

Alternative Markets for Wastepaper

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Introduction

Recovered paper has traditionally been sold almost exclusively to paper mills for use as a raw material in the manufacture of paper and board. However, a lack of demand for recycled fibre and unstable markets have prompted a requirement for the development of alternative markets for recovered paper, both to increase market demand, and to cushion price instability.

Recovered paper has successfully been



used in a number of applications, including animal bedding, cellulose insulation, moulded pulp and composting. One of the leading Scottish organisations in this field is Campbeltown Wastewatchers, who use recovered paper in both animal bedding and vermiculture.

Operations

Campbeltown Wastewatchers are a community based recycling organisation operating in the South Kintyre region of Argyll and Bute. They were formed in 1998 with the dual aims of increasing recycling levels to divert materials away from landfill and providing employment for local people, particularly those with special needs. They have received funding from the National Lotteries Charity Board, the European Regional Development Fund and the Landfill Tax Credit Scheme.

They operate a number of recycling initiatives, including providing recycling facilities for paper, aluminium, textile and garden waste. Since their formation they have successfully recycled 1,000 tonnes of material that would otherwise have been landfilled. They have also provided valuable advice to a number of councils and community organisations throughout Scotland who are interested in starting up animal bedding or vermiculture schemes.

Newsprint Animal Bedding

One of the Wastewatchers original projects is the use of shredded newspaper to produce animal bedding for sale to local farmers. Used newspapers are collected from the local community by means of a kerbside collection covering part of Campbeltown and paper banks situated in the main rural villages. These are then shredded and baled ready for sale within the local area.



Newsprint animal bedding has been shown to have a number of advantages over traditional bedding materials such as straw and sawdust. The material is highly absorbent and insulating, and doesn't support bacteria. This is highly advantageous for dairy cattle, as it helps reduce the incidence of mastitis disease, which is primarily caused by

the presence of environmental mastitis bacteria in traditional bedding.

Market Demand

CWW identified a potential market of 100 local dairy farms that were importing straw over long distances at high costs. All 100 farms were contacted to take part in a trial to see if the project was viable, with the newsprint bedding being priced substantially below the price of straw to maximise take-up of the new product. Take-up was slow at first but soon increased due to word-of-mouth from farmers who had successfully used the product, with 35 farms currently using the product. The market is highly seasonal, with greatest demand over the winter months. To overcome this problem of fluctuating demand CWW have recently negotiated use of a farmers barn to store bales over the summer months in order to have sufficient material available to meet the high winter demand.

Vermiculture

A more recent project is the use of newspapers in a trial vermiculture

(worm-farming) project. Used newspapers are composted with garden cuttings collected from the local community. The compost is then used as a feeding material for the worms. The worm casts produced can be sold for gardening and horticultural use, while the worms can be sold as fishing bait.

Both projects are ideal from a waste management perspective as they adhere to the proximity principle of dealing with waste locally, and



represent a sustainable local solution – with locally recovered wastepaper being converted into a product for use in local markets.

For more information on Campbelltown Wastewatchers please contact John Semple on 01586 553858.