



## **Glass Position Paper**

### **Key Considerations**

1. AORA and the recycled organics industry is committed to generating high-quality compost outputs that promote the protection of the environment and human health.
2. Minimising contamination in feedstock is critical to enable efficient and effective processing of organics into high quality end products.
3. AORA supports a national target of less than 2% contamination by weight in source separated organics.
4. Consistent education and messaging across Community, Industry, Councils and Government is vital to achieve behaviour change and support a sustainable organics industry.

### **Who We Are**

The Australian Organics Recycling Association (AORA) is the peak industry body and national voice for businesses across the organics recycling supply chain. AORA envisions a future where recycling and reuse of organic materials within a circular economy is widely understood and supported by all Australians. AORA works to facilitate an operating environment which maximises the recycling and reuse of organic materials, and promotes the benefits of compost, soil conditioners and mulches across the Australian community and business.

### **Introduction**

Glass, in its many forms and uses, is a wonderful product – versatile, easy to use and clean and, offers excellent product protection and storage attributes. One only has to look in the fridge, pantry or kitchen cupboards to understand this and the ubiquitous nature of glass – it is everywhere in our lives; beer, wine, and soft drink bottles, cordial bottles, condiment bottles, jam jars, and the list goes on.

Glass is, however, a problem within organic processing facilities. Glass can break easily when not handled with care and once that happens, segregating it up becomes difficult and dangerous. Glass, of course, should not be present or recycled in an organics stream. Unfortunately, when it does find its way into an organics stream, it is either broken on tipping into the truck or it will often be broken (shattered) when the truck delivering the organics unloads its contents onto a concrete floor. Once that this occurs, removal becomes almost impossible. Shards of glass are hard to see and impossible to remove completely from the organics its mixed with and it becomes a health and safety issues risk for those operators dealing with it.

Glass is a serious contamination problem within an organics processing facility for all of the forementioned reasons. Furthermore, no one wants to see shards of glass in their compost when they come to use it on their garden, lawns, fruit trees or vegetable patch.

The recycled organics industry is committed to generating high-quality compost outputs that promote the protection of the environment and human health, specifically through the diversion of organic material from landfill. The success of recycling supply chains relies on items being responsibly sorted at the origin and the materials placed in the correct bins. Glass is one example where care and consideration is needed to ensure appropriate recycling occurs.

### **Guiding Principles**

1. AORA supports the introduction of dedicated glass recycling services at the local government level to ensure residents have access to a dedicated glass recycling solution directly from the household.
2. AORA supports an extension of the current CDS (Container Deposit Scheme) to include other glass containers including beer, wine, and soft drink bottles.
3. The recycled organics industry has been producing high-quality and high-performing compost products that are safe for application to land and safe for human health and is committed to continuing to do so.
4. The supply of quality feedstock to the organics processor gate is the key component of the organics recycling supply chain. Source separated feedstock without glass, plastics, chemicals, and other contaminants (from all organic feedstock sources including household, commercial, agricultural, forestry, water treatment, etc.) is central to the growth of organics recycling rates and production of high-quality outputs.
5. AORA expects most organics processors to be able to process source separated kerbside FOGO and commercial food wastes with less than 2% physical contamination (by weight), and as such AORA supports a national target of less than 2% contamination. Hazardous materials cannot be accepted as physical contamination under any circumstances and our target for glass contamination should be zero %. As the industry matures and government support improves, AORA expects the 2% target for contamination to be lowered over time

as consistent communication and education efforts instill improved community understanding and behavioral changes.

6. Wherever possible, all participants in the Australian resource recovery supply chain, in particular, State and Local governments, should deliver a common message on materials to be recovered by organics processing facilities. This should be supported by appropriate education material that is consistent, clear, and recurring.