have provided significant funding for viticulture demand creation projects that can support industry's own strategic initiatives in NSW. RNSW have already collaborated with CORE and provided matched funding to conduct the very successful grape marc/recycled organics composting trial conducted at The Rothbury Estate with members Australian Native Landscapes and Bedminster. This trial has already resulted in

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the creation of some demand in the Hunter Region. Composted products are being supplied into the Hunter courtesy of CORE's approval from NSW Agriculture to transfer material into the region under a pilot Phylloxera Prevention Protocol program.

Co funded by CORE member Soilco, a viticulture trial was also successfully carried out at a South Coast vineyard during the 2002/2003 season. The results of this trial indicated that there were significant yield increases without any compromise to grape quality.

Recently RNSW have also agreed to co-fund and collaborate on the stage one Stakeholder Identification and Engagement Program. Resource are co-funding five regions of NSW (The Hunter, Central West, Canberra, Riverina and Shoalhaven) will be engaged to carry out a technical and marketing campaign including on-site research and development with 3 growers from each region. While this will not cover all the many growers that want to participate it is a valuable contribution to the demand creation effort. CORE is working on ways to enable all growers to participate.

7. **National Organics Recycling Forum** - Held in Canberra in August 2002 and attended by over thirty delegates the National Organics Recycling Forum shaped the future of COMPOST Australia. CORE in conjunction with the ROU initiated and managed the forum on behalf of the processing sector. Since then committees have been formed with specific tasks for COMPOST Australia including marketing, communications and finance.
8. **Foundry By-products Re-use Program** - CORE has carried out a foundry by-products re-use program as part of the NSW EPA Waste Grants Fund. The program included an analysis of all types of foundry sand to determine suitability for horticultural product suppliers. CORE then worked with a number of foundries and horticultural product suppliers as well as masonry and bitumen plants and construction and demolition industry members. While CORE is still working on solving some of the challenges in using foundry sand some CORE members are now using this material in their mixes. The program was co-funded by the Grants program and funding generated from avoided landfill costs.
9. **Rehabilitation Action Agenda Launched** - CORE has also launched the Rehabilitation Action Agenda in NSW, Victoria and QLD to increase demand for recycled organic products. The program includes a rebate scheme for quarries and mine sites whereby early adopters and demonstration sites are rebated the cost of the material used. Funding for the program is derived from projects such as the management of Bankstown City Council's garden organics. So far CORE has contributed over \$65,000 in rebates.
10. **Stormwater Action Agenda** - CORE was successful in getting to the second round of the Resource NSW Grant Program with a submission to carry out technical and market research into the performance of recycled organics in stormwater products. A study carried

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out by the Recycled Organics Unit at University of NSW identified significant potential for products such as Ecomedia and Filterbales. CORE has been an active participant in the Water Sensitive Urban Design program being run by the Coastal Councils Group and expects demand opportunities to flow in due course. Some CORE members already manufacture products for this sector. The ROU report is available on the Resource NSW Website (<http://www.resource.nsw.gov.au>).

11. **Members and Product Guide** - CORE is developing a “members’ and products guide” for use by the public and private sectors. Aimed to coincide with the more rigorous implementation of government purchasing policies, the guide is the forerunner to the organics purchasing system (CROPS) developed by CORE and tested with councils in the Northern Sydney Region. Shortly CORE Members will be sent a short spreadsheet to be filled out with general and product information. Funding for the project is derived from member fees and project management.
12. **Presentation to Soil Conservation Service** - CORE recently made a presentation to the newly reformed NSW Soil Conservation Service as a guest of member, Soilco. The presentation included an overview of industry’s Rehabilitation and Stormwater Action Agendas. Approximately forty SCS field officers attended the presentation and genuine interest was shown in the recycled organics industry’s range of products. The next step is to engage SCS more formally to explore and identify further demand creation opportunities.
13. **CORE Website Upgrade** - CORE is upgrading its Website with a re-design of each section. Links have been created to member sites and more content has been added to various sections. If you have a web site or just built one visit the CORE Website (www.corebusinessnet.com) and check your linkage is there If not contact CORE Central on 1300 885566 or email:info@corebusinessnet.com
14. **CORE Funding** - some members have asked us how CORE gets its funding to allocate the substantial resources that are being applied to industry based strategic programs. CORE funding is derived from membership fees, industry contributions, grants, industry-based projects and voluntary donations. A substantial contribution is being made from projects such as the management of Bankstown City Council’s garden organics, grants for projects such as the foundry sand reuse program, participating member’s contributions and voluntary in kind contributions from Chris, Eric, the CORE management committee and others. A status report will be produced for the 2002/2003 financial year and made available to financial members.

Following the inaugural industry leaders forum July 31st, 2001, where the organic manufacturing and processing sector unanimously resolved to support the role of CORE in market development and demand creation initiatives on behalf of the industry. (including

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support for the implementation of existing market development strategies e.g. The Sustainable Quality Marketing Strategy), Chris and Eric have substantially wound back the activities of their consulting business EC Sustainable to devote their time to demand creation initiatives to address the accumulating stockpile situation that threatens to undermine the viability of the sector.

- 15. International links** - In April Chris and Eric were invited to Canada by the Canadian Government to assess Canadian Environmental Technologies, Products and Services that had technology transfer and/or export potential to Australia. This mission was initiated as a result of CORE's long term collaborative relationship with the Canadian Government. CORE's mission was to investigate technologies that may be of benefit to members.

Coinciding with the biennial Americana Environmental Conference and Exhibition the mission included field trips, meetings with top government officials and industry organisations, the trade exhibition and conference in both Montreal and Toronto (pre SARS). The major "stand out" of the mission was the contrast in relations between government and industry (compared to Australia) where there appears to be a higher level of cooperation and collaboration. Due to intensive local commitments Eric was not able to attend leaving Chris to burn the wick at both ends!!

- 16. CORE Committee** – The CORE management committee has been meeting on a regular basis to determine policy directions that are being used to actively lobby governments around Australia for improved demand creation outcomes for organic input product producers. On behalf of members, representations have been made to organisations such as Resource NSW, EcoRecycle and the EPA in NSW, Victoria and Queensland. Most organisations have responded very positively to representations on behalf of member producers. CORE currently has a strong focus in Victoria where valuable support and assistance is being provided by government to initiate CORE demand creation programs to address the stockpile accumulation situation. Meetings have also been held to try to achieve similar assistance support for industry strategic action agenda programs in NSW.
- 17. Sustainability Assistance Scheme for Agriculture** – CORE's lobbying activities with the NSW EPA have included pushing for an incentive scheme to stimulate demand in agriculture. CORE was asked by the EPA to prepare a concept of how this may work. The proposition is that farmers receive a rebate on the cost of (eligible) organic input products based on the contribution to sustainability (eg. water, soil, biodiversity, productivity etc). There would be eligibility criteria for growers, products and suppliers. It may also require some contribution by producers. With demand in agriculture at alarmingly low levels, this is considered an urgent demand creation priority and will continue to be pursued by CORE. Once the concept has been more refined it will be circulated to members for comment and input.