Compost Certification Scheme

Biofertiliser certification scheme

Annual Report 2025

Compost / Biofertiliser Certification Schemes

Contents

Introduction

Renewable Energy Assurance Ltd (REAL) carries out a range of certification and consumer protection activities. All these set and maintain high standards of operating practice, environmental improvement and consumer protection in the renewable energy and circular economy sectors, including in the areas of organics recycling, biogas, and bioenergy. Set up in 2006, REAL is a company limited by guarantee with the number 05720606. it and is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Association for Renewable Energy and Clean Technology (REA).

The Compost and Biofertiliser Certification Schemes provide assurance to consumers, farmers, food producers, and retailers that certified compost and digestate is safe for human, animal and plant health. The Research Hub provides research support for technical and regulatory developments related to the production, testing, and use of certified compost and digestate.

This 2025 Annual Report sheds light on the technical data collected during the course of the year, as well as detailing the specific work undertaken to manage and improve the schemes. To provide a clear overview of these activities, the report is structured into three core areas. First, the scheme snapshots provide essential statistics and geographical breakdowns for both schemes in a focused format. Second, the improvements section highlights specific updates to scheme documents and the Laboratory Approval Scheme to enhance oversight. Finally, the engagement section details the team's outreach work and participation in industry events to ensure the schemes remain informed and visible across the sector.

Our Vision, Mission and Values

Our vision is:

A sustainable, decarbonised economy, trusted by consumers and built on evidence-based innovation and growth.

Vision

Our mission is to:

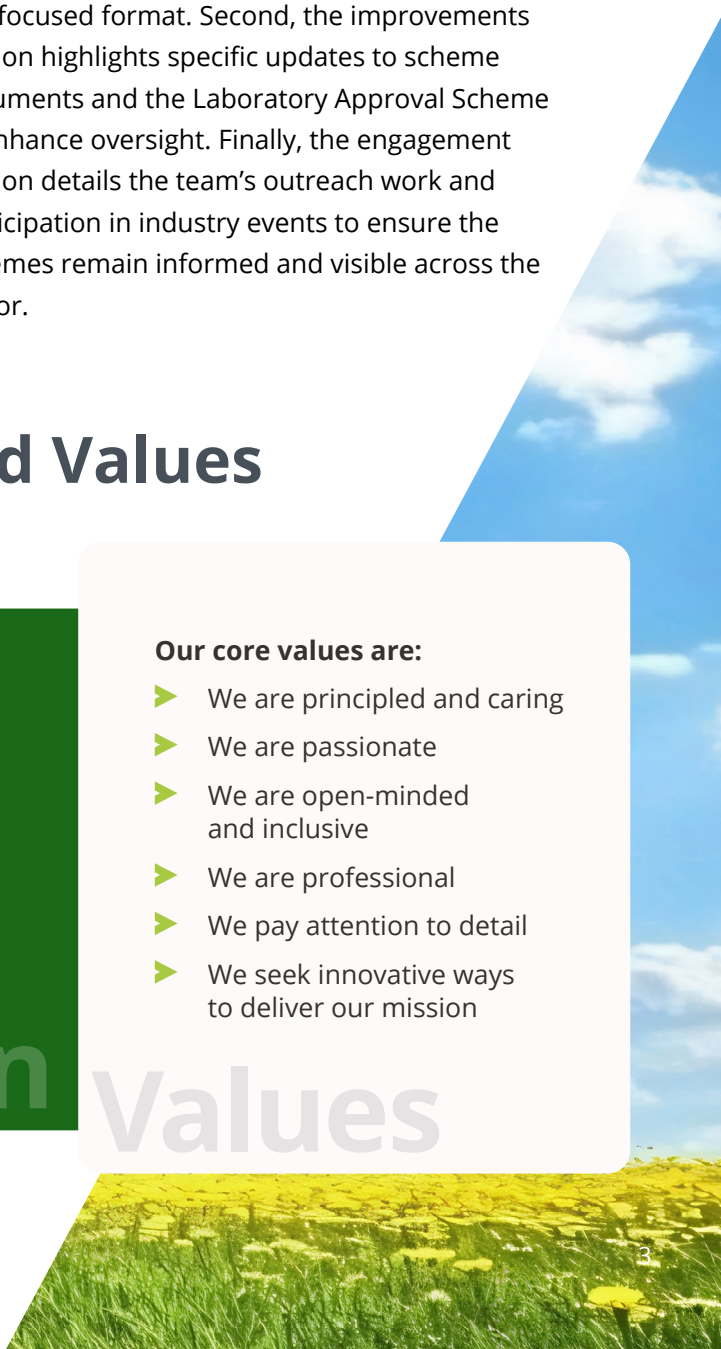
Provide trusted, independent assurance that builds confidence across the circular economy and renewable energy sector.

Mission

Our core values are:

- We are principled and caring
- We are passionate
- We are open-minded and inclusive
- We are professional
- We pay attention to detail
- We seek innovative ways to deliver our mission

Values



A word from our Chair

I have great pleasure in introducing the 2025 Annual Report for the Compost Certification Scheme and the Biofertiliser Certification Scheme.

While the Snapshot sections of this report provide the technical data for the year in a tighter more focused format than previous years, the Improvements and Engagement sections detail the specific work the team has undertaken to develop the schemes and strengthen our presence in the sector. A primary focus for the schemes in 2025 was the transition to new regulatory end-of-waste frameworks in England. Following the publication of updated End of Waste positions from the Environment Agency, SEPA, and NRW, the team undertook a comprehensive overhaul of all scheme documents, websites, databases, and contracts, to align with the new end-of-waste criteria. This alignment work is essential to provide participants with certainty and confidence in robust and up to date schemes.

Alongside these structural updates, the schemes enhanced our technical oversight through the updating of the Laboratory Terms & Conditions. Under this version, REAL has assumed direct responsibility for laboratory auditing, allowing for more rigorous performance monitoring associated with the test results that underpin our certifications.

The team also significantly increased direct industry engagement this year. By attending a wide range of events -including Packaging Innovations, the RWM Expo, and various Circular Economy Strategy Roundtables- we have maintained a consistent dialogue with industry stakeholders. This essential outreach work ensures the schemes remain informed and that the views of relevant stakeholders are considered for policy-related projects.

Our vision remains a sustainable, decarbonised economy, built on evidence-based innovation. With invaluable support from the Research Hub, and our ongoing technical developments, we are ensuring that certified compost and digestate continue to meet high standards of environmental and public health safety, providing the quality required by discerning agricultural and horticultural markets.

I would like to thank the REAL team for their professionalism during this complex period of change. Their work ensures that the schemes continue to provide the independent assurance required to build confidence both across the organics recycling industries and among the diverse sectors that use recycled organic products.

Philip Sellwood
Chair of REAL

A word from the Chair of CCS and BCS Technical Advisory Committee

The climatic trends of recent years have continued with marked changes in our weather patterns; there have been sustained periods of rainfall resulting in flooding and long periods when the soil has been saturated, in addition there have been periods with limited rainfall and resulting drought conditions.

