



REAL'S CERTIFICATION SCHEME FOR QUALITY COMPOSTS

Compost Certification Scheme Newsletter December 2021



The Compost Certification Scheme has been established as a robust and reputable quality assurance and end-of-waste scheme. In this newsletter, you will find various ways in which it has been developed over the past six months, accompanied by related industry news.

Research Hub

TO SUPPORT THE
ORGANICS SCHEMES

The First Project

January 2022 will mark the first anniversary of the completion of the Research Library. The first annual review meeting was held this month

Certification Body telephone numbers

OF&G

+44 (0)1939 291 800

NSF

+44 (0)1993 885 610

ACL

+44 (0)1984 624 989

Approved Laboratory telephone numbers

ATL

+44 (0)1449 721 192

D&F

+44 (0)1514 208 741

NRM

+44 (0)1344 886338

Media platforms

LinkedIn

[linkedin.com/company/compost-certification-scheme/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/compost-certification-scheme/)

Twitter

@compostcert

Producers Twitter

and the decision has been made for NNFCC to continue maintenance of the library for 2022 to 2023.

The Second Project

The second project, to develop a 'data pack' on the properties, characteristics, and content of digestate that will provide the context for the development of new uses of outputs from Anaerobic Digesters, was completed this month.

The outputs from the second project of the Research Hub include a 'data pack' presented in Excel and a supplementary report, which are available to all CCS/BCS producers and the report is available to purchase for the wider industry.

To request the project outputs please email olivia@realschemes.org.uk and CC: info@realschemes.org.uk

The 3rd and 4th Projects

REAL is pleased to announce that this year, two research projects were selected for funding. The selected projects are titled: 'Plant Response Test Failures: Investigation of contaminants and phytotoxins in 'End of Waste' composting feedstocks and finished composts' and 'Evaluation of the potential for the improvement of the Residual Biogas Potential (RBP) test and investigation of alternative test procedures for PAS110 biofertilisers'.

2021 marks the first year since the Hub's inception whereby more than one project has been funded in a single year. This is an exciting and important milestone for the Research Hub, our CCS/BCS operators, and the composting and anaerobic digestion communities.

A Tender Invitation Document for each has been released and REAL are seeking a suitable contract for the respective projects.

UKAS accreditation

We are very pleased to announce that after inviting the existing Certification Bodies to apply to the pilot accreditation programme launched last year with UKAS, all three are now accredited for the Compost Certification Scheme. OF&G, NSF, and ACL successfully completed the pilot programme, gaining accreditation to ISO/IEC 17065 and the CCS. Accreditation by UKAS demonstrates the competence, impartiality and performance capability of these organisations and increases the robustness of the Scheme. CCS certificates are now UKAS accredited.

We have been working with UKAS since 2015 to set up accreditation, which has involved revision of BSI PAS 100 and the CCS Scheme Rules, ensuring that the scheme documents are fit-for-purpose, and facilitating discussions between UKAS and the Environmental Regulators. We are very proud that the Scheme has reached this important milestone in its development.

For enquiries

Our 'Decision Making Tree' enables scheme participants to identify a point of call (organisation) if they have a scheme related enquiry. The tree can be found on our website [here](#).

CQP Review

REAL signed the Environment Agency's Terms and Conditions for the CQP revision process and confirmed our place on the Task and Finish Group. The first meeting of the Task and Finish Group is taking place today and we are looking forward to being involved in discussions.

EU FPR

We are engaging with DEFRA, and the Environment Agency, on the implementation of the EU FPR. The consultation was delayed, however a report on the work of the Nutrient Management Expert Group is expected in March 2022 and a full consultation of options will be held following this before finishing the final framework.

Covid-19 and audits

In consultation with the Environmental Regulators and the Certification Bodies in July, the agreements for remote auditing were extended until 31st September. During this period, in England and Scotland, on-site inspections were presumed for all sites but in certain circumstances, where an on-site inspection was not possible, a remote inspection could take place. In this event, Certification Bodies documented the reason for choosing a remote inspection and additionally, second remote renewal audits were avoided. If it was not possible to avoid a remote audit, the reasoning was given by the Certification Body to the local EA officer or SEPA. In Northern Ireland and Wales, a remote audit could

Laboratory T&Cs revision

We carried out the annual review and revision of the Laboratory T&Cs in consultation with the Certification Bodies and Approved Laboratories, under our Laboratory Approval Scheme. Several changes have been introduced, though the most significant change is the introduction of the requirement to participate in the LGC Animal Feeds Proficiency Testing Scheme (AFPS) for microbial pathogens. This replaces the VETQAS scheme and uses a real matrix rather than freeze-dried ampoules, it has more robust statistics and is run by a UKAS approved PT programme provider.

