



First quality certification for Compost

Natural World Products (NWP) has become the first compost producer in Northern Ireland to achieve certification from The Composting Association to BSI PAS 100, the quality standard for composted materials.

Based in Keady, County Armagh, NWP takes in and composts 35,000 tonnes of biowaste every year from many of the District Councils in Northern Ireland. The company was certified to the scheme for its soil conditioner "Rosey Lee" following verification that its composting process achieves high quality compost.

BSI PAS (Publicly Available Specification) 100 for composted materials was launched in 2002 by WRAP (the Waste & Resources Action Programme), The Composting Association and BSI Professional Standards Services. The standard enables producers of composted materials to assure end users of the quality, consistency and reliability of their products. Participating companies are required to regularly monitor, record and evaluate process performance in connection with compost quality. They must also document all their procedures and provide accurate, up-to-date key information about their products.

Brendan Woods, Managing Director of NWP, said: " We are delighted to be the first company in Northern Ireland to have achieved this much sought after certification and to have done so in such a short time. This certification reaffirms to our customers that NWP can deliver a consistently high-quality product which is also environmentally friendly."



To achieve the quality standard, the NWP compost regularly undergoes a very comprehensive suite of tests carried out with Bord na Móna. These tests include chemical properties such as pH, electrical conductivity, nutrients and potentially toxic elements, physical contaminants and pathogens.

The photograph (left) shows Caolan Woods of Natural World Products receiving the PAS 100 Certificate from Sharon Russell of the UK Composting Association and Ian Garner of WRAP. Caolan Woods will present the NWP success story at the Cré annual seminar in Tullamore on May 6. See page 3 for details.

Minister Cullen to open Cré Seminar

Cré is pleased to announce that the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Mr. Martin Cullen, T.D. has accepted the Cré invitation to open the Cré Seminar and Exhibition at The Tullamore Court Hotel, May 6th. The Seminar will feature presentations on the composting industry from a National and European perspective. The Exhibition will feature top Irish and international companies. The day is designed to inform and provide information from which the Irish composting sector can continue to build. See page 3 or contact Cré for details.

Sponsors of this newsletter

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Cré Submission relating to Biowaste directive

An ad hoc meeting on the EU draft discussion document (available on the Cré website) relating to a new Directive on Biowaste and Sludges was held in Brussels on the 15th and 16th January 2004. Dr. Munoo Prasad attended and took part in this brainstorming session. Participants were then asked to make submissions to the EU regarding the Document by the 13th February 2004 and this would later be taken into account when the new directive is published at the end of the year. The following is a brief summary of the points covered in the submissions in which other Cre members had an input:

- * Composting should be looked on as industry with a valuable product and not just as a waste management procedure. Markets must be identified for product and products must be tailored for the markets.
- * Regulations should be flexible with minimum standards to promote composting. Product standards should be developed depending on the proposed final application of the compost.
- * Home composting, community composting and source separation of municipal waste should be encouraged at an EU and local level.
- * Stability testing of compost instead of process residence time would be more relevant to define if the compost is ready for a particular application.
- * There is urgent need for stability standards for Mechanical Biological Treatment of waste for landfill.
- * Preparation of a document for general permits and minimum standards for compost quality are needed at an EU level and more specific standards should be developed by industry and member states.
- * The most important parameters which should definitely appear on the label of compost bags are: feedstock, level of maturity (to assess application).
- * The standardisation of sampling and analysis is essential to develop markets-The Horizontal project and CEN TEC 223 WG 4 are undertaking this at present.
- * The public sector should promote use of compost for example as a growing media component .
- * The conditions applied in the Animal by-Products Regulations have been generated from an animal health point of view rather than from a compost product or waste management perspective. This needs to be addressed. The cost of meeting the Animal by-Product Regulations should not exceed the cost of landfilling. Standardisation of the regulations across Europe is needed. Achieving a temperature of 70°C at the beginning of composting increases the risk of re-introduction of pathogenic micro organisms into the compost.

Full details of the submission can be found on the Cré website— www.compostireland.ie

Vermicomposting, a growing technology

In recent times in Ireland home-scale vermicomposting bins have become very popular to treat food waste. Commercial scale vermicomposting is also developing with facilities in Cork, Tipperary, and elsewhere.

Vermicomposting (use of worms in composting, from the Latin *vermes*) involves the combined action of earthworms and microorganisms at low temperatures <30°C to break down organic wastes. Vermicomposting developed, as an alternative market, from vermiculture (breeding of earthworms) for fish bait market in America. It was found that the raw materials required by the worms are often waste streams that require disposal. Furthermore, the waste product — worm casts, termed 'vermicompost' — was found to make excellent compost.

