

Questions to Ask When Shopping for Recycling and Composting Equipment

A. Questions for Prospective Owners/Operators/Users

1. How much material will the equipment be required to handle?
2. In what condition will the material be received?
3. Who will be using/operating the equipment? What are their requirements? How do you define “user-friendly?”
4. If the equipment to be obtained is part of an integrated system, what features are required to interface with other system components?
5. What are the market specifications for the material(s) to be handled by the equipment?

B. Questions for Equipment Vendors

1. What is the capacity of the equipment in amount of material per hour, day, or week (with and without downtime considered)?
2. What are the operating conditions for the equipment, such as maximum size or weight of the materials it can process, utility requirements, noise or dust levels, and safety requirements?
3. For processing equipment: Does the equipment turn out a product that meets your specifications for size, density, etc.?
4. What are the operating and maintenance costs per hour of service and per ton of material broken down by labor, materials, and other costs?
5. What type of warranty is provided? What is covered and for how long? What is the replacement guarantee?
6. How does the buyer get service and replacement parts? Who provides the nearest authorized warranty service and parts? How quickly are repair service and parts provided?
7. Does the vendor provide operation, maintenance and repair training/certification with the purchase and, if so, for how many operators/service technicians? If not, how do operators and maintenance/repair personnel get training?
8. Will the vendor demonstrate the equipment in action?

9. What are the recycled-content options?
10. What options are provided for customizing the piece of equipment or supply item; for example, adding the community's recycling logo and phone number to bins?
11. Are there price breaks for large-volume purchases?
12. What is the current delivery schedule?
13. Is the equipment, vehicle, or supply item available through cooperative purchasing either through H-GAC (<https://www.hgacbuy.org/>) or the Texas Comptroller's Office (<http://txsmartbuy.gov>)?
14. Who in Texas, or nearby, has purchased or leased this equipment? Get names, titles, and telephone numbers. Which users have applied the equipment to a project similar to yours?

C. Questions for Current Users of the Equipment:

1. Determine similarity of user's application to your own.
2. Confirm answers to questions 1-7 above.
3. If the equipment is for public use, such as recycling trailers, ask about public feedback regarding the equipment.