Workshops and Webinars

Since June, we have run two webinars for producers on test results and sampling. The CCS Understanding Test Results Webinar delivers information on the core PAS 100 test methods. It is designed for producers to gain further insight into the tests used under CCS and help with interpretation of results and is especially suited for those new to the scheme or with a limited understanding of testing. This webinar provides an effective platform for discussion on this topic with REAL and other producers. We also held another CCS sampling webinar in October. The CCS Sampling Guidance Webinar focusses on the REAL 'Guidance on sampling composted materials in accordance with BS PAS100:2018', sampling in practice, and touches on developing sampling SOPs.

Feedback from these webinars has been positive, all attendees have responded that they would recommend the webinar to others. We will be holding more of these webinars in early 2022.

CCS Producers' Forum and TAC

We held the winter meeting of the CCS Producers' Forum in October where we were joined by Professor Stephen Nortcliff. As Advisor to the Research Hub, Stephen provided an overview of the Research Hub project selection process and updates on the projects funded by the Hub. Stephen also offered producers the opportunity to contact him directly if they have an idea that they would like to develop further into a research proposal before the next call for proposals.

We said goodbye to Gaynor Hartnell and thanked her for her time as independent chair of the CCS forum over the last few years. REAL are currently seeking a new chair for the forums. If anyone has suggestions for suitable individuals or would like to discuss this opportunity, please send an email to info@realschemes.org.uk.

Key topics of discussion at the forum, such as suggestions from producers on potential revisions to PAS 100 in relation to stones and E.coli limits were then raised at the November TAC meeting. This meeting also included technical discussion over the use of Peat moss

only take place under exceptional circumstances and the Certification Bodies notified the regulators prior to the audit.

A further review meeting took place between REAL and the Regulators in September. REAL presented two proposals for auditing arrangements from 1st October. Following this discussion, the previous agreements with the EA, NRW, and SEPA lapsed, meaning a return to all audits on-site across England, Wales, and Scotland. The previous agreement with NIEA was extended until 31st December 2021.

We are monitoring the evolving situation and will take into consideration any changes to Government guidance or new restrictions.

2020 Annual Report

Our 2020 annual report was published in September 2021. The report found that by the end of 2020, there were 176 certified composting processes in the UK: 137 in England, 6 in Northern Ireland, 20 in Scotland, and 13 in Wales. 110 of these were operated as open air, turned windrows, 11 as in-vessel composting only processes, and 12 as aerated static pile processes with no subsequent process step. 143 were processing green waste only (approximately 2.5 million tonnes on an annual basis) and 33 processing green waste mixed with ABP materials (approximately 1.3 million tonnes on an annual basis). Collectively, producers on the CCS were producing 1.6 million tonnes of quality compost annually.

The report can be read in full [on the CCS website](#).

Participant and Research Hub Surveys

We ran two surveys in October: the Scheme Participant Survey and the first Research Hub Survey. The purpose of these was to help REAL assess scheme satisfaction amongst producers, prioritise areas for further development, and

in the Plant Response Test, an issue which will be raised at the next PRT Technical Working Group meeting, as well as an update on the Environment Agency's new RPS241; and how REAL could provide guidance on this position statement to producers.

+44 (0)207 981 0875

www.qualitycompost.org.uk

info@realschemes.org.uk



From everyone at REAL, have a very Merry Christmas and we look forward to working with you in 2022!

to assess how producers use and interact with the Research Hub. We received positive survey results, showing an overall good level of satisfaction with the CCS. The Research Hub Survey identified that there is a good understanding of the aims and benefits of the Hub and there is an opportunity to improve understanding around how projects are selected for funding.

WRAP Roadmap for the Organics Sector

WRAP published their roadmap for addressing the key challenges facing the organics sector in September this year.

These key challenges include the need for quality, reducing ammonia emissions and fully valuing the products produced by the organics sector. In order to ensure that the roadmap remains live and relevant, WRAP, on behalf of Defra, will manage the roadmap and will work to convene the actions owners, including REAL, and monitor progress made.

Compost Certification Scheme is part of Renewable Energy Assurance Limited.
Compost Certification Scheme, Brettenham House, 2-19 Lancaster Place, London WC2E 7EN
Having trouble reading this? [View it in your browser](#). Not interested anymore? [Unsubscribe](#) instantly.
You can read our privacy policy [here](#)