



REAL'S CERTIFICATION SCHEME FOR QUALITY COMPOSTS

Compost Certification Scheme newsletter



The Compost Certification Scheme (CCS) 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 the scheme has been developed this year accompanied by industry related news.

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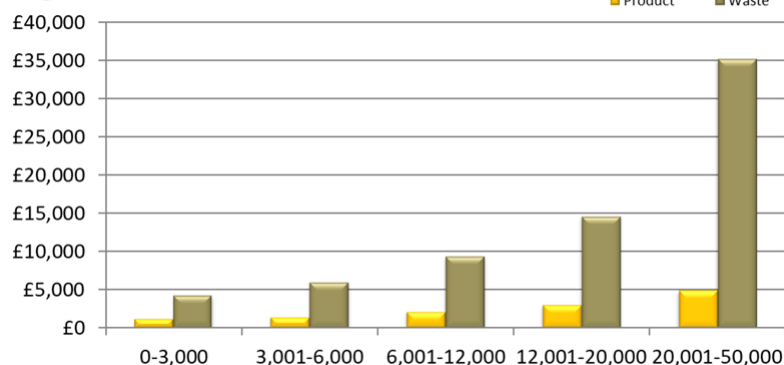
Media platforms

We recently set up our first LinkedIn and Twitter pages for CCS - please follow us using the links below!

LinkedIn

www.linkedin.com/company/compost-certification-scheme/

England



Input tonnage per annum

Product vs Waste

The graph above compares average annual costs for the renewal of certification against the end of waste criteria for compost ('Product') and the deployment of compost to land under waste management regulations ('Waste'). The costs used for this analysis include the new deployment charges introduced by the Environment Agency this year. Operators processing between 20,001 and 50,000 tonnes of feedstock on an annual basis could incur an annual cost of approximately £5,000 for renewal of *quality compost* status or £35,000 for the spreading of waste compost.

The cost comparison document detailing all of the assumptions and supplementary information can be found on our website [here](#).

Revision of PAS 100

The quality standard BSI PAS 100:2011, which underpins the production of *quality compost*, has been formally revised with the British Standards Institution (BSI) over the last year. The new specification for composted materials will be published soon!

The updated standard is the result of an extensive stakeholder consultation and consensus building process. Over 300 comments were evaluated and a wide range of industry stakeholders engaged in discussions and debates on how to make PAS 100 more fit for purpose for today's organics recycling industry.

The revision process has shown that we have a robust standard that the industry can be very confident in. However, to keep it up-to-date, we need research and scientific evidence to support a number of technical changes. We need to support the world of Research & Development (R&D) to keep the standard evolving as the industry

Twitter

www.twitter.com/compostcert

Strategic Review of Charges

Following a consultation, the Environment Agency published its new [environmental permitting charging scheme](#), effective from April 1st 2018. New mobile plant deployment charges were introduced for land spreading and the graph above provides an indication of the average costs that producers spreading compost under waste management regulations could now incur on an annual basis.

PAS training course

In June, we contributed to the delivery of the REA's PAS 100 training course to explain how the certification scheme works and present the latest scheme developments. It was interesting to learn how different operators interpret certain PAS requirements and understand HACCP planning.

Organics Recycling Conference 2018

In March, we gave a talk at the annual Organics Recycling Conference amongst dynamic speakers working in the field of organics recycling. The emphasis on 'quality' was clear with a need to focus on cleaning up waste inputs and producing good quality outputs. We presented our plans for market development and the Research Hub, which was mentioned as a great initiative by the Agency.

Bioenergy Sector Group meetings

We presented at two of the REA's Bioenergy Sector Group meetings, where attendees could learn more about the regulatory issues and policies shaping the industry. We were proud to show the significant amount

evolves. REAL has devised a mechanism to achieve this goal.

BSI PAS 100:2018

We will soon be celebrating the release of PAS 100:2018 as BSI publishes the new standard within the next few weeks!

The new requirements introduce more quality controls to the composting process and management system. A significant change is the new Safety and Quality Control System (SQCS), which requires producers to assess both safety and quality hazards relevant to the intended use of the compost. We are currently working on a paper to present to Defra the importance of this change and the impact it will have on the production of *quality compost*.

Another important addition is the new 'Compost quality' clause that makes clearer the requirement to produce compost that is fit for purpose. The quality of compost must be suitable for its intended use. This clause requires producers to check and agree with customers any additional quality requirements.

The industry can have great confidence in this new standard that will ensure the compost produced according to the requirements is consistently safe, good quality, and fit for purpose.

However, we recognise that there were limits to what could be revised and what can be revised in the future without the relevant research taking place. There was not enough evidence available to support some proposals. To this end, we have set up our Research Hub so that the industry will be ready for the next revision equipped with more knowledge and evidence to take things forward.

Research Hub

PAS 100 might need to be updated again in the future and we need to be prepared with the evidence base to support the necessary changes. Therefore, we have devised a tool to source funding to support the necessary research in the form of a Research HUB. We launched REAL's Compost and Biofertiliser Certification Schemes' Research HUB in March this year!

