

## Summary Notes of the CCS Technical Advisory Committee meeting

15<sup>th</sup> January 2015, 10.30 am – 12.30 pm, REAL offices, London

### Attendees:

Professor Stephen Nortcliff – chair; Virginia Graham – REAL; Justyna Franuszkiewicz – REAL CCS; Ciaran Burns – REAL Biofertiliser Certification Scheme (BCS); Emily Nichols – REAL CCS; Roy Lawford – Organic Farmers & Growers (OF&G); Claire Eaton – NSF Certification (NSF); Rebecca Foster – NSF Certification (NSF); Duncan Rose – NRM Laboratories (NRM); David Tompkins – Waste and Resource Action Programme (WRAP); Anna Simpson – National Farmers Union (NFU); Gregor Keenan – The CCS Producers’ Forum.

### Teleconference:

Alison McKinnie – Zero Waste Scotland (ZWS); Fiona Donaldson – Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)

### 1. Scheme Update

- a. Details of the state of the Scheme at the end of 2014 were provided. Currently there are c. 180 members in the Scheme; this number has remained constant over the last 2 years, with both new members and departures.
- b. In 2015 the Scheme will develop an on-line database and develop a laboratory monitoring programme (Tenders for an independent assessor(s) are being considered and an appointment will be made in April 2015).
- c. REAL CCS will continue the independent sampling scheme.
- d. The Plant Response test methodology is under review. Highlighted for future consideration is the need to consider differences in natural and artificial light and the basis for the peat to compost ratio (basing this on electrical conductivity is considered unsuitable).
- e. REAL is in discussions with UKAS concerning CCS accreditation.
- f. REAL has discussed the importance of the recognition of the certification mark and will take steps to broaden its recognition in the horticultural market.

## 2. Update from the Certification Bodies

- a. The recently introduced checklist has been well received.
- b. Some sites have been removed from the Scheme because of test failure, but new sites have been added.
- c. It was noted that technical enquiries from Producers are discussed in a three way relationship Operators-CB-REAL and in addition there is a monthly review between CBs and REAL. Major topics arising from these discussions would be referred to the TAC. No outstanding technical matters had been identified at the moment.

## 3. Producers Forum

Gregor Keenan raised matters discussed at the Producers Forum.

- a. Concerns had been expressed over the variability of some test results (see 2b). Particular concerns had been raised relating to the Stability Tests. In discussion it was noted that this test is robust for mature composts, but has proved problematic when used with younger less mature composts. It was noted WRAP will publish a report on this in the near future.
- b. The PAS 100 stone limits may be too narrow for compost supplied for agricultural use. In discussion it was stressed that stone limits are very important when compost is used in horticulture. A review of PAS 100 has been considered, but has been put on hold until the EU Fertiliser Regulations are finalised. These may supersede PAS 100 and CQP. If a review takes place WRAP will no longer be able to provide supporting funding. It was suggested by the TAC that industry might contribute to any future review.
- c. The classification of compostable bags and cutlery has been raised as a concern by some producers. This is a topic which will be kept under review.
- d. The Committee considered the contributions from the Producers' Forum very valuable. For continuity the Committee considered it was preferable that the representative from the Producers' Forum did not change for each meeting of the TAC.

## 4. Environmental Regulators' Update

No major issues were identified.

## 5. Standards

- a. Quality Meet Scotland have recently published an updated Standard which requires test results for each consignment. There were possibly some issues which needed clarification in relation to 'consignment'. The Committee will review this at a future meeting following discussion with CCS operators.
- b. BS Topsoil – a revision of this standard is currently out for public consultation

## 6. WRAP Project Summary

David Tompkins provided a brief summary of the current WRAP's projects. These include:

- a. Sampling and Testing the Physical Contaminants in PAS Compost and Digestate
- b. Screened out side – streams from composting & AD operations: Guidance on potential markets
- c. Specification of Quality Compost for use in Growing Media (Growing media package)

## 7. Land Spreading Consultation

The recently published EA consultation on spreading of compost and digestate to land was highlighted.

## 8. Departure of David Topkins

David Tompkins explained that he is leaving WRAP in mid-February but will still work in the organics recycling industry. The group thanked David for the long support in the Scheme's development and wished him all the best in his new role.

The group agreed that WRAP's representation at the TAC meetings is desirable.