



Project 2007CB16IPO008-2013-3-008 «Joint promotion of agriculture waste composting - AGROCOMP», co-funded by Bulgaria-Turkey IPA Cross-border Programme CCI № 2007CB16IPO008

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”Providing consultancies for studies, assessments, analysis, design”

CROSS-BORDER ASSESSMENT OF THE COMPOSTING IMPACT ON THE POLLUTION LEVEL IN POMORIE AND PINARHISAR MUNICIPALITIES



Contracting authority: “Europe and We” Association, town Pomorie



Contractor: Bulgarian-Austrian Consulting Company JSC.



The present project is implemented by "Europe and We" Association, Bulgaria in partnership with the Pinarhisar Chamber of Agriculture, Turkey and is co-financed by the EU through the program for IPA Bulgaria - Turkey Cross-border Programme 2007 - 2013 CCI number 2007CB16IPO008





INTRODUCTION

This cross-border assessment is the result of the assessments of the composting impact on the pollution level, developed in Pomorie and Pinarhisar Municipality. Both assessments are developed on the basis of conducted parallel studies and analysis of the work of the Monitoring Group in the two target regions of project "Joint promotion of agriculture waste composting" - town Pomorie, Republic of Bulgaria and Pinarhisar Municipality, Republic of Turkey.

The project "Joint promotion of agriculture waste composting is funded by the European Union through the Bulgaria - Turkey IPA CB Programme CCI number 2007CB16IPO008 and is implemented by "Europe and We" Association, town Pomorie (Leading project partner) and Pinarhisar Chamber of Agriculture, town Pinarhisar.

This report aims to develop a final cross-border assessment of the impact of the composting process, the benefits of composting to the extent of pollution in the target regions, the expected long-term impact on nature and the environment. The document will provide a general assessment of the impact and success of project "Joint promotion of agriculture waste composting". The studies which are the basis for this assessment were made by hired external consultants and summarized cross-border assessment is carried out by the consulting team of Bulgarian-Austrian Consulting Company Jsc.



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PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of project "Joint promotion of agriculture waste composting" is to improve the quality of life in the cross-border region through effective use and protection of common natural resources. The project promotes composting as a tool to fight waste volumes and the impact of climate change in the cross-border region.

The specific project objectives are:

- Reducing the negative impact of agriculture on the environment by promoting agriculture waste composting;
- Reducing the impact of climate change on the environment through the development of a joint action plan for agriculture waste management and development of environmentally friendly behavior in the cross-border region.

METHODOLOGY

The consulting team of Bulgarian-Austrian Consulting Company Jsc. was engaged in the implementation of the cross-border assessment and proposed a methodology for the activity implementation, summarized, compared and analyzed the results of the questionnaires completed from the two target regions and prepared a summarized analysis and cross-border assessment of the composting impact and project implementation.

The aim of the present report is to make a general assessment of the efficiency of the composting process, the impact of composting on the level of pollution in the target region, and to assess the expected long term effect on nature and the environment.

In both target regions - Pomorie and Pinarhisar Municipality agriculture has a significant role in the local economy. As a result, there are many waste from agricultural activities. Composting of biodegradable agriculture waste is a proper and responsible decision on waste management, which must be promoted and distributed. Within the project, a number of activities are implemented in order to raise awareness among farmers about the benefits of composting and encourage environmentally friendly behavior to agricultural waste generated.

For the purposes of the project were implemented a study and identification of farmers in both target regions, generating large amounts of waste, assessment of their awareness and motivation to compost biodegradable waste. A methodology was developed for assessment and selection of farms within the two target municipalities - Pomorie and Pinarhisar, where to install demonstration composting platforms. On the basis of the methodology were evaluated and selected 12 (10 + 2 spare) farms - 6 in each region, as in 10 that have received the





highest scores, demonstration composting platforms were installed. The selected farmers went through specialized training, during which to learn about the basic principles of composting and work with demonstration platforms. In the two target regions Monitoring groups were created to monitor the composting process in the municipality.

