



Testimony offered on behalf of:
MIDATLANTIC MICROBIALS, LLC

IN SUPPORT of:
HB 455 – Agriculture – Processing of Poultry Litter for Alternative Use

House Environment and Transportation Committee
Hearing 2/3/2021 at 1:30 PM

MidAtlantic Microbials (MAM), LLC strongly **SUPPORTS HB 455 – Agriculture – Processing of Poultry Litter for Alternative Use.**

My name is Anthony J. Drexel Biddle III, and I am the General Managing Member of MAM. MAM is a Maryland company, formed five years ago, based in Queen Anne’s County, dedicated to the practical application of the science of healthy soil. That science focuses on a community of microorganisms that are naturally present in healthy soil. The scientist to whom its discovery is generally attributed is our Chief Advisor. MAM has developed a proprietary process that is highly monitored and controlled with aeration and sensor systems not heretofore employed with chicken manure at large scale, as per a patent search conducted in 2019. The supplemental microbial blends are added to balance the community already present in chicken manure, together with micronutrients and other components that optimize the product as a habitat and environment for beneficial microorganisms. The MAM process amalgamates a highly effective alternative reuse process of poultry litter; the legislation assists in defining and interpreting alternative use and processing of poultry litter for permitting purposes.

HB 455 prescribes requirements for the processing of poultry litter for an “alternative use” and for the product that results from the processing. The bill takes effect July 1, 2021.

Chapter 15.20.05 defines “Alternative use” as the use of poultry litter or other animal manure in an environmentally acceptable way, other than by direct land application in an unprocessed form, as determined by the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA).

For compost-based processes the processing of poultry litter for an alternative use or the product that results from the processing, as appropriate, must:

1. convert the phosphorus content of unprocessed poultry litter to a form that is not soluble in water, as specified, but retain the phosphorus in a form that may be converted by the natural activity of soil-resident microorganisms to be available to plants,

2. contain a community of natural soil microorganisms that enhances or replenishes farm soil microbiology, as specified, and
3. retain the high nutrient value of poultry litter. Additionally, the processing must eliminate any noxious odor from poultry litter early in the process.

To avoid or minimize any disruption of longstanding farming or growing regimes, an alternative use product resulting from the processing of poultry litter must be able to be procured in the same manner, at relatively similar cost, and handled or applied in the same manner as unprocessed poultry litter. An alternative use product resulting from the processing of poultry litter may be transported off the DelMarVa Peninsula:

1. to established, identified markets,
2. using a distribution apparatus that is in place and does not require any transportation cost-sharing assistance.

IMPORTANCE OF HB 455

A major obstacle to expansion has proven to be permitting for a production facility. Because our system does not have a precedent, there is confusion in local jurisdictions as to how to categorize or define it in local codes. A MAM facility is not a manure shed. This stalls, if not confounds, the permit process. An important effect of HB 455 will be to establish a common definitional structure Statewide for reference by local jurisdictions, in defining the activity we are asking them to permit. Thereby removing a roadblock to the expansion of what can become a highly beneficial activity.

MAM has been working with MDA and the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) on this issue. During 2019-2020 we honed our process efficiency and economics, brought production to commercial scale, and conducted trials with row crops, greenhouse vegetables, residential landscaping, and two reclamation/restoration projects of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) – all extraordinarily successful. This legislation will be of substantial support in advancing those efforts.

Accordingly, MidAtlantic Microbials, LLC respectfully requests the Committee to render a **FAVORABLE Report on HB 455.**

Sincerely,

Anthony J. Drexel Biddle III
General Managing Member
MidAtlantic Microbials, LLC
AJDBiddle@gmail.com
215-435-2479