These conditions have imposed serious restrictions on agricultural activity and seriously affected agricultural production. During the periods of excessive rainfall, the soil has been saturated and as a consequence, farming activities have been severely restricted, resulting in reduced yields and in the case of some over wintered crops, crop failure. The widespread droughts have further restricted yields. It is widely agreed that these disruptive weather patterns are a part of the overall trend of changing climatic conditions, linked to increasing CO2 levels in the atmosphere. In the context of these global carbon budgets, it is widely recognised that there is a paramount need to increase the rate of carbon recycling. Composting and Anaerobic Digestion of waste organic materials, such as green wastes, food waste and agricultural wastes provide two important pathways for the sustainable recycling of carbon. The excessively wet and dry periods experienced this year highlight the need for soils to have high levels of resilience to withstand these extreme conditions. In this context it is widely recognised that the levels of organic matter (carbon) in the soil have a significant influence on the soil's resilience and also the degree to which water can be stored in the soil during dry periods to sustain plant growth. There is widespread concern that soil organic matter levels have been declining, with a consequent reduced resilience and water storage. Increasing soil organic matter by adding carbon in the form of manures is long established; the addition of anaerobic digestate and composts to soils is similarly beneficial. Coupled with the concern to increase recycling of carbon rich wastes, there has also been a drive to reduce the volume of peat used in horticulture, both commercial and private. The development of high quality certified composts provide an excellent environmentally sound alternative to peat for widespread horticultural use.

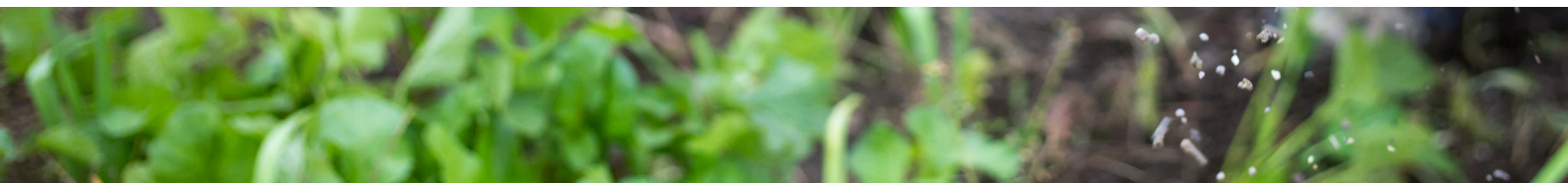
During the year, the production of certified compost and biofertilisers through the CCS and BCS have continued to grow steadily. The compost is predominantly produced from green waste streams, with limited production from green waste and food waste streams, with over 2 million tonnes of certified compost produced per year across the United Kingdom, predominantly for mass sale. The biofertiliser is predominantly produced from food waste, with limited production from food waste and farm waste inputs (manure and crop residues), with over 4 million tonnes produced per year, mostly for application to agricultural land. In this context this last year has been critical because in England (the major producer of both certified compost and biofertiliser), the fundamental review into allowable feedstocks and refinement of the allowable characteristics of outputs (e.g. mass of plastic), under the heading Resource Frameworks, was completed and implemented. During the development of the Resource Frameworks, there was considerable discussion amongst participants of both Schemes at the Participants' Forums and further inputs before the final versions of the Frameworks were produced. There is considerable ongoing effort to ensure that both Schemes accommodate the changes which have been introduced.

The Resource Frameworks, whilst specifically applying only to production of compost and biofertilisers in England have prompted extensive discussion amongst participants of both Schemes from the four countries, the certification bodies and the approved laboratories, in the drive to ensure the production of materials of the highest quality. There is general agreement that the outcome of these new Frameworks will maintain the confidence the users of the outputs from the two Schemes that their use of certified compost and biofertilisers is environmentally beneficial.

The BCS/CCS Technical Advisory Committee has continued to meet both in person and online. Discussions have been wide ranging, particularly as the process to produce the Resource Frameworks approached its conclusion and publication. The active participation from all TAC members; BCS and CCS representatives, certification bodies, laboratory representatives, regulators and others involved in the sustainable use and promotion of these recycled materials is essential if the industry is to continue to grow and thrive. The TAC provides the oversight to ensure that the production of high quality composts and biofertilisers is continually under review and wherever appropriate refined to ensure the continuing improvement of the production of excellent high quality outputs.

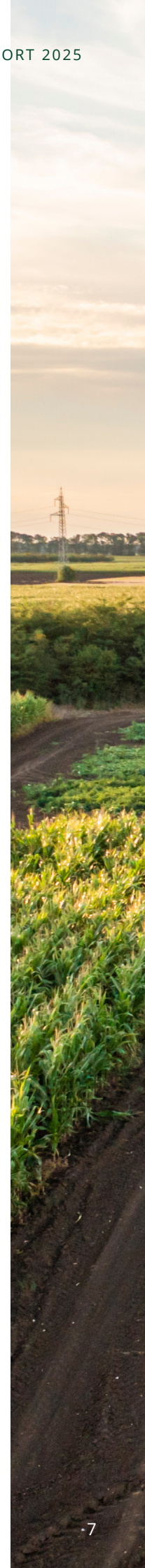
Whilst the recycling of organic waste was once of relatively little interest to the general public, this is changing rapidly. There is greater public awareness that recycling must form a normal part of everyday life, and organic recycling is key amongst these interests. The volume of household food waste being recycled through local authorities is increasing rapidly and the preferred recycling pathway is through anaerobic digestion; it seems likely therefore that there will be a rapid growth in this activity and that the role of the Biofertiliser Certification Scheme in ensuring quality outputs are produced will continue to grow. As less and less peat is used in compost, the demand for peat free compost will continue to grow and it is imperative that this is of the highest quality as assured by the Compost Certification Scheme. Both BCS and CCS schemes ensure that Scheme participants produce materials of certified quality and that their use and application are environmentally sustainable.

Professor Stephen Nortcliff (Chair of the BCS and CCS Technical Advisory Committee)



Glossary of Terms

ABP	Animal By-Products
ADQP	Anaerobic Digestate Quality Protocol
BBIA	Biobased and Biodegradable Industries Association
CB	Certification Body
CQP	Compost Quality Protocol
DAERA	Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (Northern Ireland)
EA	Environment Agency
EoW	End of Waste
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GW+ABP	Green Waste and Animal By-Product
IVC	In-Vessel Composting
NIEA	Northern Ireland Environment Agency
NRW	Natural Resource Wales
PAS	Publicly Available Specification
PC&S	Physical Contaminants & Stones
PRT	Plant Response Test
PTE	Potentially Toxic Elements
QP	Quality Protocol
REA	Association for Renewable Energy and Clean Technology
REAL	Renewable Energy Assurance Ltd
RF	Resource Framework
RBP	Residual Biogas Potential
RPS	Regulatory Position Statement
SEPA	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
SL	Separated Liquor
SF	Separated Fibre
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee
TPA	Tonnage Per Annum
TMWG	Technical Working Group
UKAS	United Kingdom Accreditation Service
WD	Whole Digestate
WRAP	Waste & Resources Action Programme



