

Garbage fertilizes farm land

In an attempt to reduce energy costs and prevent the further deterioration of agricultural land resulting from heavy use of chemicals, farmers in two southern Ontario communities are planning to turn garbage into rich, organic fertilizer, reports Brian Toller in *Canadian Renewable Energy News*, May 1980.

"We've not been able to restore the soil at the rate we've been using it up," says Joan Lowden, secretary of the Hamilton-Wentworth Federation of Agriculture in Hamilton, Ontario. "We never used to think it would hurt that much, but the soil is compacting."

At least one farmer in the agriculturally-rich Niagara peninsula had no crop last year because the soil is in such bad shape, Lowden said. A lack of humus, the by-product of decomposing organic substances such as manure and corn husks, is the cause of these poor soil conditions, she says.

Meanwhile, municipalities are running out of space for disposing of garbage in land-fill sites, so Lowden and her associates have decided to kill two birds with one stone by composting residential garbage and selling the humus-laden fertilizer to area farmers for \$10 a ton.

Garbage an asset

"We're going to turn it (garbage) into an asset," she explains. "We need it now and we will need it in the future."

The Wentworth Agricycle Co-op will raise the \$200,000 needed to build the composting plant, to be located near Mount Hope, Ontario, 15 miles south of Hamilton.

Township of Cranahe, 85 miles east of Toronto, recently gave a site to Agpro Industries, another co-op set up to build a similar composting plant.

Both plants will rely on a 150-foot solar greenhouse to contain the garbage and promote composting, which will occur at temperatures just below the boiling point. To the solid waste collected from surrounding residences will be added chicken manure, paper and a variety of other organic materials. But industrial and some sewage wastes will not be used because of their high metal and chemical content.

Plans call for handling 50 tons of garbage a day, which should produce 30 tons of compost a week.

Quebec votes "no" to sovereignty-association

In an historic referendum held May 20, Quebecers denied the Parti Québécois government of the province of Quebec a mandate to negotiate sovereignty-association.

The referendum question had asked Quebecers to decide if they would give the Quebec government a mandate to negotiate Quebec's independence, while at the same time maintaining an economic association with the rest of Canada.

The proposal of the Parti Québécois government was defeated by a vote of 2,171,913 (59.5 per cent) against, while 1,478,200 (40.5 per cent) voted in favour. A record number of Quebecers — 84 per cent of the electorate — voted in the referendum, up 7 per cent from the 1976 provincial election.

The "no" side won a majority of votes in all but two regions, Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean and Côte-Nord, which represent 5 per cent of the Quebec population. On average the "no" side won 57 per cent of the vote in constituencies with French-speaking majorities. The "yes" side received the same percentage of the popular vote as the Parti Québécois received in the 1976 election.

Provincial Liberal leader Claude Ryan, the leader of the "no" forces supporting federalism, told a victory rally after the vote that the outcome illustrated "the depth of our Canadian roots", and that Quebecers believe that their future lies within a federal Canada. Mr. Ryan claimed a majority in every sector of the population, including the French-speaking voters.

Premier René Lévesque told a rally of supporters that the defeat in the referendum "hurts me more than any electoral defeat". He said that the Quebec people had "clearly given (federalism) another chance" and called upon Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau to make good his promises of constitutional change.

Prime Minister's statement

In a speech to the House of Commons on May 21, Prime Minister Trudeau said of the referendum:

"We strongly hope and believe it signals the end of a long period of uncertainty, of doubt and strained relations between Quebec and the other provinces of Canada and between French and English speaking Canadians. It marks a new beginning. It heralds a period of healing and

rebuilding. By voting for Canada the people of Quebec have recognized that their fellow Canadians are prepared to listen to them, to understand them, and to meet their legitimate aspirations.

"But Quebecers have also shown that they themselves are prepared to hear what other Canadians have to say, to find out what their aspirations are and to help them to realize their dreams. We Canadians are now agreed on a common destination, and that was the fundamental issue. What we must now do is chart a new course and agree on a common itinerary towards that common destination.

"Such is the profound meaning, the only possible interpretation of yesterday's referendum. The majority of Quebec voters have refused to give their provincial government the mandate to negotiate the withdrawal of Quebec from the Canadian federation even though they had been assured over and over again that that could be done while maintaining some form of economic association with the rest of the country. Those voters said no because they put their confidence in Canada....

"On the other hand, we know that a large proportion of those who voted "yes" did so not because they were in favour of independence for Quebec but because they had doubts about our assurances and felt that they would better promote changes by giving tactical support to the Parti Québécois.

"...Altogether, what Quebecers expressed...was a massive support for change within the federal framework. We cannot venture to ignore this will to change which reflects that of all other areas in the country and to fall short of the expectations of Canadians. This is why, on May 14, I solemnly undertook to launch the constitutional renewal and never stop working at it until Canada finally has a new constitution.

"However, we would be deceiving ourselves if we were to believe that it will be easy to keep this commitment. We shall need the constant support of the Canadian people and their representatives within this Parliament. We are also counting on the support of all provincial governments, including that of Quebec. We shall all have to agree on the basic principles underlying our efforts. We have to be receptive to the needs and aspirations of