This report aims to assess the effect of composting on the environment through questionnaire to the target groups and analysis of the work of the Monitoring Group in Pomorie and Pinarhisar Municipalities. In particular, the study will contribute to the overall general assessment of the effectiveness of the project implementation and the success achieved.

Territorial scope: Pomorie Municipality, Burgas District, Republic of Bulgaria and Pinarhisar Municipality, Kirklareli province, Republic of Turkey

Period of implementation: January 2015.

Target groups: farmers in whose farms demonstration composting platforms are installed, farmers, members of the Monitoring Group, formed under the project, representatives of local and regional authorities, environmental institutions, non-governmental organisations, businesses representatives, general public in both target regions.

Methodology for activity implementation:

- Summary, comparison and analysis of the results of the filled in outgoing questionnaires in the two target regions;
- Summarized analysis and summarized assessment of the effect of composting on the environmental pollution level;
- Summarized analysis and summarized assessment of the general effect of the project;
- Analysis of the expected long-term effect;
- Preparation of general conclusions and recommendations in the context of joint cooperation and long term partnership between the two target regions;
- Packing a final cross-border analysis and evaluation of the effect of composting.

Method: cameral

Summary, analysis, assessment, report: 2 experts.



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SUMMARY, COMPARISON AND ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS FROM THE STUDIES CONDUCTED IN POMORIE AND PINARHISAR MUNICIPALITIES

In the period November - December 2014 in the two target areas were held final studies aimed to establish the impact of the composting process and the success of project "Joint promotion of agriculture waste composting". The results of both studies are subject to summary, comparison and analysis in this section.

MAIN CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY IN POMORIE MUNICIPALITY

1. 42 respondents participated in the questionnaire - farmers and other stakeholders of Pomorie Municipality.
2. The objective was to assess the effect of the composting process, the benefits of composting to the level of local pollution and the expected effect on the environment in long term, as well as to evaluate the overall effectiveness and success of the project "Joint promotion agriculture waste composting".
3. The majority of the respondents participated in the events activities implemented under project "Joint promotion agriculture waste composting".
4. The majority of the respondents expressed their satisfaction with the quality and quantity of the information presented about composting and its benefits.
5. Over 2/3 of the respondents think that the amount of agriculture waste disposed decreased or was affected after the project implementation.
6. 2/3 of the respondents believe that as a result of composting the amount of agriculture waste decreases, which is a very high percentage in favor of biodegradable waste composting.
7. Almost all respondents think that the implementation of project "Joint promotion agriculture waste composting" has a significant effect on the level of waste disposed in Pomorie Municipality.
8. There is strong support and confidence in composting as an environmentally friendly way to deal with biodegradable waste.
9. The majority of the respondents think that biodegradable waste composting has a significant positive effect on the environment.



10. 1/3 of the respondents think that biodegradable waste composting contributes to increase soil fertility.
11. As a result of the project activities implemented the awareness and willingness of farmers to compost waste generated by agriculture activity increased.
12. The majority of the respondents think that biodegradable waste composting helps to protect the environment to a greater or lesser extent.
13. The majority of respondents are positively affected by the project implementation and have changed their attitude / behavior to the ways of waste treatment and to protect the environment.
14. There are respondents who started composted without being direct beneficiaries to the project (without having received a demonstration composting platform).
15. We need an insignificant incentive for those already informed, but still not enough motivated farmers to start composting biodegradable waste from agriculture activity.
16. Over 2/3 of the respondents tried to compost their biodegradable waste.
17. Over 1/5 of the respondents tried to compost their biodegradable waste successfully.
18. There is a high degree of motivation and willingness to compost, and the success is a guarantee of continuing good practice and its promotion among other farmers and households.
19. The majority of respondents are highly educated farmers with higher and secondary education, aged 35 years.
20. As result of composting the quantities of agriculture waste decreased, the costs for waste collection and disposal were reduced.
21. The decreasing quantities of agriculture waste disposed, and the reduced costs for waste collection and disposal, have a direct and indirect contribution to counteraction to climate change globally.