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CCS Snapshot

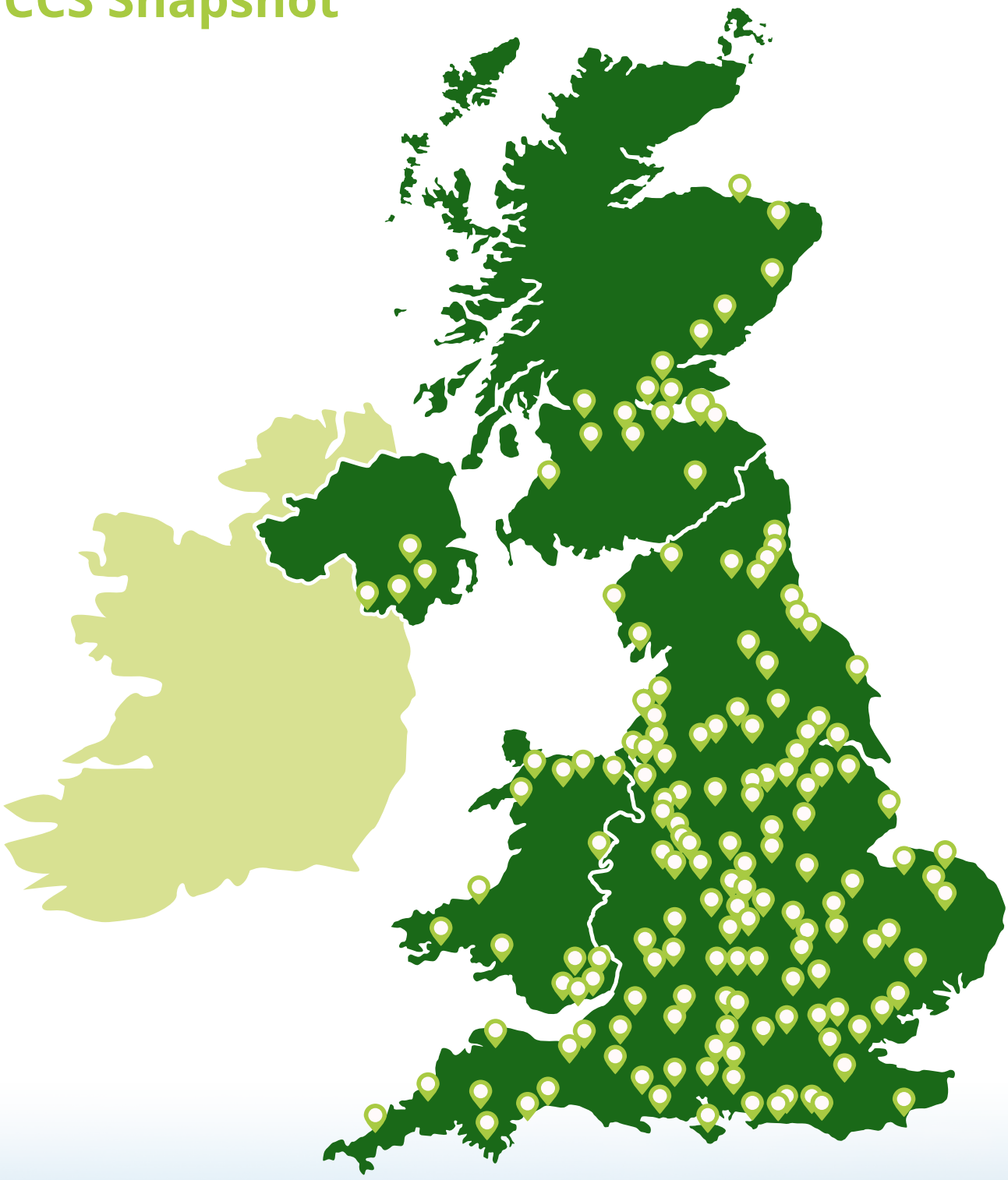

Figure 1. Map of CCS certified processes across the UK

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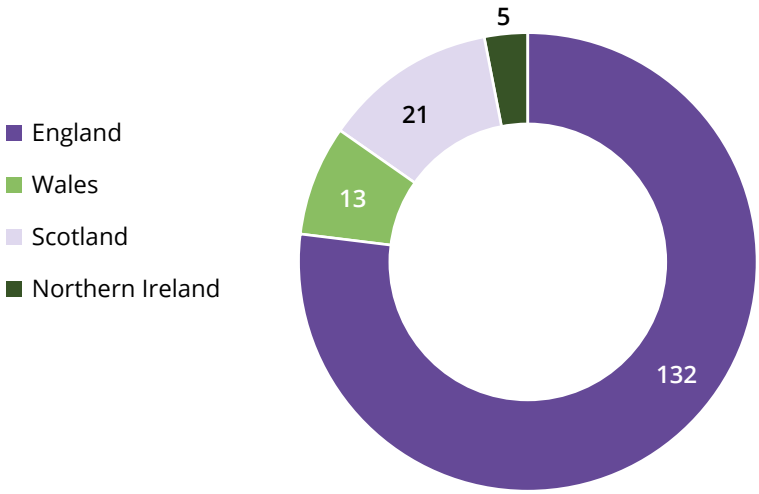


Figure 2. Number of certified processes by nation

By the end of 2025, there were 171 certified composting processes in the UK.

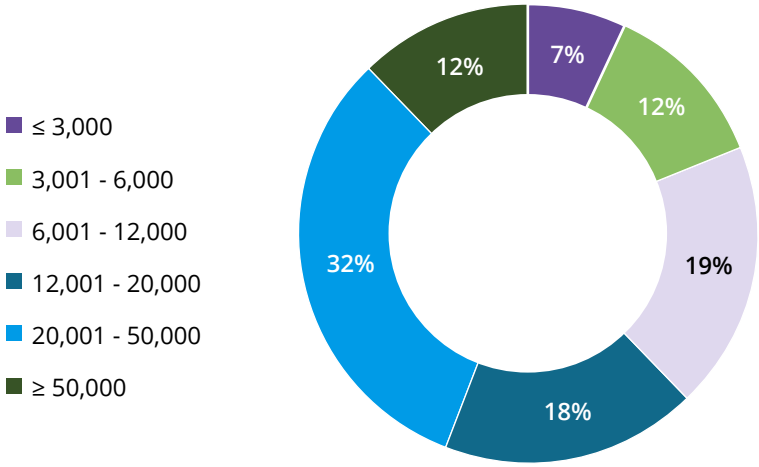


Figure 3. Sizes of process represented as bracketed groups of input tonnage per annum

The most common process size is 20,001-50,000 tonnes per annum (tpa), accounting for 32% of the total number of certified processes. The least common size of process is ≤ 3000 tpa with only 7% of certified processes within this bracketed group. However, all categories have significant representation.

