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New Bedford Company is Recognized as Recycling Manufacturer of the Year

A New Bedford company that turns organic waste from fish processing plants into a widely used liquid fertilizer has been recognized as the state's Recycling Manufacturer of the Year.

Advanced Marine Technologies (AMT) received the award from MassRecycle on October 29, at the 8th Annual Buy-Recycled and Environmentally Preferable Products Vendor Fair and Conference. The annual award recognizes "a Massachusetts manufacturer that shows innovation through the use of recyclable material in their manufacturing process."

"This award is tremendously important for us, because it recognizes the core values that AMT is all about. Our philosophy is to take material out of the waste stream, and turn it into profit centers," said President and co-founder Jeff Young. "We deeply appreciate MassRecycle's recognition of all our work in this important area."

Headquartered in South Dartmouth and with manufacturing plants in New Bedford and Vancouver, British Columbia, AMT converts fresh fish wastes from New Bedford's fish processing industry into "Organic Gem," a liquid fertilizer/bio-stimulant used by large growers of hops for beer in Idaho, citrus fruits in Florida, golf courses on the East Coast, wineries on the West Coast, and locally for fruit trees and cranberries.

"Our goal is to gradually expand our product base, taking more fish waste out of the system, until eventually we have markets for products that consume all of New Bedford's fish waste," said co-founder Lew Spencer, adding that the firm has the ability to use the same technology to turn fish waste into more than a dozen different types of products, including energy. "This will substantially ease the burden on New Bedford's landfill and wastewater treatment system, and simultaneously create more jobs, both directly and in ancillary businesses, like hauling."

AMT is currently working to expand its staff and production capabilities with the goal of recovering all of the 80 million pounds of fish processing waste generated annually by New Bedford's fish processing plants. By converting the fish waste into valuable feedstock for its products, AMT is boosting the local economy by helping several of the city's 25 to 30 fish processing companies reduce and eventually eliminate their waste disposal costs. In addition, AMT's reuse of organic fish waste helps protect the environment by reducing the amount of organic waste going to two local landfills and reducing the amount of nitrogen discharged to Buzzards Bay through the New Bedford Sewage Treatment Plant.

The potential for AMT to expand production, create jobs, and help protect the local environment by reusing all of the city's fish processing waste was discovered during a recycling-based community economic development project undertaken by the New Bedford Area Chamber of Commerce's Sustainable Greater New Bedford Committee (SGNB). In 2001, SGNB was awarded a \$25,000 grant from the Chelsea Center for Recycling and Economic Development to study recycling and reuse opportunities from local food, rubber and wood waste streams.

“The Chelsea Center is pleased that our support helped to discover the potential for AMT to grow as a business while at the same time helping to boost the local fish processing industry and protect the environment,” said Michael Dimino, Interim Director of the Chelsea Center for Recycling and Economic Development. “Reusing a local wastestream to create both economic and environmental benefits is exactly what recycling-based community economic development is all about. AMT is an excellent example of how it can and does work.”

“It is wonderful being recognized for the environmental and economic benefits of the waste to value model we are building,” said VP for External Relations Chawner Hurd. “Having this recognition from MassRecycle, as well as the ongoing support we receive from the Chelsea Center, SGNB and the Remade Alliance, serves to strengthen the market’s understanding of our contributions to rebuilding a better environment. Green science is here to stay, and we are thrilled to be a part of it.”

SGNB is continuing to work with AMT, and last May the company received the first Sustainability Award presented by SGNB in recognition of sustainable practices and outstanding efforts to collect and process local wastes.

AMT is a member of the Re-Made in Massachusetts Alliance, a growing network of more than 20 companies from various industries across the Baystate that use recycled materials as feedstock in manufacturing. The Re-Made Alliance is working to expand the use of recycled materials by manufacturers and promote the recycled product manufacturing industry in Massachusetts.

Part of the University of Massachusetts, Lowell, and the Commonwealth’s Strategic Envirotechnology Partnership (STEP), the Chelsea Center for Recycling and Economic Development is charged with creating jobs, supporting recycling efforts, and helping the economy and the environment by working to increase the use of recyclables by Massachusetts manufacturers. Funding for grants comes from the Clean Environment Fund, through the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs.

For more information about AMT, contact Chawner Hurd at 508-946-4995 or visit www.amtorganic.com. For more information about the Chelsea Center and its programs, call 617-887-2300 or visit www.chelseacenter.org.

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