MAIN CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY IN PINARHISAR MUNICIPALITY

1. 50 respondents participated in the questionnaire- farmers and other stakeholders, representatives of the target groups of Pinarhisar Municipality.
2. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effect of the composting process, the benefits of composting to the extent of local pollution and the expected effect on the



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environment in long term, and to evaluate the overall effectiveness and success of the project "Joint promotion of agriculture waste composting".

3. The positive effect of project "Joint promotion of agriculture waste composting" is undeniable- 98% of the respondents consider that due to the project, the quantities of agricultural waste disposed has ignificantly decreased.
4. Almost all respondents believe that biodegradable waste composting has a strong positive effect on the amount of agriculture waste disposed.
5. The majority of the participants in the questionnaire believe that biodegradable waste composting contributes to environmental and natural resources protection;
6. The majority of the respondents demonstrate a clear and responsible position of the majority of the respondents to the issues of environmental protection and rational use of natural resources.
7. The majority of the respondents have tried to compost their biodegradable waste, as only those who were more stubborn and strictly followed the rules for composting succeeded.
8. Respondents demonstrate a high degree of awareness and desire for composting.
9. The majority of respondents see multilateral benefits of composting and compost - both personally and for the environment in the region.
10. The respondents demonstrate a high degree of ecological thinking and behavior and awareness of the sustainable development principles.
11. The majority of the respondents believe that the method for agriculture waste utilization promoted within the project - composting, is good practice and will continue to be applied after the project completion.
12. There is a direct contribution to sustainability and distribution of the positive effects and good practices from the project.
13. The high level of awareness about composting and the trust in it is due largely to the public activities implemented under the AGROCOMP project.
14. The greatest role in raising the awareness about agriculture waste composting had the information days.
15. The majority of respondents were farmers, men with primary and secondary education, aged over 35 years.



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16. There is a high degree of motivation among farmers and representatives of the target groups and readiness to compost and show responsible attitude towards the generation, treatment and utilization of biodegradable waste.
17. As result from composting the quantities of agriculture waste decreased, the costs for waste collection and disposal were reduced, and as a result in a direct and indirect way, there is counteraction to climate change globally.

SUMMARIZED ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS FROM THE STUDIES IN POMORIE AND PINARHISAR MUNICIPALITY

The information and conclusions from studies in both target municipalities was summarized, compared and analyzed. The summarized conclusions about the cross-border region of studies are presented below:

1. The majority of the respondents in the cross-border region participated in the events activities implemented under project "Joint promotion agriculture waste composting", and it may be concluded that high level of awareness about composting and the trust in it is due largely to the public activities implemented under the project.
2. The majority of the respondents in the cross-border region think that the amount of agriculture waste disposed decreased after the project implementation.
3. The majority of the respondents in the cross-border region believe that as a result of composting the amount of agriculture waste decreases.
4. In both target regions – Pomorie and Pinarhisar Municipality there is strong support and confidence in composting as an environmentally friendly way to deal with biodegradable waste.
5. Farmers and stakeholders from both target regions realize the multilateral benefits of biodegradable waste composting - both personally and globally, regarding the impact on the environment.
6. As a result of the project activities implemented the awareness and willingness of farmers to compost waste generated by agriculture activity increased.
7. As a result of the project activities implemented there is a change in thinking and behavior of farmers and stakeholders from both border regions, the need for an environmentally friendly life in accordance with the principles of sustainable development is realized.



8. The majority of the respondents demonstrate a clear and responsible position of the majority of the respondents to the issues of environmental protection and rational use of natural resources.
9. In both target regions there are farmers and stakeholders who started composting without being direct project beneficiaries (without being given a demonstration composting platform).
10. In both target regions there is a successful demonstration composting process.
11. In the cross-border region there is a high degree of motivation and willingness to compost, and the success is a guarantee of continuing good practice and its promotion among other farmers and households.
12. The majority of respondents in the two studies are farmer, men, aged over 35 years.
13. In both target regions is reported that due to composting the quantities of agriculture waste decreased, the costs for waste collection and disposal were reduced, which has a direct and indirect contribution to counteraction to climate change globally.