Figure 4. Total annual input tonnage by nation

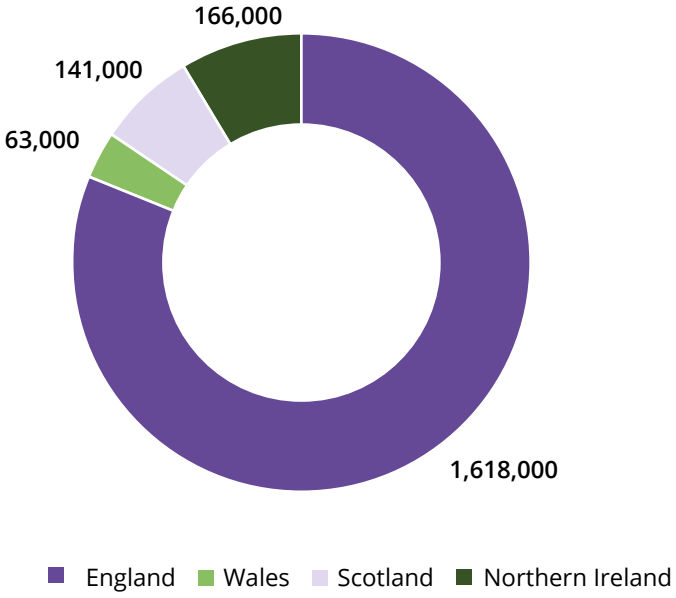


Figure 5. Total annual output tonnage by nation

The total annual input of biowastes and biodegradable material across all four UK nations exceeded 4 million tonnes, with England accounting for over 80% of that material. Similarly, the total annual output of quality compost across the UK reached a volume of approximately 2.0 million tonnes. England continued to produce the majority of quality compost, contributing approximately 1,618,000 tonnes, which represented over 81% of total output. Northern Ireland and Scotland produced approximately 166,000 tonnes and 141,000 tonnes respectively, while Wales accounted for the remaining 63,000 tonnes.

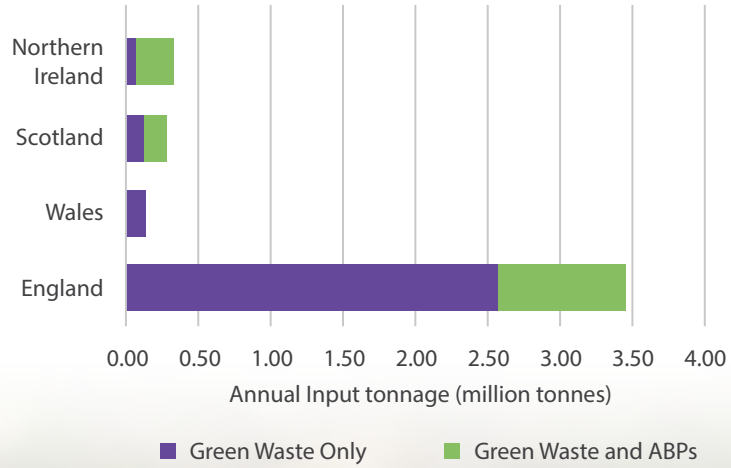
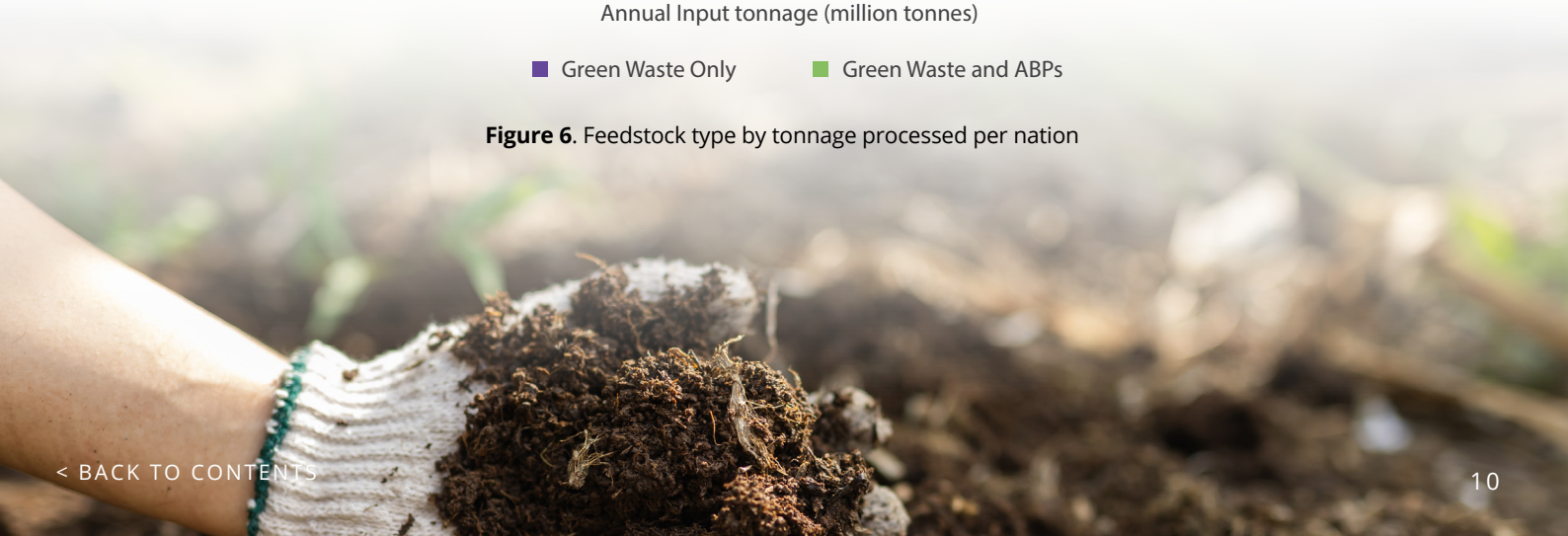


Figure 6. Feedstock type by tonnage processed per nation



While the composting sector is primarily supplied with Green Waste Only (GWO) feedstocks, the integration of Animal By-Products (ABP) materials varies significantly by nation. In England, GWO remained the primary feedstock type, representing approximately 74% of the total input tonnage. In contrast, Wales composted GWO exclusively with no recorded ABP input, while Northern Ireland relied most heavily on co-mingled feedstocks, which accounted for 79% of its total annual input. Scotland maintained a distinctive profile among the four nations, with a nearly equal split between Green Waste Only fed processes and processes fed by comingled Green Waste and Animal By-Product. Specifically, 42% of processes were certified for Green Waste Only, while the remaining 58% were certified for a combination of Green Waste and Animal By-Products. The data highlights that while green waste remains the dominant feedstock material by weight across the UK, animal by-product compliant processing is highly prevalent and represents a significant proportion -or in some cases, the majority- of processes in England, Northern Ireland, and Scotland.

