



Pre Conference Workshop HALF DAY
1:00 PM - 4:30 PM

**Vermicomposting and Use of Vermicompost Products in
Production Agriculture**

Vermicomposting is more than managing organic materials with worms—it is a biological process that can transform organic residuals into valuable soil amendments and contribute to productive, sustainable agricultural systems. This half-day workshop will explore the fundamentals of vermicomposting, the importance of worm husbandry, and the range of technologies used from backyard systems to large-scale commercial operations. Participants will learn how feedstocks, system design, and operating conditions influence the characteristics and quality of the resulting vermicompost. The workshop will then move from production to application, examining how vermicomposting can be integrated into manure management and how vermicompost products can be used in horticultural and other plant production systems.

A particular focus will be placed on disease-suppressive vermicompost, including current understanding of the biological mechanisms and modes of action that may contribute to plant health and disease suppression.

The workshop will feature three, 45-minute presentations, each followed by time for discussion and questions, providing opportunities for participants to connect the science and technology of vermicomposting with practical agricultural applications.

Instructor: Tom Herlihy - Director of Compost Operations, Synagro

Fee: \$310.00 for USCC members / \$365.00 for nonmembers

Duration: 1:00 PM - 4:30 PM

Date: February 1, 2027

CCOM™/CCP™ PDHs: 3.5

Agenda

- Fundamentals of vermicomposting (worm husbandry, and history)
- Vermicomposting technologies -Backyard to large scale. Differences in feedstock and operation impact final product
- Integrating vermicomposting with production agriculture.
- Role in manure management
- Use in horticultural production
- Modes of action in disease suppression.

About the Instructor

Tom Herlihy has over 40 years of experience specializing in the design, permitting and operations of organic waste management facilities. He holds a Master's in Agricultural and Biological Engineering, and a Bachelor's in Physics. In the first 15 years of his career, he worked as a Consulting Engineer for both municipal and private clients on projects across the solid waste and wastewater fields. He then left engineering and founded his own composting company for 15 years that established many technological firsts that integrated large-scale vermicomposting with production agriculture (animal and plant production). Currently he is combining his engineering and operational experience while serving as Synagro's Director of Compost Operations across their national composting operations. He is a compost geek and enjoys combining his love of engineering, waste management and production agriculture. His agricultural background runs deep from growing up working on a producing Dairy Farm (in NY), to teaching at the University of Vermont in the Plant and Soil Science Department. He has authored and been the Primary Investigator on over 16 peer reviewed Federal research and development projects, all centering on organic waste management and the development of compost based products for use in production agriculture.