



Jerome (Jerry) Goldstein,

born ; died 2012

Editor and Publisher Emeritus of BioCycle, and founder of The JG Press, Inc.. Reading his writings, letters and notes from the past 50-plus years, certain words keep popping into our minds, many starting with the letter

“P”: Pioneer, Prolific, Positive, Prescient, Persistent, Passionate, Patient and Pugnacious. And then there’s a series of **“C”** words: Communicator, Collaborator, Consistent, Creative, Cooperative, Committed — and Community oriented in his actions, activism and thinking.

“Composting, as we know it today, would not have been possible without the vision of Jerome Goldstein. Rest in peace.” (Erica Spiegel, University of Vermont Recycling Program)

Jerry worked to forge an industry around composting, organics recycling and anaerobic digestion that is very much alive and thriving today.

Jerry leaves behind thousands of pages of his writings — articles, speeches, editorials, book chapters, Letters to the Editor — that have influenced and shaped so many elements of resource conservation, soil preservation, composting, sustainable agriculture, renewable energy, recycling, locally grown and healthy food, and much more. But print and conference presentations were not his only communication outlets. Jerry testified before Congress and state legislatures, paid many visits to federal agencies and initiated campaigns — all to influence public policies that would benefit or might hurt composting, recycling, organic agriculture, renewable energy, food quality, energy consumption and urban and rural renewal.

For decades, people would comment that Jerry’s ideas were “ahead of his time.” And some still likely say that today. But here’s what is different. In communities around the globe, examples abound of Jerry’s life work — utilizing sewage sludge to fertilize soils, recycling papers, bottles and cans, composting food waste and other organics, using compost to build healthy soils, starting enterprises to deliver these services, creating nonprofits to carry out community initiatives, implementing green job training programs and more. Along the way, Jerry prodded and pushed, inspired and initiated, mentored and monitored, networked and nudged, created and communicated. And he always did it with a smile, a gentle manner and frequently, with humor.

Neil Seldman, Institute for Local Self-Reliance wrote: Jerry Goldstein was a giant of a man. Smart, generous, he always had time for people interested in the field. He took so much time helping me as a neophyte recycler.

“He was a wonderful man; so passionate and down-to-earth. He truly is an organic father to many generations of composters and to advocates of organics recovery.” Daryl McCartney, Civil & Environmental Engineering, University of Alberta

In January 1978, Jerry left Rodale Press after a 25-year career as Executive Editor of Organic Gardening & Farming and Executive Vice-President of the company. He started The JG Press, Inc., where he was joined by his wife, Ina Pincus Goldstein, and two daughters, Rill Ann Goldstein Miller and Nora Goldstein. The JG Press acquired the rights to Compost Science, which Jerry had edited since the publication was founded in 1960. The name was changed to Compost Science/Land Utilization. In 1981, the magazine was renamed BioCycle.

“Jerry was a true leader and pioneer in our field, but more than that he was a great human being. I always enjoyed talking with him, whether it was about composting or family, and I admired his commitment and his compassion.” Howard Levenson, CalRecycle

After discussing several other conferences held in Spring 1975 related to agricultural waste management, Jerry made the following suggestion: “After all that good talk on composting and organic waste recycling, the thought emerges of how vital it is for the U.S. to develop a National Humus Program. Humus becomes the critical yardstick by which to measure how seriously the excellent scientific research on wastes-in-agriculture is put into practice. ...

What a great contribution Jerry made to our fragile planet. It must be comforting to see that the majority of people are coming around to composting being a key answer to climate change, sustainability and Zero Waste.

A wonderful man, a mentor for many, a leader who helped us all see some fundamental truths about LIFE! on this earth!
Eric Lombardi, EcoCycle