The Research HUB has been widely supported and is regarded as an exciting development that will support growth in the organics recycling industry. It will contribute to the evolution of the industry and it could also provide a better link between industry and the R&D

of green waste and ABP materials that certified compost producers process on an annual basis to produce compost that is safe and good quality!

CCS Annual Report 2017

Our [annual report](#) has been published, providing an overview of scheme data and developments from 2017.

The report also presents data on the proportion of certified to non-certified sites in March 2018. In March this year, 55% of compost sites in Northern Ireland were certified, 70% of sites with waste management licenses in Scotland were certified, and 45% of all permitted sites in England were certified. This indicates that a large amount of waste is recycled or recovered through quality processes and good quality compost is produced on an annual basis - 1.9 million tonnes per annum by the end of 2017!

In this report, we also shared updates from the Biofertiliser Certification Scheme, Green Gas Certification Scheme, and Compostable Packaging Certification Scheme, which are owned and administered by REAL.

Compostable coffee cups

We would like to share the good news that the Animal and Plant Health Agency, the Environment Agency, and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency consider that *certified* compostable cups and capsules can be composted in a facility that doesn't have APHA approval!

This applies to products that have been in contact with tea, coffee, **milk** and **cream** *only*. Producers must also have the appropriate waste codes in their environmental authorisation and the waste codes must be listed in Appendix B of the Quality Protocol.

Clean Air Strategy

Defra is consulting on its [Clean Air](#)

world (e.g. universities, academics, researchers, and consultancies).

Through our technical discussions with stakeholders, we recognise the need for this more and more. Without the relevant research taking place, the industry could stagnate. WRAP used to play a vital role but the funding and resources are no longer available. We would like to fill this void and provide the revitalisation that the industry needs.

We are now in the process of finalising the governance details and we will share more information about the HUB soon. In the meantime, we have provided an overview in this section of our website [here](#).

CCS Producers' Forum and TAC

At the recent Forum meeting, we discussed with operators the Research Hub, market development, our plans to develop aspects of testing and certification, and the revisions made to PAS 100. It was interesting to hear wide-ranging views on the potential Research & Development (R&D) work that the HUB could support in the future and how this work would benefit the industry.

The Oversight Panel meeting that took place a few weeks later proved very useful for Panel members to discuss the technical issues experienced by the operators. We also learned more about the environmental regulators' views on certain practices. It was an effective meeting with plenty of discussion on market development, research and development, and scheme development.

Laboratories

We liaise regularly with the appointed laboratories and independent laboratory auditor. Through this collaboration, we can seek to improve and address testing-related issues. REAL's Technical Manager focusses on developing aspects of testing, working closely with the Laboratory Terms & Conditions (T&Cs). We are revising the Laboratory T&Cs again this year to introduce new requirements and we are also in the process of drafting a tender invitation document for the development and / or provision of proficiency testing schemes - more news on this soon!

Certification Bodies and UKAS

[Strategy](#) and the consultation period ends on 14th August. Proposals to reduce ammonia emissions from farming include the introduction of nitrogen (or fertiliser) limits. REAL will be submitting a response to this consultation after we also attended a workshop to discuss these proposals.

There is concern over the rise of ammonia emissions from the spreading of organic fertilisers and Defra has now published the [Code of Good Agricultural Practice for Reducing Ammonia Emissions](#), which provides best practice guidance and recommendations.

25 Year Environment Plan

The Government published its [25 Year Environment Plan](#) earlier this year, which sets out policies for using and managing land sustainably. The actions to achieve the goals of improving soil health and protecting peatlands involves; developing better information on soil health, restoring vulnerable peatlands, and ending peat use in horticultural products by 2030.

This will hopefully create more space for the use of compost in agriculture and horticulture and provides a great opportunity for the industry to flourish!

Resources & Waste Strategy

As we anticipate the forthcoming Resources & Waste Strategy, we are engaging with Defra in relation to this Strategy, compost, and digestate. We had a positive meeting during which we discussed the importance of quality standards for the recycling of biowaste / biodegradable materials and the importance of clean inputs and good quality outputs to reduce contamination.

We will continue to engage with Defra going forward on the Resources & Waste Strategy, Fertilisers Regulations, and the Clean Air

We work very closely with certification personnel to maintain strong, collaborative relationships with the appointed certification bodies. We regularly discuss new scenarios and share views on certification-related queries to form a shared position when necessary.

In April, we hosted a roundtable meeting for the certification officers and inspectors to facilitate discussions on technical requirements and potential improvements to the certification process. It was great to engage with highly competent certification personnel who have backgrounds in farming, composting, soil science, and auditing.

We are also working with the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) to set up specific accreditation for the CCS and we will be engaging with UKAS this summer as we revise the CCS Scheme Rules. Certification scheme accreditation will provide even more assurance in certification services with extra checks carried out on the certification process. Accreditation will make CCS even more robust and we look forward to working with UKAS!



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