

A Materials Research Science and Engineering Center Program Highlight

The CCMR Jumpstart program, seeding new technologies

The CCMR JumpStart program partners New York State small businesses with Cornell experts who can help them “seed” new technologies.

Omniafiltra LLC, a specialty paper company in Beaver Falls, NY, collaborated with horticulture Professor Alan Taylor to develop garden-friendly uses for a paper slurry byproduct that would otherwise go to the landfill. Pressed and dried, it can be made into sheets of dense mulch to thwart germinating weeds, or into seed mats embedded with vegetable seeds and fertilizers to give home gardeners a head start on the growing season.

Prototype papers made with mill sludge as the primary component were tested for their ability to germinate seeds and allow the roots to rapidly penetrate the paper while inhibiting weed growth and maintaining soil moisture. One paper was selected.

Thanks to JumpStart, Omniafiltra has demonstrated that it is possible to utilize its available manufacturing capacity, develop a new revenue stream, and reduce the amount of waste material currently being disposed of in landfills.