SUMMARIZED ANALYSIS AND CROSS-BORDER ASSESSMENT OF THE COMPOSTING IMPACT ON THE POLLUTION LEVEL IN POMORIE AND PINARHISAR MUNICIPALITY

10 demonstration composting platforms are built and installed in preliminary selected 10 farms in the two target municipalities. Both Monitoring groups regularly track, monitor and discuss the progress in the composting process in the farms selected. From the analysis of the work of both groups the following conclusions can be made:

Farmers in whose farms demonstration composting platforms are installed are use the platforms as intended and take care of them as good farmers. All farmers have a significant progress in composting and can use the final product to improve soil fertility by the treatment and preparation of soil for the new season. All farmers expressed satisfaction with the opportunity to utilize waste from agriculture activities and at the same time are pleased to contribute to environmental protection. **The members of both Monitoring groups think that due to composting the quantities of agriculture waste decreased, the costs for waste collection and disposal were reduced**, which has a direct and indirect contribution to counteraction to climate change globally.

In addition, the results of the two studies may be added. The majority of the respondents in the cross-border region think that the amount of agriculture waste disposed decreased due to



composting. This, however, is not only due to the composting of agriculture waste from the 10 pilot farms. The results analysis of the two studies showed that a total of over 2/3 of the respondents in the two target regions have tried to compost their agriculture waste, some successful, others - to a lesser extent. But the fact is that **most of the respondents have made efforts to utilize biodegradable waste generated by their agricultural activity, which actually contributed to reduce waste to be disposed.**

Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions means percentage reduction in greenhouse gases realized in this case by biodegradable waste composting on behalf of disposing the same. Greenhouse gases that are subject to monitoring and calculation of emissions are:

- carbon dioxide - CO₂;
- methane - CH₄;
- nitrous oxide - N₂O;
- precursors of greenhouse gases - NO_x, CO и NMVOCs;
- sulfur dioxide - SO₂.

Different greenhouse gases are weighted by their global warming potential, as total emissions are expressed in millions of tons equivalent of carbon dioxide (CO₂). Greenhouse gas emissions of sector "Agriculture" result from the activities, production and processing of agriculture products, soil fertilization and animal waste. The largest source of methane emissions in the sector is enteric fermentation in livestock - 21.3% of the emissions of the sector. The most significant are the N₂O emissions from agricultural soils, as their share in 2011 was 57.6%. When burning agriculture residues quantities of greenhouse gases are emitted known as - precursors of greenhouse gases - CO and NO_x. Greenhouse gas emissions in sector "Waste" result from the processes of collection, storage and treatment of solid waste and after treatment of wastewater from households and industry. Solid waste can be treated by disposal in s, recycling, burning for elimination or energy production. In this sector the emissions of greenhouse gases are determined only from the processes of decay of solid waste disposed. Solid waste disposed, emit CH₄ as a result of anaerobic and aerobic decomposition of organic content (biodegradable waste, including waste from agriculture activity). Therefore the role of biodegradable waste composting is significant for reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, namely: burning, collection, transportation, processing and disposal.

Reducing the amount of waste for disposal as a result of their composting reduces transport and other necessary costs inherent for waste collection and disposal, which contributes to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and has a direct and indirect contribution to fighting





climate change globally. By waste disposal methane and other greenhouse gas emissions are emitted, which is reduced by decreasing the volume of biodegradable waste. Mixing municipal solid waste, recyclable and biodegradable waste in depot does not allow efficient utilization, thereby wasting resources and missing benefits in medium and long term. People believe that composting will continue to be applied after the end of the project and will even be promoted and multiplied, and this contributes to the sustainability of the initiative and guarantee the long-term effect.

SUMMARIZED ANALYSIS AND CROSS-BORDER ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AGROCOMP PROJECT

The majority of the respondents in the cross-border region participated in the events and/or activities implemented under project "Joint promotion agriculture waste composting". It may be concluded that high level of awareness about composting and the trust in it is due largely to the public and information activities implemented under the project. It is important that the majority of the respondents from Pomorie and Pinarhisar Municipality think that the amount of agriculture waste decreased after the project implementation.

