



Manure recycling smells like success

A Langley man may have found a way to turn horse manure into green gold.

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In February, GreenScene Pellets Inc. began recycling manure with technology that converts fly-laden horse waste into a dry, pathogen-free byproduct for use as bedding material for horses and other animals or fuel for greenhouse operations.

Although the operation is still in the startup phase, company founder Phil Wilford believes he will make \$300,000 selling the bedding pellets in the next year and up to \$5 million in a few years time when he starts marketing the complete package including the recycling plant.

He said its the first processing plant of its type in Canada.

"There are 75,000 horses in the Fraser Valley," Wilford noted in an interview. "They make 400,000 to 500,000 tons of manure a year. We're taking something that's smelly and impossible to get rid of and turning it into a viable byproduct that they can use in the industry."

He said the process also reduces greenhouse gases and helps eliminate manure stockpiling and groundwater contamination.

Wilford, who is working on the project with the B.C. Horse Council, is now partnering with Crescent Stables Ltd. in Ladner for his first drying and shredding plant, with animal waste from the farm used as feedstock for the system.

The byproduct is used as bedding at the host farm, with the excess sold to other horse farms or nearby greenhouses.

Wilford, who previously built machines to clean contaminated soil, built his demonstration machine by modifying a plant used to remove sewage sludge.

So far, he's spent \$350,000 developing the company.

Wilford, whose recent projects include working with the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture to develop an efficient method of disposing of poultry during an avian influenza outbreak in 2004 and 2005, said he's getting interest in the manure recycler from many parts of the world -- including Brazil, Mexico and Europe -- and that he believes there's room for 10 to 12 of his recycling plants in B.C. alone.

He estimates that each complete plant will sell for about \$750,000 and that several farms will eventually buy one recycler together.

"One of the biggest problems in the agriculture industry is getting rid of horse manure," he said. "So I developed a system for drying and shredding horse manure, removing the pathogens and turning it back into bedding material for horses and other animals."

Wilford said sawdust is now used for bedding, but it's poor quality, gets wet easily and promotes mould spores, which get into horses' lungs. Sawdust, he said, contains 49 per cent moisture, while his manure byproduct is just 11 per cent moisture. "It removes the spores and it's absolutely clean."

Wilford has had his share of challenges starting up GreenScene Pellets. "Raising sufficient capital was the biggest challenge. Also, educating the industry to accept recycled manure.

"And we need more investment."

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GREENSCENE PELLETS INC.

Year company formed: 2007

Number of employees: four

Startup costs so far: \$350,000

Projected sales of bedding pellets this year: \$300,000

Number of horses in Fraser Valley: 75,000

Tons of horse manure made by those horses annually: 400,000 to 500,000

Estimated sale price of each GreenScene processing plant: \$750,000

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