

Masthead

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## Biomass waste gets own Web site

It's like Craigslist for people looking for food scraps in industrial-size mounds or used cooking oil by the drum.

A Web site launched by North Carolina state government seeks to match companies looking to get rid of tubs of oil and tons of wood chips with companies that can turn them into something else.

"They can barter, they can give it away, they can sell it," said Tom Rhodes, an environmental specialist with the state Department of Environment and Natural Resources. "It's to keep materials out of the landfill."

The site, N.C. Biomass Trader, was spun off from N.C. Waste Trader, which lists all sorts of industrial leftovers, including 16 tons of bulk toothpaste, 3 tons of upholstery cuttings and 96 tons of wood blocks.

So much biological material started to populate the list that the state decided such discards deserved their own site, Rhodes said. The state environmental agency announced the new online waste exchange last month.

On the list of available products is 14 tons of wood dust, available every two weeks, a weekly supply of 6,000 gallons of cooking oil, and 500 cubic yards of wood chips, also available every week.

Piedmont Biofuels in Pittsboro uses the state site to look for used cooking oil it turns into biofuel, and for customers for its production byproducts, marketing manager Russell Harper said.

The site would work better, he said, if more people knew about it. It's geared to industries dealing in large volumes, he said, not homeowners.

Frank Franciosi, composting manager for Novozymes in Franklinton, searches for waste by the truckload. A man called to offer the enzyme manufacturer six wooden pallets; Franciosi said he needed 6,000. He uses the site to find yard waste, wood to grind, and sawdust to make compost.

"It adds carbon back to the soil," he said. "That's where it started from, and that's where it belongs. It's trying to close the loop on some of these products that are generated."

[lynn.bonner@newsobserver.com](mailto:lynn.bonner@newsobserver.com) or 919-829-4821