Effects of Compost Composition on Novamac Performance

C. G. Embree[1], K. Benedict[2] and H. Mackinnon[2]

[1]Atlantic food and Horticulture Research Centre, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, 32 Main Street, Kentville, Nova Scotia, Canada B4N 1J5; [2]AgriLogic, PO Box 231, Port Williams, Nova Scotia Canada B0P 1T0

Commercial apple orchards require a balanced supply of nutrients each year. Thus maintaining a source for soil nutrition is essential in organic apple production. A trial was established in 2002 at the AAFC Kentville Research Centre to evaluate three regional composts as sole nutrient sources for 13 year old Novamac apple trees. Three different sources of compost were compared with a control, ammonium nitrate. Composts used were: a dry flowable poultry manure from a local egg producer, a compost made of fish-plant waste, pulp mill waste and sawdust at AAFC Charlottetown, and Kings County municipal compost; household compostable waste from residential collections. Soil and tissue analysis and yield did not vary significantly ($p<0.05$) between treatments with the exception of a slightly lower soil pH for the control in 2003. All compost sources used provided adequate growth, yield and fruit size compared to the commercial fertilizer treatment.

Key Words: Organic, apple, compost, soil nutrition.

Corresponding author: Embreec@agr.gc.ca