They say that the information about composting and its benefits was comprehensive, high-quality, appropriate and accessible. The largest effect for both regions had the information days and seminars in which the majority of survey respondents participated. Of course, the effect of participation in other project activities should not be underestimated - the Round Table, during which the results of initial studies were presented and farmers identified, and formed two Monitoring groups. The direct beneficiaries – farmers that received a demonstration composting platform, also participated in the study and shared their experience of the pilot implementation of composting for the purpose of agricultural waste utilization. **The biggest effect of the project implementation is the change in thinking and behavior of farmers and other stakeholders**, the recognized need to generate less waste, to utilize waste, to protect natural resources and to strive to reduce its negative impact on the environment. The majority of the respondents share that the implementation of information and demonstration activities within the project has a positive effect, because people are more informed and this leads to change in their attitude to waste. Others believe that the effect is positive, as people begin to treat their waste environmentally and others begin to compost. The respondents said that due to project AGROCOMP they are more informed about agriculture waste and composting benefits, which helps them to be more reasonable to waste. Positive is the fact that thanks to the project implementation not a few people say they have already stopped burning their biodegradable waste and dispose them



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in illegal places. Important for the further initiative development is the opinion that it is a good practice to be disseminated and promoted in the future. The benefit of project "Joint promotion of agriculture waste composting" is undoubted, as well as the effect of changing the way of thinking and behavior of the target groups. As a result of the project for a short period was reported reducing the amount of agriculture waste disposed. Because of the wide interest and multilateral benefits of composting, it is expected in medium and long term this effect to be strengthened and have even greater impact on the pollution level in the cross-border region.

JOINT COOPERATION, MEASURES AND EFFORTS FOR REDUCING THE ANTHROPOGENIC IMPACT ON NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE ENVIRONMENT IN THE CROSS-BORDER REGION

In the two target regions of project "Joint promotion of agriculture waste composting" - Pomorie and Pinarhisar Municipality, agriculture is a priority sector with a leading role in socio-economic development. The agriculture waste generated of vegetable and animal origin is suitable for composting, thereby achieving multiple impact with economic, physical, chemical, biological and environmental benefits:

- Assists the cultivation of healthy fruit and vegetables;
- Reduces garden and household waste;
- Diverts materials from depots - remnants of food and garbage from the yard are from 20 % to 30% of the depot;
- Turns waste into much useful material and soil improver;
- The effect of adding compost is immediate, but also with a very long-term positive impact on soil structure. It does not become thicker and increases capacity for water retention, reduced costs for irrigation;
- Optimizes and stabilizes the pH of the soil
- The distribution of a number of diseases among plants can be influenced by the microorganisms in the compost and thus the soil;
- Reduces the spread of weeds;
- The addition of compost as a mulch or soil conditioner, warms it faster in the spring;
- Helps fight against soil erosion;



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- Helps the soil to bind and degrade certain pollutants such as volatile organic compounds, heavy metals and toxic chemicals such as pesticides and herbicides;
- The composting process degrades, and in some cases completely eliminates preservatives, pesticides, PCBs, and chlorinated hydrocarbons in polluted soil;
- Reduces the need to use fertilizers and pesticides;
- Economic benefits include reducing the need for irrigation of crops, the use of toxic agricultural chemicals and conventional soil remediation;
- Compost is now a marketable commodity (Price), i.e. there is a real possibility of doing business;
- Extends the "life" of depots;
- Reducing waste at depots, reduces emissions of greenhouse gases - including methane.

Compost has the unique ability to improve the properties of soil and its qualities as a nutrient medium: physical (as structure), chemical indicators (nutrient medium) and biological properties. The real benefits of compost use are widespread and long-term and are related to the content of living - organic matter in it.

The above facts are reason for wider application of composting as a means of reducing the carbon imprint we leave behind. The fact is that in the two target regions agriculture has a key role in local economic development and consequently large amounts of waste are generated. Initial studies conducted at the beginning of the project indicated that the way of dealing with them largely increased the negative impact on the environment - by burning and disposal at illegal dumpsites. Positive is the fact that after the implementation of project "Joint promotion of agriculture waste composting" the trend towards biodegradable waste utilization greatly increased. There is a substantial change in the way of thinking and behavior of the population in line with the principles of sustainable development.