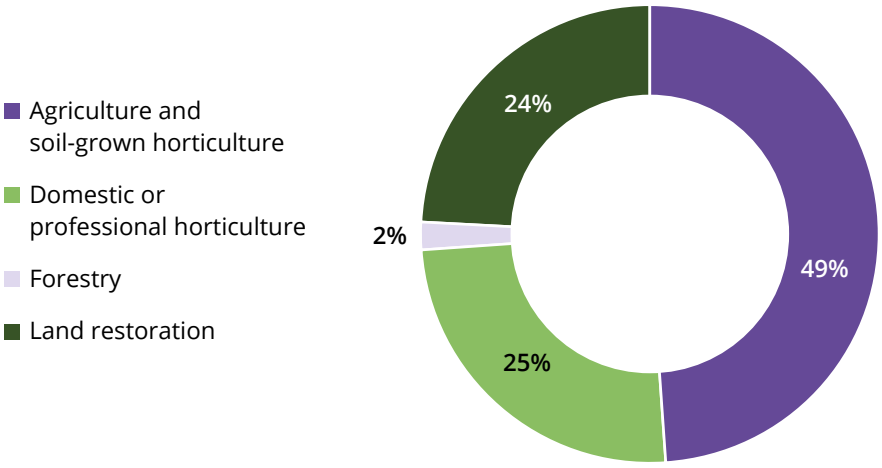


Figure 7. Number of certified processes supplying each market sector by percentage of the total

The distribution of certified processes highlights a significant concentration within the 'Agriculture and soil-grown horticulture' category.

When analysed on the basis of market supply instances - recognising that individual certified processes may supply more than one market sector - 50% of all certified processes were found to supply agricultural markets. This reflects the scheme's strong alignment with agricultural end uses. Supply to 'Domestic or professional horticulture' and 'Land restoration' followed at broadly comparable levels, accounting for 25% and 24% of processes respectively. In contrast, 'Forestry' remained a peripheral outlet within the current market landscape for quality compost, with only 1% of certified processes supplying this sector.

BCS Snapshot

Figure 8. Map of BCS certified processes across the UK

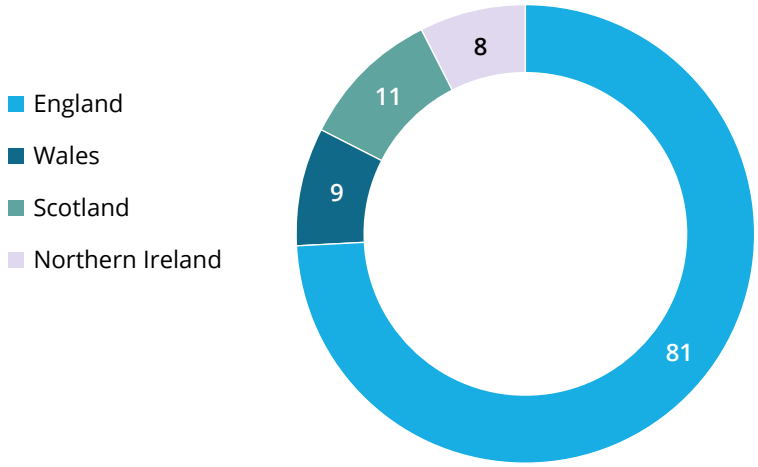


Figure 9. Number of certified AD processes by nation

By the end of 2025, the Biofertiliser Certification Scheme comprised a total of 109 certified anaerobic digestion processes across the UK. England continued to represent the largest share of the Scheme's participation, accounting for 81 processes. The Scheme also maintained a consistent presence across all UK nations, with 11 processes in Scotland, 9 in Wales, and 8 in Northern Ireland.

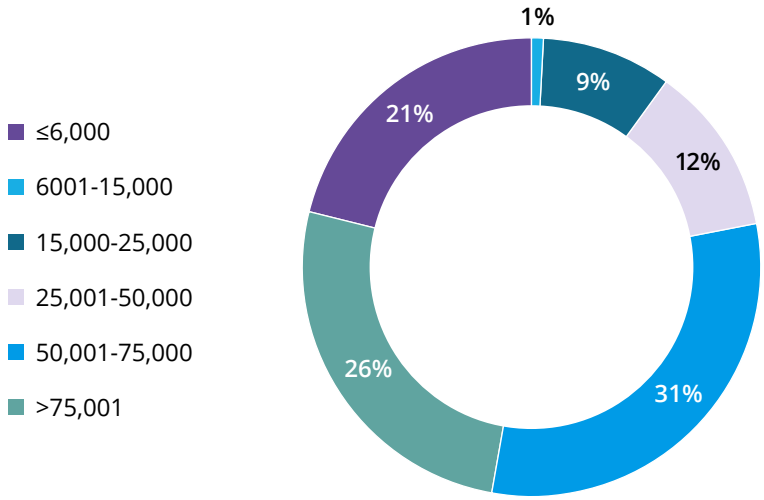


Figure 10. Size of process represented as bracketed groups of input tonnage per annum

The distribution of processes by size shows a clear concentration within the mid-to-high range of input tonnage categories, with the highest three bracketed groups accounting for 78% of processes on the CCS. The largest proportion of processes fell within the 25,001–50,000 tonnes per annum bracketed group, followed closely by those processing between 50,001-75,000 tonnes per annum.

Together, these operations account for the majority of certified processes, indicating that the scheme is predominantly characterised by medium to large facilities. Smaller processes, handling 15,000 tonnes per annum or less, represented only a small fraction of the total quantity of processes, while a notable cohort of high-input sites process more than 75,001 tonnes annually. This spread reflects a sector anchored in high scale operations, with representation across a wide range of processing capacities.

