

## Biofertiliser Certification Scheme Newsletter



The Biofertiliser Certification Scheme (BCS) has been established as a robust 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 related industry news.

### Research Hub

#### Second meeting of the Research Panel

The Research Hub's Research Panel met for the second time on 13 June 2019. Key agenda items included the presentation of the Research Hub's SurveyMonkey results and the prioritisation and selection of Research Project Proposals, to take forward to tender.

The Panel discussed each of the thirteen shortlisted Research Project Proposals, as included in the SurveyMonkey and, informed by the survey results, decided to take forward one research project in

### 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

#### NRM

+44 (0)1344 886338

#### ATL

+44 (0)1449 721 192 (Chemistry) /  
+44 (0)1449 721 637 (Microbiology)

### Media platforms

#### LinkedIn

[www.linkedin.com/company/biofertiliser-certification-scheme/](http://www.linkedin.com/company/biofertiliser-certification-scheme/)

#### Twitter

[www.twitter.com/biofertcert](http://www.twitter.com/biofertcert)

### For enquiries

Our 'decision making tree' enables scheme participants to identify a point of

2019. The chosen project is simple in its objectives allowing the project to run productively, ensuring success, whilst the Hub simultaneously develops and finalises its procedures.

### **The first project of the Research Hub**

The first project taken forward by the Research Hub is titled 'The development of a Research Library for the Organics Recycling Industry'. Existing industry research will be collated, and a gap analysis will be undertaken. The collation of existing research across both the compost and anaerobic digestion industries will allow research 'gaps' to be identified and distinguish areas of research that are limited, or altogether absent.

The establishment of the Research Library can prevent the duplication of research studies and importantly, prevent misuse of research resource. The Panel is of the opinion that the findings of this project have the potential to shape and inform the objectives of future Research Project Proposals submitted to and taken forwards by the Research Hub. The Research Library will be an informative and valuable resource for both the composting and anaerobic digestion industries.

Other research projects that were shortlisted from the Panel's shortlist include, 'Reducing plastic and other contaminants in compost (and digestate) feedstock', 'PAS 100 plant response testing: options for change' and 'Digestate value in agriculture'.

### **Plans for 2019 and beyond**

The Research Hub will run a tender to appoint a contractor for the first project of the Research Hub. The tender period will run throughout September and October with the successful contractor anticipated to be appointed at the end of November. Look out for the Tender Invitation Document coming soon!. The contract period will run throughout December and into 2020.

The third meeting of the Research Hub, due to take place at the end of October, will provide an opportunity for the Panel to discuss the progress of the first project as well as an opportunity to discuss subsequent projects of the Hub.

Previously, the Hub was accepting research project proposal submissions within a designated 'submission period'. The Panel has decided proposals can be submitted to the Hub at any time and outside of a designated 'submission period'. Projects submitted outside of the period will be 'banked' and reviewed at a later period.

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call (organisation or individual) if they have a scheme related enquiry. The tree can be found on the BCS website [HERE](#).

### **2018 REAL Annual Report**

You can find our recently published 2018 Schemes' Annual Report on our website [HERE](#) for information about the status of the Scheme by 2018 end.

### **PAS 110 review**

In May, REAL issued a survey to all BCS operators to ask 'Do you think there is a need to initiate a PAS 110 revision process in the near future?' and gave operators the opportunity to provide any additional comments. The survey also provided context related to the Research Hub and ADQP review.

The survey results were compiled and analysed by REAL and later presented to the Technical Advisory Committee for discussion and advice on whether wider industry engagement is necessary at this stage. REAL is now engaging with the environmental regulators and WRAP to seek their views on whether a revision of PAS 110 is necessary in the near future.

Following this consultation, a case will be made to BSI, with a corresponding letter, on whether a revision of the standard should be initiated in the near future. Should the revision process be established, workshops will be set up with wider industry to discuss any specific technical issues or proposals.

### **ADQP review**

The Environment Agency has announced that it will be reviewing all the current Quality Protocols over the next 12-18 months with the initial review of the ADQP (and CQP) prioritised. There are three potential outcomes of the initial review, which are:

- The Agency supports the current version or with only minor amendments
- The Agency does not support the current version and when asked, if

## Changes to scheme operation

'Certification codes' have been issued by the Certification Bodies to all scheme participants, for each digestate output certified under BCS and we have revised our PAS 110 digestate analysis request form.

