

Greg Hunt MP

PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE AUSTRALIAN MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT & HERITAGE
FEDERAL MEMBER FOR FLINDERS

Hon Stephanie Jack MLA

NORFOLK ISLAND MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

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\$650,000 TO NORFOLK ISLAND TO RECYCLE GREEN WASTE

The Hon Greg Hunt MP, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for the Environment and Heritage, who is visiting Norfolk Island, announced today that Norfolk Island is to get \$650,000 to help revolutionise its method of green waste disposal.

The funding comes from the Australian Government's \$3 billion Natural Heritage Trust.

"The Island will use the funds to introduce a green waste management system including the purchase of a 'tub grinder' - a giant mulcher which will turn green organic waste into compost. The tub grinder will also have the capacity to transform builders waste and shredded cardboard into soil conditioning and fertilising products," Mr Hunt said.

Norfolk Island Minister for the Environment, Mrs Stephanie Jack, said she was delighted by the announcement. "This substantial grant will make a big difference to the Island's green waste management," Mrs Jack said. "Norfolk Island's contribution towards this project will be the installation, operation and ongoing maintenance of the tub grinder.

"This new system means that there will be significant environmental benefits. Green waste won't need to be burned and the quantity of builders waste that is currently burnt and the ash dumped at sea, will be minimised. Norfolk Island's air quality and our marine life will be the winners.

"The mulch and organic fertiliser will be available for sale, so Islanders won't need to import fertilisers from the mainland for their gardens and farming lands. Profits from the sale will be used to maintain the grinder.

"We will be running a public awareness program so everyone understands the new green waste recycling system and we'll be encouraging everyone to participate in the project to dispose of their green waste."

"The new tub grinder will be a great help in reducing the spread of weeds," Mr Hunt said. "The local community has been working hard to clear woody weeds, particularly African olive trees.

"However, green waste is now piling up and unless it is disposed of completely any weeds could continue to spread. The grinder will turn the green waste into mulch that can then be composted and eventually used as fertiliser. Mulch can also be spread over weeded land to help prevent weeds growing there in the future and provide improved conditions for the re-establishment of Norfolk Islands native plant species, many of which are listed as threatened.

"The tub grinder will go a long way toward enhancing waste management practices and protecting Norfolk Island's fragile environment and I'd like to congratulate the Islanders on taking this initiative to increase the island's sustainability."

Media enquiries: Katrina Flannery, ph: + 6723 22152 or Fiona Murphy, ph: 0423 577 045 (Mr Hunt's office). Peter Maywald (Secretary to Norfolk Island Government) ph: +6723 22003.

For more information on the Natural Heritage Trust visit www.nht.gov.au