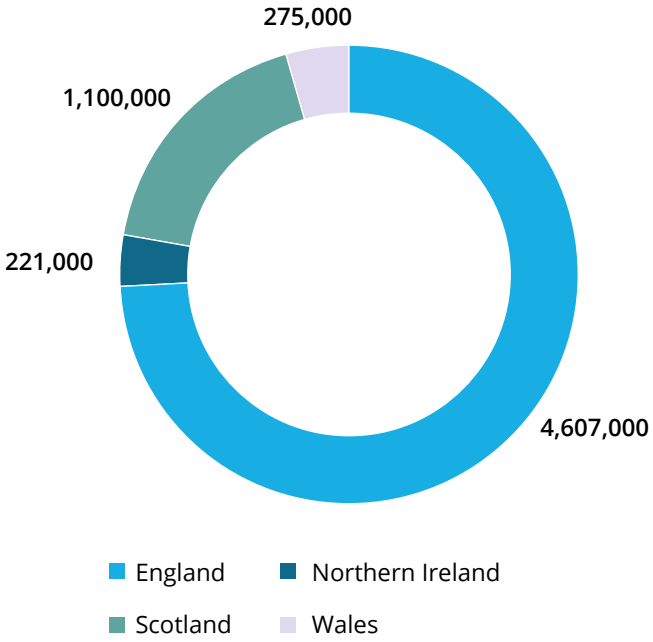


Figure 11. Total annual input tonnage by nation

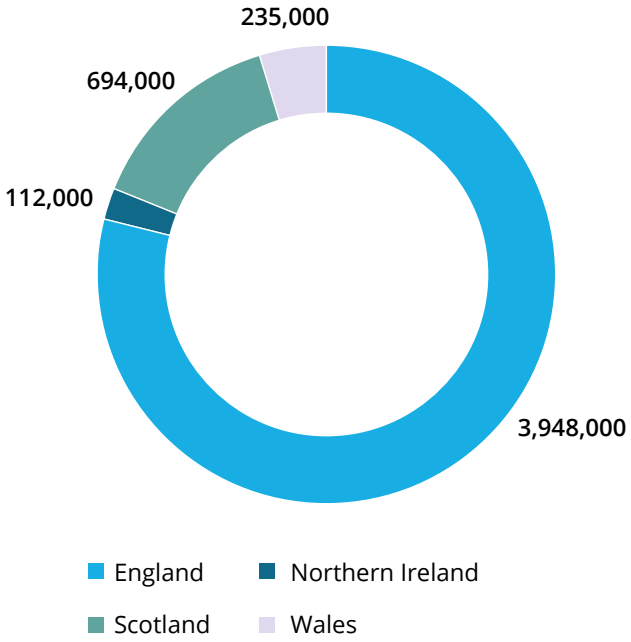


Figure 12. Total annual output tonnage by nation

The total annual input of biowastes and biodegradable material across all four UK nations exceeded 6.2 million tonnes, with England accounting for over 80% of that material. Scotland accounted for 18% of the input and Wales and Northern Ireland collectively accounted for the remaining ~1% of input material.

Similarly, the total annual output of quality digestate across the UK reached a volume of approximately 5.0 million tonnes. England continued to produce the majority of digestate, contributing 4.6 million tonnes, which represented over 80% of total output. Scotland and Wales produced approximately 694,000 tonnes and 235,000 tonnes respectively, while Northern Ireland accounted for the remaining 112,000 tonnes.

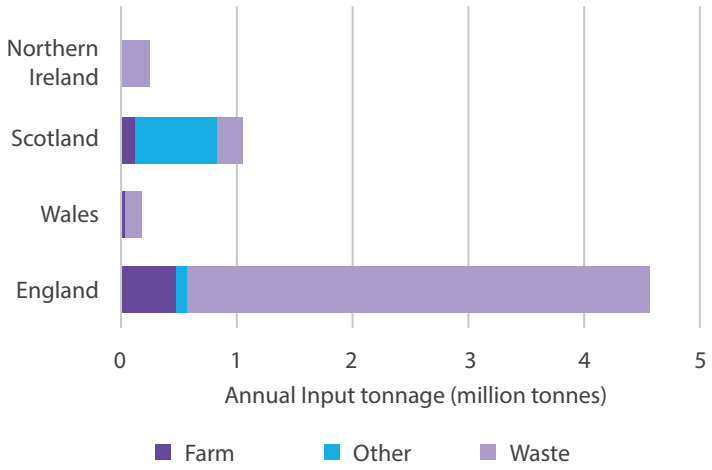


Figure 13. Feedstock type by tonnage processed per nation

The distribution of input tonnage by feedstock type is strongly weighted towards England, which accounted for over 80% of the total material processed annually across all certified anaerobic digestion processes.

Across the UK, waste feedstocks collectively represented the largest share of total annual input tonnage, far exceeding “farm” and “other” feedstock categories. Scotland presented a more diversified profile, with a substantial contribution from “other” feedstocks, alongside waste and farm inputs, while Wales relies exclusively on waste feedstocks. Northern Ireland processed comparatively smaller volumes overall, with inputs split between waste and farm feedstocks.

AD plants are categorised under the scheme as ‘farm’, ’waste’ or ‘other’, based on the input materials they process. Farm-fed plants are those processing over 50% agricultural feedstock e.g., manures and crops. Waste-fed plants are those processing over 50% waste feedstock e.g., food waste. Plants in the ‘other’ category are those processing over 50% nonwaste/agricultural feedstock e.g., distillery by-products.

Together, the data highlights the central role of waste materials within the scheme, alongside clear regional variation in feedstock composition and certified processing capacity.

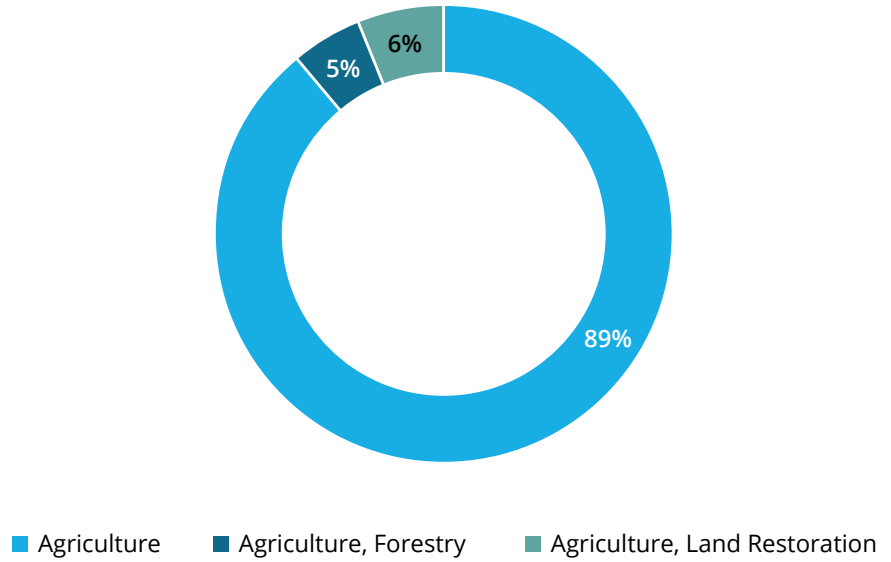


Figure 14. Total number of processes supplying to each market sector as a percentage

The figure shows a clear concentration of certified processes supplying a single end market; agriculture, with the minority supplying to agriculture and one other market sector. Of the 109 processes represented, 92 supplied agriculture exclusively, making it the dominant destination for certified digestate.

A smaller number of processes demonstrate a broader market scope. Nine processes supply both agriculture and land restoration, while seven supply agriculture alongside forestry. Together, these pathways indicate limited but meaningful diversification beyond supplying just to agriculture.

CCS & BCS Improvements

Implementation of New End of Waste Positions

A significant focus of the Schemes' work in 2025 was managing the transition from an aligned certification approach for England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, whereby all three nations used the same EoW position (the QP), to an approach defined by nation-specific criteria. This shift was necessitated by the introduction of the Compost Resource Framework and Anaerobic Digestate Resource Framework in England, alongside the new End-of-Waste positions published by Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), and the NIEA continuing to use the Quality Protocol as its EoW position. To accommodate these divergent regulatory landscapes, the Schemes restructured the CCS and BCS Scheme Rules to include unique annexes containing all nation-specific EoW criteria. This change ensures that participants can clearly identify the precise requirements relevant to their production site's locality.

Alongside these structural changes, substantial implementation work was undertaken to implement the EoW positions across both Schemes. This included a comprehensive revision of the CCS and BCS audit checklists, not only to introduce new requirements arising from the new End-of-Waste positions, but also to reflect revisions to the Scottish Environment Protection Agency's position and extensive cross-referencing changes following the introduction of nation-specific annexes to the Scheme Rules. Multiple rounds of review and feedback were held with the scheme appointed Certification Bodies to review these checklist updates. This iterative process was critical to achieving complete operational alignment prior to the formal issuance of revised checklists, enabling Certification Bodies to embed the changes within their audit processes in accordance with ISO/IEC 17065 requirements. In parallel, the Schemes worked closely with the Environment Agency to establish and implement robust processes for managing participant usage of the Regulatory Position Statement exemptions, providing regulators and scheme participants with assurance that robust procedures were fully integrated into scheme operations.

