



ANDRÉ JACQUE

STATE SENATOR • 1ST SENATE DISTRICT

Phone: (608) 266-3512

Fax: (608) 282-3541

Sen.Jacque@legis.wi.gov

State Capitol • P.O. Box 7882

Madison, WI 53707-7882

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Contact: Senator André Jacques

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(608) 266-3512

SEN. JACQUE'S CLEAN WATER BILL CLEARS SENATE

'Win-win' measure reduces agricultural run-off into our waters, while providing income for farmers

MADISON... Clean water legislation promoting a number of best practices and initiatives that would help Wisconsin farmers generate income while reducing runoff into our waters is heading to the State Assembly following unanimous passage in the State Senate today.

State Sen. André Jacques (R- New Franken), the bill's author, called it a 'win-win' measure that removes a barrier to making the environmental and agricultural best practice of manure composting more economically viable for Wisconsin farmers, reducing the pressure on dairy farms to excessively spread it.

"Marketing manure can be a beneficial, low-risk way for livestock producers to manage animal waste on their farms while incorporating a value-added product into their overall business plan," Sen. Jacques said. "The opportunity to sell a waste product and recoup an economic benefit while reducing potential environmental liability is a much sought-after outcome this legislation will help to create."

Current law requires a fertilizer distributed in Wisconsin to be guaranteed to contain a combined weight of nitrogen, phosphorous, and potassium that is at least 24 percent of the total weight of the fertilizer unless DATCP promulgates a rule exempting the fertilizer, or DATCP grants a permit authorizing the distribution of the fertilizer as a nonagricultural or special-use fertilizer.

"These requirements currently make organic products of composting unsaleable in Wisconsin," Sen. Jacques said. "This legislation makes a number of reasonable changes to these requirements that apply to fertilizers and soil or plant additives that are derived from converting manure into compost and compost byproducts, thereby removing a barrier to the economic viability of manure composting in Wisconsin that is not present in other states."

Sen. Jacques said proposals similar to the measure ([2025 Senate Bill 78](#)) passed the full Senate in previous legislative sessions as [2023 Senate Bill 24](#) and [2021 Senate Bill 113](#). Unfortunately, the bill was not taken up by the full Assembly, although essentially identical legislation has cleared that Chamber in the past.

"In talking to experts who work with farmers to address the financial and logistical hurdles, it's clear that Wisconsin farms looking to make this environmentally friendly change also face regulatory obstacles," Sen. Jacques said. "This bill will help our producers sell the valuable organic compounds produced through the composting process that have been shown to create a profit center in other states."

The legislation previously passed the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Revenue in a unanimous 8-0 vote, and had a public hearing in Assembly committee. It must next pass the Assembly and be signed by the Governor to become law.

Senator André Jacques represents Northeast Wisconsin's First Senate District, consisting of Door and Kewaunee Counties and portions of Brown, Calumet, Manitowoc, and Outagamie counties.

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