



REAL'S CERTIFICATION SCHEME FOR QUALITY DIGESTATES

Biofertiliser Certification Scheme newsletter



The Biofertiliser Certification Scheme (BCS) has been established as a robust and reputable quality assurance and end-of-waste scheme. BCS has been tailored to work for all relevant stakeholders including the end users of quality digestate, providing assurance on the safety and quality of certified material. We champion the ways in which the Scheme and its participants contribute to the circular economy, healthier UK soils, and market confidence in digestate as a fertiliser.

MERRY CHRISTMAS

We are currently celebrating the tenth anniversary of when REAL laid the foundations of PAS 110 and the Biofertiliser Certification Scheme (BCS).

Here you will find industry-related news and events that we would like to share with you accompanied by various Scheme developments that we are celebrating this festive period.

We would also like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Certification Body contact details

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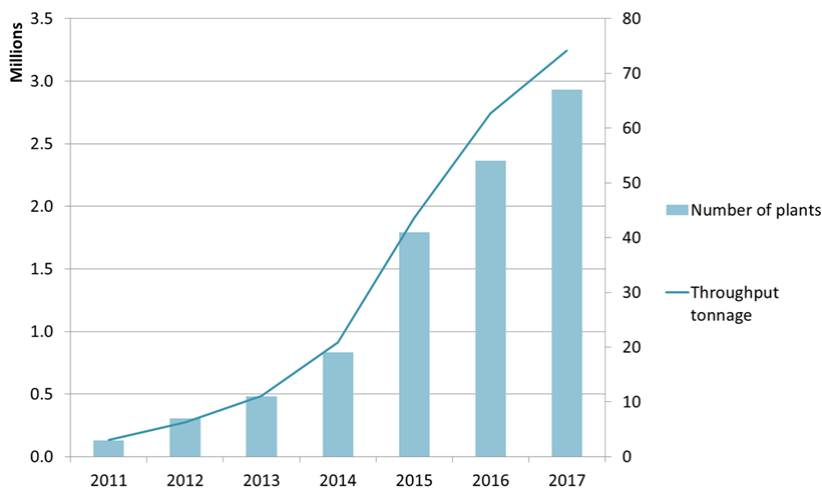
NSF

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Aardvark Certification Ltd (ACL)

+44 (0)1984 624 989

Laboratory contact details



Since 2011, there has been a substantial increase in the number of plants certified through the Biofertiliser Certification Scheme rising from three to 67 since 2011. Collectively, certified plants are now processing approximately 3.2 million tonnes of feedstock annually with 49 plants producing certified whole digestate, 24 producing certified separated liquor, and 14 producing certified separated fibre.

Certification Bodies

When the Scheme began, there was only one certification body available to provide certification services for participants. There are now three certification bodies appointed to provide independent assessments of conformance on behalf of REAL BCS. We are proud to be able to offer digestate producers with the choice of three organisations and highly competent certification personnel. This competition helps to ensure that they provide their services to the highest standards and we are very happy to be working closely with Organic Farmers & Growers (OF&G), NSF, and Aardvark Certification Ltd (ACL).

Laboratories

We are also very pleased to have officially appointed ATL and NRM to provide services for testing of digestate against the PAS 110 criteria. The laboratories work very hard to ensure the results they produce are reliable and accurate. They were fully audited earlier this

Natural Resource Management (NRM)

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Alliance Technical Laboratories (ATL)

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REAL BCS contact details

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Strategic Review of Charges

The changes to the regulatory charging scheme proposed by the Environment Agency could make it more expensive for producers to landspread waste. We anticipate that BCS certification could become more attractive.

EU Fertiliser Regulations

We have been keeping up to date with the latest developments surrounding the EU Fertilisers Regulation. The introduction of these regulations could open up a big market for operators and we look forward to exploring the opportunities this might present us.

Training course

In November, we contributed to the delivery of the Renewable Energy Association PAS 110 training course. It was a very good turnout and it was great to meet so many individuals committed to operating an efficient process and committed to producing good quality digestate.

year and the independent auditor provided us with positive audit reports and recommendation letters expressing support for their renewal. The introduction of independent auditing has improved our understanding of their practices. We work closely with the laboratories to address any new issues and they are very cooperative when engaging with our work. Regular liaison with the independent laboratory auditor also allows us to identify areas of auditing that we could improve. We look forward to working with the laboratories and independent auditor even more closely next year.

BCS Operators' Forum and Oversight Panel

The BCS Operators' Forum provides a great opportunity for us to engage with operators. The discussions contribute to our understanding of how the Scheme works for participants and we can learn how the industry changes from digestate producers' perspectives. We were delighted to engage with operators at the [BCS Operators' Forum](#) in June and the views they shared on achieving PAS 110 and technological developments in the industry were useful for consideration of future Scheme developments.

The link between the Oversight Panel and Operators' Forum provides means for industry stakeholders, including the environmental regulators, to participate in discussions on issues raised by digestate producers. The Oversight Panel meetings also provide a great opportunity for us to engage with farm assurance schemes, such as Red Tractor, and ensure that we consider a cross-section of views when proposing future developments to the Scheme. The most recent Oversight Panel meeting allowed us to seek advice from experienced organisations like WRAP regarding our proposals for R&D support and to gather views from the operator representatives on our proposed fees.

BCS plans for 2018

We are excited for the year ahead and our plans for promoting the Scheme further afield, updating the Scheme documents, and strengthening our relationship with different organisations. We will continue to engage with individuals and stakeholder groups on issues facing certified digestate producers. We will also continue to

Organics Recycling report 2015

WRAP published the [Organics Recycling industry status report 2016](#) earlier this year presenting a snapshot of the UK's organics recycling sector. Approximately 4.5 million tonnes of digestate was produced with an impressive 1 million tonnes of biofertiliser produced by certified plants!

SQC consultation

In March, Scottish Quality Crops (SQC) invited industry members to respond to their consultation by agreeing to a robust level of accreditation and audit required on green-feedstock AD plant digestate for use within their scheme. We submitted a response outlining why we think all digestate should be certified to PAS 110 through the Biofertiliser Certification Scheme, regardless of the feedstock materials.

SEPA's revised regulatory position statement

After consulting with industry last year, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) revised their [position statement](#) on how they will regulate the use and handling of digestate. More stringent limits for plastics have been introduced to bring the limits in line with Quality Meat Scotland (QMS) standards. SEPA is very supportive of operators in Scotland and we look forward to building our working relationship with SEPA and the other environmental regulators in 2018.

WRAP risk assessment report

In January WRAP published their highly anticipated report on [digestate quality and safety for agriculture](#). The

strengthen the robustness of the Scheme by working with UKAS to set up specific accreditation for the certification bodies and developing the BCS database. Furthermore, we look forward to proceeding with our plans to set up a Research Hub that will support R&D projects and allow us to keep informed of relevant technical developments in the industry.

findings demonstrated that the risks associated with application of quality digestate to land were low or negligible. These were very welcome findings for REAL BCS and we will continue to share the knowledge of these risk assessment reports at any available opportunity.

Merry Christmas



Biofertiliser Certification Scheme is part of Renewable Energy Assurance Limited.
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