Opportunity taken to Expand Certification Services

A major milestone in 2025 was the successful conclusion of the Certification Body tender process. This exercise was undertaken to ensure the Schemes maintain robust capacity and continue to offer a high-quality service to all participants. The tender attracted strong market interest, with five bids received for the delivery of certification services across both the Compost Certification Scheme and the Biofertiliser Certification Scheme. This level of engagement provided a healthy and competitive procurement environment, enabling a thorough assessment of technical competence, sector expertise, and delivery capability. The process concluded successfully, resulting in the establishment of new contractual arrangements and providing a strong platform for continuity, resilience and future scalability of the Schemes' certification infrastructure as the organics sector continues to evolve.

Positive developments under the Laboratory Approval Scheme

In 2025 the Schemes revised and issued Version 10 of the Terms & Conditions for Approved Laboratories. A significant change introduced was the Schemes taking direct responsibility for the auditing of laboratories, utilising both internal expertise and robust assessments to enhance performance monitoring. Furthermore, the updated T&Cs mandate laboratory participation in the same rigorous Proficiency Testing programme for potentially toxic elements and introduce formal timeframes for communication and responses, including a requirement for laboratories to acknowledge complaints within one week to ensure a transparent resolution process.

The Schemes also maintained active engagement with several applicant laboratories throughout the year to further enhance testing capacity and scheme participant choice.

During 2025, one applicant laboratory progressed through the completion of an independent audit and uploading of calibration test reports. A small number of non-compliances were identified during this assessment; these were subsequently addressed by the applicant and subjected to detailed review by the Scheme, alongside the appointed Certification Bodies. Following satisfactory consideration of the corrective actions provided, the laboratory's application has continued to progress in accordance with the Schemes' established approval processes.

Guidance introduced to support Scheme Participants and Certification Bodies

Nation-Specific End of Waste Position Guidance

- As the regulatory landscape across the UK became increasingly divergent in 2025, the Schemes published a comprehensive document detailing the specific End-of-Waste requirements for each nation. This guidance found here and here covers the Resource Frameworks and RPS 317 in England, the requirements of GN022, GN023, and RS 122 in Wales, SEPA's updated EoW positions in Scotland, and the continued use of the Quality Protocols in Northern Ireland.

Plastic Factsheets

- In response to the new End-of-Waste positions, the Schemes worked closely with the Approved Laboratories to standardise the reporting of physical contaminants, specifically plastics. As a result, laboratories began reporting against the reduced plastic limits under CCS and new plastic limits under BCS, introduced by the Resource Frameworks.
- To support participants, the Schemes collaborated with the Approved Laboratories to produce dedicated factsheets; this guidance was designed to help participants understand the updated reports and plastic limits. Crucially, the guidance found here and here also outlines the procedure for amending reports in cases where these lower limits do not apply. By establishing a clear process for requesting revised reports, the Schemes ensure that participants can reliably access accurate reports including their specific regional requirements for their own and their customers' benefit.

Overcoming Sample Collection and Courier Issues

- In response to feedback from Scheme participants regarding the reliability of third-party courier services, the Schemes focused on providing operators with greater flexibility in their sampling logistics, working closely with the Approved Laboratories to accommodate depot drop-offs as a formalised option. This alternative approach ensures that participants have more control over the transport of their samples and materials leave the site promptly after sampling. A guidance document was published to outline this approach and can be found here and here

Locating Your Certification Codes

- To assist participants in accurately completing analysis request forms, the Schemes released a new visual guide in 2025 to help identify unique PR numbers and Certification Codes. The guide provides a walk-through for locating these details on the various certificate formats issued by all appointed Certification Bodies, ensuring these details are recorded correctly. The guidance can be found here and here.

Launch of the Test Method Working Group (TMWG)

The REAL TMWG completed its first project in 2025 and published a final summary report. The project focused on revising the Physical Contaminants & Stones (PC&S) test method for compost and digestate in part given the lower plastic limit in the End of Waste Positions in effect in England, Scotland, and Wales.

Following a stakeholder consultation in late 2025, the TMWG agreed on three key technical changes to the PC&S methods: standardising the cleaning of contaminants prior to weighing using a soft bristle brush to ensure more accurate mass measurements; increasing weighing precision from 2 to 4 decimal places and reporting to 3 decimal places to provide better resolution for the reduced plastic limits; and introducing a multi-person confirmation process for identifying sharps to reduce subjectivity. The full Project 1 Summary Report is available on the Schemes websites(hyperlinked)

The TMWG is scheduled to reconvene later in 2026 to discuss further work on plastics testing and other potential projects.

CCS & BCS Engagement

CCS Producers' Forum and BCS Operators' Forum Meetings:

In 2025, the CCS and BCS each held three Producers' Forum meeting, two standard meetings and one ad-hoc meeting. The role of the Forum meetings is to provide certified producers and operators with the opportunity to share their thoughts, concerns or general experiences of Scheme participation.

Attendance at the standard Producers' and Operators' Forum meetings was generally strong. Scheme Participants who attended shared valuable contributions and insights, which both producer and operator representatives were able to take forward to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). A number of topics were presented and discussed across both Fora and subsequently referred to the TAC for consideration. These included:

- The collection and transportation of compost and digestate samples
- Feedback on the supply of feedstock from local authorities
- Feedback on test reports, with a particular focus on physical contaminant classification

In the ad-hoc producers' and operators' Forum meetings, the CCS and BCS outlined the key changes between the Quality Protocols and the new Interim Resource Frameworks, as well as explaining how they planned to implement these Framework into the Scheme operations. It was great to see such a large turnout from Scheme Participants for both meetings, as they recognised the importance of these publications and what they mean for the composting and AD sectors.

Following the publication of the Interim Resource Frameworks in October 2025, the CCS and BCS partnered with the Environment Agency, the Renewable Energy Association (REA), and other industry stakeholders to host a set of webinars that presented the new Frameworks in their final forms. The attendance was encouraging as the webinars each had over 50 attendees, not only illustrating the aforementioned importance to the composting and AD sectors, but also to the wider organics industry. The Schemes were thrilled to see this level of engagement!

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meetings:

The TAC is at the core of how the Compost and Biofertiliser Certification Schemes are overseen. This is reflected in the membership of the TAC, which includes:

- The four devolved national regulatory bodies
- The three appointed Certification Bodies
- The appointed laboratory representative
- Key market stakeholders such as the National Farmers Union and Zero Waste Scotland

The input of TAC members ensures that the operations of the Schemes, policy work and the work of the Research Hub are effective and robust.

The TAC met three times in 2025, with an initial spring 'catch-up', an in-person summer meeting, and a virtual autumn/winter meeting. The dates of the latter two meetings aim to follow each set of producers' and operators' Forum meetings so that the Scheme representatives can escalate any important discussions raised, like the ones noted above, to the TAC.

