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**For immediate release**

**Wednesday, November 29, 2017**

**KEVIN DAVIES OF CALGARY WINS PRESTIGIOUS MANNING INNOVATION AWARD**  
*\$25,000 prize for developing Canada's first inner-city compost facilities*

**Calgary, AB ... The Ernest C. Manning Awards Foundation is thrilled to announce that Kevin Davies has won the 2017 Manning Innovation David E. Mitchell Award of Distinction for developing Canada's first inner-city compost facilities that produce the most nutrient-rich compost tested in Canada.**

**The David E. Mitchell Award of Distinction** is one of four prizes that the Ernest C. Manning Foundation awards annually to talented Canadian innovators who are improving the lives of Canadians and others worldwide through their commercialized innovations.

"I'm honoured to be a Manning Award recipient, and draw much inspiration from other recipients in this year and past years," **says Mr. Davies.** "Compostable waste is a key concern in Canada, taking up more than 40% of all landfill area and I'm proud to have helped develop a solution for this problem."

**Mr. Davies and the other 2017 winners will be available for interviews at the Manning Innovation Symposium at OCAD U Room 270, Great Hall, 100 McCaul St, Toronto, ON on Thursday, November 30<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 a.m. EST.**

In 2013, Mr. Davies recognised opportunity in the unaddressed food waste filling the dumpsters of his Green Start recycling company's clientele. Most compost facilities cannot get regulatory approval to operate within cities where the majority of waste is produced due to odours in the windrow production process. The long-haul trips to reach rural facilities create uneconomic service for potential compost haulers, reducing consumer adoption.

But the inspiration for Hop Compost began after his dog Willy was poisoned by fertilizer in the family garden. Willy was ultimately nursed back to health, but the situation alerted Mr. Davies to the danger of using chemical fertilizer to grow food. As more people share similar concerns, organic food production has reached record sales, but organic farms suffer up to 80% lower crop yields without fertilizer, so production cannot meet demand.

Mr. Davies' research led him to HotRot, a compost cleantech developed by a team of biologists and engineers out of the Wool Research Organisation of New Zealand. Mr. Davies negotiated their first commercial exclusivity agreement to give Hop sole rights for North America, before ultimately acquiring all of HotRot's intellectual property.

Backed by HotRot cleantech which eliminates odours from production, Mr. Davies created Canada's first inner-city compost facilities in Calgary and Vancouver, cutting up to 83% of primary hauling costs and spurring food waste diversion. Hop Compost has signed more than 150 food companies, including Earls, the Hyatt, and DavidsTea to collect compostable material, and that number will rise to more than 400 by the end of 2017.

Hop's compost is now sold at more than 30 retailers in Western Canada including Whole Foods, Burnco, and Greengate, and will be available at more than 250 stores by spring 2018. One bag of Hop's finished compost product provides the nutrients of 8.2 bags of standard compost, increasing organic crop yields.

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## **KEVIN DAVIES OF CALGARY WINS PRESTIGIOUS MANNING INNOVATION AWARD, CONT.**

To commercialize the capital-intensive cleantech for the first time in Canada, Mr. Davies pioneered a triple revenue stream business model. As the first compost operation with complete vertical integration, Hop Compost profits on its inputs with compost hauling service, on its outputs with a compost product, and on its by-products with carbon credits.

Unifying food merchants and food growers in a closed loop, Hop Compost has saved more than 9 million pounds of food waste and more than 15 million pounds of emissions since February 2015. Plans are underway to expand to 14 additional cities in Canada and the United States over the next few years. Hop is 2000x cleaner than OMRI organic standards, improving human health in Canadian agriculture.

**“Canada’s innovation heroes are among our most valuable natural resources,” says Foundation President Jennifer Diakiw. “By sharing their stories, we hope to inspire others to innovate, and foster a sense of pride in our nation.”**

The Ernest C. Manning Awards Foundation was established in 1980 by Alberta Energy Company CEO David Mitchell. Working with former Alberta premier Ernest C. Manning and others, he built the foundation to recognize and celebrate Canadian innovators of all ages and across all disciplines. The Foundation has built a national network of 3,000 young and adult innovators who are leaders in technology, business, engineering, and social innovation advancement. It has awarded innovation prizes to 273 Canadians who have demonstrated innovative talent in developing and successfully marketing a new concept, process or procedure. For more information visit: [www.manningawards.ca](http://www.manningawards.ca).

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For more information, interview requests, or photo opportunities, please contact:

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