

Technology

New Container Stores Organic Waste For Weeks Without Attracting Animals, Insects or Pests

By James Armstrong

If you are a supermarket manager worried about having to store spoiled vegetables or other organic wastes where they attract rats, raccoons or even bears, the waste containers Holly Christie's company makes can solve that problem.

"Supermarket employees who are allergic to bee or wasp stings will be glad to know our containers are safe to work near because they do not give off odours that attract these types of insects," said Christie, national representative for Molok Oy, a Finland based company that manufactures waste containers in five different sizes to hold a wide variety of waste products.

Towns, hospitals, schools, factories, retailers (including supermarkets) in Europe have been buying Molok products for years. Last September, Molok Oy opened a branch office and distribution centre on Copenhagen Road in Mississauga.

Since then, Christie said, Molok has sold their product to seven municipalities and conservation authorities in Ontario and has received orders for more.

"After an article appeared in the most recent CPMA newsletter, we have received inquiries from Loblaws and Provigo," she said. While acknowledging Canadian supermarket chains have yet to purchase any Molok Oy products, Christie said that Molok has sold many to supermarkets in Germany, France and many other countries. "Supermarket managers would find any of the five different Molok bins suitable for storing used paper, glass or tin cans," she said. "However, for supermarkets, grocerias, restaurants or hotels, the model that would best suit their needs is the Bio Molok, designed specifically for storing wastes."

The Bio Molok, a cylindrical metal container, stands 2.7 metres (about 8 feet) tall and has a diameter of 80 centimetres, or about 32 inches. It can hold 1,000 litres (or up to 600 kilograms) of organic wastes in a hygienic manner for up to several months without giving off offensive odours.

"The secret is in its design, which has patent protection in many countries and design protection in Canada," Christie explained. "A container at the bottom of the cylinder catches juice from fruits or vegetables, sour milk or other liquids coming from the organic waste above it. When a supermarket employee dumps organic wastes into the Bio Molok, any liquids from the waste seep to the bottom of the cylindrical bin where they are caught in a container where it is stored until it can be emptied manually."

Christie pointed out that by separating the liquids from the rest of the organic waste, the Bio Molok keeps the rest of the

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waste material dry. This in turn slows down considerably the activity of the microbes that break down the waste matter and thus extend the time the solid waste can be stored before it is taken to a composter.

"The Bio Molok," Christie added, "is not a composter but rather a safe, hygienic holding container where organic waste can be stored until it can be trucked off to the composter."

Since it is airtight and designed to slow down the decomposition of organic matter, the Bio Molok does not give off any offensive odours. This means supermarket staff do not have to worry about rats, raccoons and other scavenging animals hanging around the supermarket. Nor do supermarket staff or customers with allergies to bee stings have to worry about the containers attracting these dangerous insects, she explained.

Other design features of the Bio Molok (and other Molok containers) that have made them popular include the following:

By standing vertically into the ground, a Molok requires only 20 percent of the surface space of the conventional waste collecting system.

The coolness of the ground around it keeps the waste cool; this also allows decomposition.

Gravity squeezes the waste with its own weight. As a result, a 2:1 (or greater) compaction ratio is achieved.

Even the smaller Molok model can hold many times the amount of waste of the conventional waste collection system.

For instance, the Bio Molok (with a capacity of 300 litres less than the small Molok) has the capacity of 16 of the bins currently used in many Canadian supermarkets.

Christie feels confident that once the first Bio Molok is installed at a Canadian supermarket, its reputation for quality will spread fast.

"It will be just a matter of time," she said, "before other supermarket managers will be wanting one."

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