



## **Guidance for Getting Started with REAL's Biofertiliser Certification Scheme**

Read BSI PAS 110 and the Anaerobic Digestate Quality Protocol (ADQP). The ADQP can be downloaded from the BCS website. Review your facility against the criteria in the PAS110 and QP documents to determine those changes that are necessary to pass the standard. There is a checklist that will be used by the certifying body when they inspect your plant that may be useful to review the facility against the criteria in PAS 110 and the ADQP. This checklist can be also be downloaded from the BCS website.

- Digestate must be produced only from source-segregated biodegradable materials.
- EWC codes must be listed in Appendix B of the ADQP for allowable waste streams.
- Written supply agreements for input materials must be agreed with each supplier.

**You may need a guide to instituting a Quality Management System of HACCP system. There are consultants who can advise on this. Carry out the changes you identify as necessary.**

- A QMS must be established and maintained, specific to the digestion process and resulting digestate.
- A Quality Policy must be in place and include producer's commitment to achieving minimum quality.
- HACCP planning must be utilized to identify and control hazards e.g. presence of pathogens.

**Select a Certification Body from the three appointed organisations and request an application form together with any documentation that is necessary for certification. Contact the appointed laboratories to discuss taking samples and submitting for testing.**

- Choose one of two Appointed Laboratories (NRM based in Berkshire or ATL based in Suffolk).
- Each final sample must be representative of the batch or portion of production sampled.
- Three most recent digestate sample test results must pass the minimum quality criteria in PAS110.

**Forward the full application form plus accompanying documents and fee to the Certifying Body.**

- REAL recommend contacting each CB (ACL, NSF, and OF&G) to make an informed decision.
- Contact details, price lists, and application forms can be found on this website.
- Enclose QMS documentation, HACCP assessment, test results (if available), flow diagram, copy of Environmental Permit/Waste Management Licence/Exemption, copy of APHA licence (if relevant).

This application is reviewed by a Certification Officer (CO) to ascertain if the plant system is in line with the requirements of the standard, and if it is, then an appointment to visit the site is made. If however there is still work to be completed the Certification Officer (CO) notifies the plant of the requirements and when the changes have been made the CO will make a site visit. A site inspection is carried out by a Certification Officer.

- The inspector will explain any non-conformances identified during the inspection.
- Corrective actions will be agreed to address any non-conformances identified.
- Inspector will send report to the Certification Body where it's assessed before inspection by CO.

If successful this marks the start of validation. If there are corrective actions then these are notified to you. The corrective action taken is then notified to the CO who will decide whether a further site visit is necessary. When the corrective action is accepted successfully, this marks the start of validation.

**Please also note the following:**

- ❖ Important aspects to consider for achieving certification include; ensuring there is an appropriate mix of suitable input materials, the AD process is well-managed and effective, and a suitable hydraulic retention time (HRT) has been established.
- ❖ A pasteurisation step is required by PAS110, although, there are exemption clauses in the standard.
- ❖ Certification Bodies are allowed to offer guidance about interpretation of the requirements of PAS110 and the ADQP but are not allowed to offer advice on how to achieve certification.
- ❖ There must be a designated market for the digestate – end markets specified in ADQP.
- ❖ Supply documentation and good practice guidance must be given to customers of digestate (ADQP).
- ❖ PAS 110 is a non-statutory document so producers must also comply with all relevant existing statutory requirements and the conditions of their permit for digesting the waste.

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions. Thank you.

**Georgia Phetmanh**, Schemes Manager, [georgia@realschemes.org.uk](mailto:georgia@realschemes.org.uk)

**Justyna Staff**, Head of Certification Schemes, [justyna@realschemes.org.uk](mailto:justyna@realschemes.org.uk)