In light of the above, we can say that in the two target regions it is necessary joint measures to be taken and efforts to reduce the negative anthropogenic impact on the environment:

- In both target municipalities to create Agriculture Council and Council on the Environment Protection, including representatives of local public administration, the competent state bodies, professional organizations, NGOs and other stakeholders. Structures created should meet at least once a quarter to discuss pressing problems.



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- To nominate representatives of local farmers in the two target regions to be included in the Agriculture Council at local level by presenting the needs of farmers and protect their interests in policy and decision making.
- To seek the cooperation and support of local and state authorities to improve relevant policies, especially those related to agricultural waste treatment and recovery.
- To acquaint farmers with the damage that is inflicted on the environment and natural resources in the non-use of agricultural land for its intended purpose and inappropriate use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides.
- To promote practicing sustainable agriculture.
- To encourage generation of less agriculture waste and the treatment of already generated waste in environmentally friendly way.
- Seek opportunities to give free composting platforms farmers in the two target regions.
- To provide opportunities for composting of agricultural waste without special containers for composting - the principle of "do it yourself" using old stuff or compost pile.
- Demonstration composting platforms composting, installed under project "Joint promotion of agriculture waste composting" and the results achieved to be used as an example and good educational practice from which other farmers to learn and in this way the effect to be multiplied.
- Conduct information and awareness campaigns among farmers for the benefits of composting, basic principles and rules in composting, as for a specific target group to be selected organic producers.
- Conduct information campaigns presenting potential harms to the environment and threats to humanity from climate change, carbon dioxide emissions, methane and other greenhouse gases and quantities of waste accumulated in the depot. Presentation of the steps that each farmer can take to help limit climate change.
- Work with children and young people to get acquainted with the basic principles of composting and its benefits - conducting workshops and information sessions with children and adolescents to build ecological thinking and behavior.
- Organization of joint practical measures "on the spot" with the inclusion of farmers and children - joint agricultural activities jointly, organized collection of agriculture



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waste, joint activities in the treatment of biodegradable waste generated by agriculture activity.

- Organization of joint seminars, trainings, workshops to share experiences, good practices and innovative approaches, as well as current developments in the application of good agriculture practices and environmentally friendly behavior in agriculture and processing of agricultural waste generated.
- Building and maintaining an online database of farmers in the border region, creating opportunities for cross-border partnership in the field of agriculture, good agricultural practices, sustainable agriculture and environmentally friendly treatment of agriculture waste.
- Promoting the principles of sustainable development and the promotion of environmentally friendly behavior, natural resources and directed to future generations.
- Promoting the principles of sustainable agriculture, limiting greenhouse gas emissions and contributing to limit climate change.
- Low levels of carbon dioxide and waste reduction, by advising farmers on efficient use of resource and waste reduction.
- Reducing pollution and resource use and minimizing waste, promoting resource efficiency of agriculture at cross-border level.
- Sustainable use of resources, efficiency and clean technologies to help transform both trans-border states in low-carbon economies.



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CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we can summarize that agriculture waste composting is an environmentally-friendly way to deal with biodegradable waste generated and contributes to combating climate change and reducing the environmental imprint we leave on the environment. The effect of the project implementation is in individual perspective - by reducing the costs for agriculture and increasing agricultural productivity, and in global aspect. The biggest benefit of the joint initiative is the change in the way of thinking and behavior of the community and the recognized need to live in harmony with nature, protecting natural resources. The overall positive impact of project "Joint promotion agriculture waste composting" is clearly visible, and the benefits expected for the environment and the pollution level will be reported more clearly in long term. The demonstration composting platforms constructed and installed are good practice, promotion and distribution of which will enhance the positive impact of the project. The commitment of local and regional authorities in the ongoing promotion and implementation of biodegradable waste composting, however, is essential for the success of the initiative and turning it into a necessity for every farm and home.

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