

## Hereford Times – Media coverage

***First published on Wednesday 12 June 2002:***

### **Composting project wins first award for innovation**

LEOMINSTER-based Bioganix, the first composting operation of its kind in the UK, is the winner of the inaugural £1,000 Bulmers Award for sustainable innovation in the countryside staged in association with the Three Counties Countryside show at Malvern.

Bioganix turns agricultural by-products and food processing waste into composted fertiliser at a plant at Wharton Court, near Leominster. It has taken two years and over half a million pounds to develop the 'in vessel', composting process, currently handling up to 20 tonnes of waste a day.

The project, part of 7Y rural services network, a co-operative of 500 farmers in the Three Counties, is already having a major impact on the environment by reducing the amount of waste going to landfill sites, and reducing not only greenhouses gasses, but the use of fossil fuels in the production of artificial fertilisers.

Hundreds of tonnes, of feathers each week from local poultry processing plants are now going through the process in a giant revolving 100 tonne capacity steel vessel. The secret is in getting the right mix of waste products, such as feathers, paper, green waste, to achieve a perfect composting cycle.

It is hoped the plant will eventually be handling up to 1,000 tonnes of waste a week.

The compost is mostly sold to farmers for spreading on the land, but is also being used for growing mushrooms. Bioganix also recovers ammonium nitrate and phenol, a chemical used in the manufacture of anti-septics.

Said Tim Epps, orcharding general manager at Bulmers. "There were a lot of interesting and innovative entries, but the judges felt that the Bioganix project was the one which encompassed all the criteria of sustainable development - economics, community and environment being nurtured together for the mutual and long term benefit of all.

Philip Blackman-Howard, the plant manager, said: "Winning the Bulmers Award gives the project a terrific boost."