

## **New England Organics Receives Composter of the Year Award at Annual Conference**

RUTLAND, VERMONT (February 1, 2004)—Casella Waste Systems, Inc. (Nasdaq: CWST), a regional, non-hazardous solid waste services company, announced today that its New England Organics division has received the 2004 Composter of the Year Award at the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual U.S. Composting Council Conference in Las Vegas.

New England Organics' Hawkridge Facility was chosen for the national award based on a number of factors, including excellence in management, the quality of its operations and finished product, and its outstanding marketing and distribution programs.

James Ecker, New England Organics' Vice President, said the award represents the latest chapter in the country's growing recognition of the safety of nutrient-rich organic materials known as biosolids. He pointed out that more and more people are realizing that the "business" of waste water treatment is not only good for the community, but for the environment as well. "We are exceptionally pleased with the performance of our Hawkridge Facility and this award is testimony to the skill, hard work and dedication of its management and staff", said Ecker.

The Annual U.S. Composting Council Conference is the industry's premiere event, featuring industry leaders, workshops and training opportunities, and tours of state-of-the art composting facilities as well as the Annual President's Luncheon and Awards banquet.

The 2004 Award is the most recent of many accolades New England Organics has received over the past few years. The company's Hawk Ridge facility in Unity, Maine, received a National Wastewater Management Excellence Award from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for its outstanding private/public partnership for biosolids and other organic by-product composting. New England Organics is also the recipient of an EPA national award for its beneficial use of sludge and the Maine Governors Award for Environmental Excellence.

Begun in 1990 as a small, private regional facility to serve local wastewater treatment plants, today New England Organics is the largest commercial biosolid composting operation in New England. Headquartered in Falmouth Maine, the company sells and distributes high quality compost throughout the northeast. In addition, New England Organics provides organic waste recycling services for over 35 communities throughout New England and New York State, including transportation, land application, composting and product marketing. The company specializes in residual management of municipal biosolids, pulp and paper sludge, short fiber, and non-hazardous ash.

For further information, contact Jay Kilbourn, Director of Business Development at (207) 781-5011 or visit the company's website at <http://www.newenglandorganics.com>.