Survey and Analysis of the US Biochar Industry

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Overview

- Survey, Analysis, and Preliminary Conclusions
- Observations, Context, Next Steps (Tom Miles)
Dovetail’s Mission Statement:
To provide authoritative information about the impacts and trade-offs of environmental decisions, including consumption choices, land use, and policy alternatives.

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Project Team

- Kathleen Draper, Finger Lakes Biochar and Ithaka Journal; NY
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- Tom Miles, Tom Miles Consulting, Inc. and US Biochar Initiative; OR
- Martin Twer, Biomass Program Director, The Watershed Research & Training Center; CA
Producer Survey Design

- Production Information
- Product Information
- Supply Information
- Location
- Historically Effective Support
- Growth and Pricing Expectations
User Survey

- End-Products Profile
- Additional Processing
- Market Growth Potential
- Cost Information
Analysis

- 61 responses from 135 domestic biochar producers; a 45% response rate.
- 58 User responses.
- Prior to this survey, the US biochar industry’s production was estimated to be between 15,000–20,000 tons per year (TPY). This survey provides data to support an estimate of 45,000 TPY.
- At that rate, the industry is using an estimated 200,000 bone dry tons of biomass.
Conclusions

- Two trends stand out:
  - Both producers and users anticipate growth in sales based on their general optimism about the strength of the marketplace.
  - Both producers and users desire more information and support from all classes of resource providers. (IBI, USBI, Extension, Researchers, Suppliers, and Governments.)
Both users and producers see the need for much higher profile education to the public and farmers, specifically.

Biochar as an animal feed supplement was mentioned by both survey groups repeatedly.

Biochar as a *proven* carbon sequestering product was expected to have the greatest potential to enhance its appeal.
For More Information

- Dovetail Partners website: http://www.dovetailinc.org/reports