This year's round of meetings bore a particular importance as 2025 saw the publication of three separate End of Waste positions for both compost and digestate, each of which replacing the compost and AD Quality Protocols in England, Scotland and Wales. As a result, the conversations had in these TAC meetings were vital for two key reasons. Firstly, to allow the national regulators to update the Schemes and wider Scheme stakeholders on the development of the new positions, and secondly, to give the Schemes and the Forum representatives the opportunity to raise any queries or concerns to the regulators in regard to the new positions. This proved to be successful as several problem areas were identified, discussed and addressed during these meetings. Some examples of issues included:

- The point at which End of Waste is achieved for compost and digestate
- Classification of pre-dispatch storage of compost and digestate
- Where the producer's/operator's responsibility for the certified compost and digestate is transitioned to the customer or end user
- Evaluating updated lists of acceptable waste inputs for both compost and digestate production

The TAC continues to be an integral part of the Compost and Biofertiliser Certification Schemes' governance structure. The CCS and BCS look forward to 2026's meetings and the opportunities to improve the operation of the Schemes.

Events the Schemes attended in 2025:

Active participation in industry events is an important part of how the Schemes engage with stakeholders and maintain a strong presence across the sector. Events like those noted below provide valuable opportunities to showcase the work the Schemes do, communicate key messages, and contribute to sector-wide discussions.

These events also play a critical role in keeping us informed about emerging issues, innovations, and opportunities across the organics industry and related sectors. Insights gained through these events help ensure our work remains relevant, responsive, and aligned with the needs and priorities of the organic industry.

In 2025 the Schemes attended the following events:

- Packaging Innovations & Empack, 12th-13th February
- 2025 Organics Annual Conference, 27th March
- REA Green Gas Forum, 30th April
- Compostable Coalition UK Roundtable, 7th May
- Environmental Packaging Live, 24th-25th June
- Circular Economy Strategy Roundtable, 8th July
- BB-REG-NET Workshop on 'Creating a favourable regulatory environment for bio-based and biodegradable materials, 1st July
- Resource & Waste Management Expo (part of the Environmental Services & Solutions Expo), 17th-18th September
- BB-REG-Net White Paper Launch: Bio-Based Policy for People & Planet, 3rd December

Consultations Engaged With:

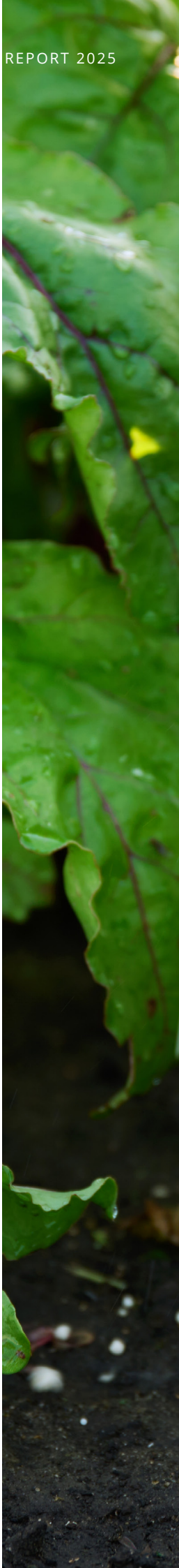
Throughout the year, the Schemes have been monitoring industry developments and new or potentially important policy approaches and decisions. With this, we have engaged with, and responded to, a number of key consultations from across the regulators and governmental departments. They can be seen below:

- Environment Agency: Proposed amendments to standard rules (Decarbonisation Readiness)
- Environment Agency: Consultation on modernising environmental permitting for industry
- Scottish Government: Draft Circular Economy Strategy

Engagement with the UK National Regulators:

As part of the administration of the Compost and Biofertiliser Certification Schemes, we hold annual meetings with the four UK national regulators. Organic recycling policy is a devolved policy area, and as such, each nation takes a different approach to organic recycling regulation and processes.

In 2025, annual regulator meetings were held with the Environment Agency (EA), Natural Resources Wales (NRW), and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA). Engagement with the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) also took place, albeit on a smaller scale.



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In addition to these scheduled meetings, a significant number of ad-hoc meetings were held with the EA, SEPA, and NRW throughout 2025. Many of these discussions focused on the regulators' individual End of Waste positions and how the Schemes can recognise and incorporate these positions within their operational frameworks.

The Schemes are very proud of the continued collaboration with the national regulators. These relationships are essential in providing assurance to certified operators and producers as well as the wider industry that compost and digestate produced in accordance with Scheme requirements are recognised by the regulators. Ongoing regulatory support for the Certification Schemes enables the organic recycling industry to operate as effectively and confidently as it does today.

Engagement with other external stakeholders:

Our stakeholders play an important role in shaping our place in the industry, where our priorities could and should be, and our long-term success. Engaging regularly with our core stakeholders, trade associations, and other key industry contacts helps us better understand their perspectives and respond to emerging issues. Below is a summary of some of the stakeholders we have engaged with in 2025 that are outside of our core stakeholder group:

- **ADBA**: We had useful discussions pertaining to legislation applicable to the spreading of digestate, with a particular focus on Farming Rules for Water, and how it interacts with the AD Resource Framework.
- **REA**: As our parent company, the REA plays a key role in supporting the Compost and Biofertiliser Certification Schemes. We therefore held regular meetings and correspondence with them, particularly in relation to the publication of the Compost and AD Resource Frameworks. This engagement ensured that the interests of compost producers and AD operators were represented in the Framework revisions and that any issues raised by either organisation were addressed. Beyond the Framework discussions, we also co-hosted webinars and engaged regularly with the REA at industry events.
- **Members of the Circular Economy Taskforce:** Introducing the Certification Schemes, the work we do, and the important role standards and certification can play in developing a circular economy. Looking to better understand the aims of the Circular Economy taskforce, the process of formalising the Circular Economy Growth Plan, as well as the best ways to contribute to its development.
- **BBIA (BB-REG-NET):** Attended and engaged in workshops aiming to development the bioeconomy sector and enhance the platform of bio-based and biodegradable materials. We provided an end-of-life perspective for these materials as well as some knowledge from CCS producers who accept these materials.
- **WRAP**: Continued correspondence and interaction with a particular focus on plastic, plastic contamination and the performance of compostable plastics in industrial composting. Valuable industry knowledge and insight into the wider narrative on compostable plastics and the bio-based sector.

In 2019 REAL achieved certification of its Quality Management System to the ISO 9001:2015 standard.

The ISO 9001:2015 standard is based on a number of quality management principles including a strong customer focus, the motivation and implication of top management, the process approach and continual improvement. Using ISO 9001 helps ensure that customers get consistent, good-quality products and services, which in turn brings many business benefits.

The seven quality management principles are:

- customer focus
- leadership
- engagement of people
- process approach
- improvement
- evidence-based decision making
- relationship management.

Compost Certification Scheme (CCS) is part of Renewable Energy Assurance Limited.

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