Additionally, a field has been added to the form to indicate the type of sample being sent for testing, and the purpose of the analysis. These categories include 'routine verification'. Within the 'important notes' section at the end of the form, there is a description of each sample type. The Approved Laboratories will be using the certification codes to upload test results onto a database managed by REAL. This change has been introduced to improve the robustness of the BCS.

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## Position on Technical Requirements

We updated our BCS position on technical requirements document, which was written in response to queries from operators on the BCS and other organisations. This document accompanies our Scheme Rules (version 5). The requirements provide clarity on specific technical aspects of PAS 110, the ADQP and the BCS scheme rules. The purpose of the document is to ensure consistency of interpretation of the requirements and to improve robustness of, and uniformity within the schemes.

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## Market development

Our Market Development Working Group (MDWG) met for the second time in June, and the agenda covered a wide range of topics following the first meeting. One agenda item was the topic of PAS promotion. The group discussed ways to promote PAS 100/110, and the labelling of quality products, to the markets.

The MDWG also noted from an NNFFC dataset that 220 AD/biogas plants were processing digestate from manures/slurries and crop residue. Plants such as these may benefit greatly from certification under the BCS Quality Assurance Scheme.

A teleconference took place recently to discuss how best to communicate the development of this Scheme to the markets.

The Environment Agency had confirmed that a review/gap analysis of the ADQP and CQP will be undertaken in the near future.

Engagement with the industry may take place, depending on the outcome of the review. The MDWG will be circulating a survey to BCS scheme participants to gather views on potential changes

industry requires it to be revised and updated, any revision undertaken would be chargeable to industry

- The Agency does not support the current version and when asked, if industry does not or cannot require a revision, the ADQP will no longer be supported and all QP compliant material will revert to waste

We are liaising with the Environment Agency about the ADQP and PAS 110 reviews. We have also sought initial views from operators at the last BCS Operators' Forum on the reviews.

## EU Fertiliser Product Regulations

On 15th July, The EU published new regulations for placing fertilising and other products on the internal EU market. The regulations focus on making use of recycled or organic products for fertiliser. At present, there are partially harmonised regulations for fertilisers made from inorganic material.

Products that are compliant with the requirements of the EU regulations can move freely within the internal EU market and help promote a circular economy. The initiative was identified as one of the key legislative proposals under the Circular Economy Action Plan. EU Member states can choose to continue to implement their national rules and regulations.

The regulations set limits for several contaminants in EU marked fertiliser, e.g. a 60mg/KG limit of cadmium within organic and phosphate fertiliser. There are also certain requirements for input waste, treatment processes and techniques, and the fertilising products, ensuring that the products do not have an overall adverse impact on environmental or human health.

*The EU Fertiliser Product Regulations will apply from 16th July 2022, three years after they came into effect.*

considered by the MDWG, principally additional waste inputs and market sectors.

More information about the MDWG can be found on the BCS website [here](#), including the Terms of Reference and meeting summary notes.

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### PAS 110 digestate testing

This summer, the BCS Approved Laboratories are going through their third round of annual audits. This is now a combined audit process with the laboratories assessed against a new set of Terms and Conditions. For the BCS laboratories, this will make the auditing process more efficient and for REAL, this has freed up resource to look into the development of a proficiency testing programme. The programme will be set up for tests specific to the scheme. We will soon be releasing the Tender Invitation Document for this.

We have also initiated a tender process for the appointment of a new Independent Laboratory Auditor. The auditor will be in place from the beginning of next year and will work closely with us over the next two years to continue monitoring performance. You can find the Tender Invitation Document [here](#) and we welcome submissions.



+44 (0)207 981 0875



[www.biofertiliser.org.uk](http://www.biofertiliser.org.uk)



[info@realschemes.org.uk](mailto:info@realschemes.org.uk)

## Industry Engagement

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We have been attending meetings of the Agency's Biowaste Regulatory Forum (BRF) and CIWM's Biowaste Special Interest Group (Biowaste SIG) to keep informed of wider regulatory/technical issues and/or developments. These meetings provide the opportunity to promote the schemes and liaise with various industry bodies and DEFRA.

## Innovation in Digestate

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Our MDWG is supporting a new and exciting event organised by the Renewable Energy Association in October. The event will discuss the challenges the anaerobic digestion and farming sectors are currently facing and the digestate management challenges the sectors are likely to face in the future. The event will explore the most effective way(s) to address these challenges. We will be presenting updates on the Hub and Market Development Working Group. More information on our website.

Biofertiliser Certification Scheme is part of Renewable Energy Assurance Limited.  
Biofertiliser Certification Scheme 80 Strand, London WC2R 0DT / Tel: +0207 981 0875  
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