During the vermicomposting process, important plant nutrients of nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, calcium, and magnesium are released and changed into more soluble and available forms for plants to absorb. Research also suggests that earthworms may produce and excrete plant growth factors. Vermicompost has been found to have superior plant growth when compared to other composts.

Large-scale vermicomposting thus developed as means to divert waste from landfill and produce a product, which can be sold as a soil conditioner. There are large-scale vermicomposting plants, notably in Australia and America, which process waste such as sewage sludge and food waste.

In Ireland, a joint research project involving Institute of Technology, Sligo Department of Environmental Science, and Glanbia is assessing vermicomposting techniques for treating dairy wastewater sludge. The project is sponsored by the Department of Agriculture and Food and the Environmental Protection Agency. The findings of this project will be communicated to Cré members upon completion.

The logo for 'Research' features the word 'Research' in a stylized, black, serif font. The letter 'e' is significantly larger and more decorative than the other letters, with a long, sweeping tail that extends to the right and then curves back under the 's'.

This article was prepared by Percy Foster, graduate student, working on the project "Vermicomposting of dairy

Cré 4th Annual Seminar—May 6th 2004



Cré, The Composting Association of Ireland Teo, invites all interested parties to attend the 4th Annual Composting Seminar & Exhibition, on May 6th 2004, in the Tullamore Court Hotel, Tullamore, Co. Offaly. This date is chosen to coincide with International Compost Awareness Week 2004.

SRS—Seminar Main Sponsors 2004

The theme of this year's seminar is 'Growing the Industry' and will consist of presentations from a European and national perspective, focussing on the current situation of the Irish composting industry, planning, permitting & licensing issues, and 'on the ground participation' in relation to the implementation of the brown bin system, commercial composting and home composting.

The seminar will be officially opened by the Minister for Environment, Mr. Martin Cullen at 9.30AM.

Please find below a programme for this seminar. The Fee for attendance is 100 per member and 125 per non-member, with lunch included. SRS are this year's main Seminar sponsors. For details of other exhibitor and sponsorship opportunities, please contact Fiacra Quinn info@compostireland.ie.

To ensure delegate spaces please confirm attendance by April 30th 2004.

9:30 – 11 The Big Picture

- © Opening Address – Minister for the Environment
- © Draft National Biowaste Strategy – Department of Environment, Heritage, Local Government
- © Growing The Industry: Ireland Now – Conall Boland, RPS-MCOS
- © Composting in Austria – From An Agricultural Perspective – Florian Amlinger, ECN

11:30-1 Planning, Permitting & Licensing

- © EPA Perspective: Licensing & Other Issues – Thomas McLaughlin, EPA
- © Achieving Planning, Permits, License – Damien Grehan, TES Consulting Engineers
- © A Success Story – Caolan Woods, Natural Worlds Products Ltd.

2:30-3:45 On the Ground: Participation

- © Race Against Waste – Elizabeth Arnett, Project Manager, Race Against Waste
- © Home Composting Programme: 1 year on – Gary Brady, Longford County Council
- © Public Education for Brown Bin Programs: What Works – Oonagh O'Connor, Kerry County Council.
- © Getting Businesses to Participate – Frank Curran, Waterford County Council

4-4.30: Cré Research and Development Update

- © Bioaerosols – EPA & Munoo Prasad, Bord na Móna – Cré Technical Committee Chair
- © Quality of Waste Derived Compost in Ireland – Lorraine Herity, RPS, Cré Secretary
- © Legislative Updates – Conor McGovern, *greenstar*, Cré Treasurer
- © Quality Standards – Fiacra Quinn, Greenstreets, Cré Chair

BIM fish waste event

BIM organized a waste management event in Athlone on March 23 and 24. The event was conceived to bring together fish waste producers with solutions providers. There was substantial interest from producers of shellfish and finfish waste, both open caught and farmed salmon and whitefish. A variety of technologies were proposed over the two days, from solid waste composting to anaerobic digestion to protein recovery. Valuable links were made on the two days.

Cré meet with EPA on Animal By-Products issue

Cré met with the EPA on March 12, 2004 as a follow up to the submission made by Cré on the Animal By-Products issue in December. The meeting was used to further clarify the concerns Cré have about the Animal By-Products Regulation and its implementation. Workable solutions to the concerns were presented in outline form. A briefing paper on the solutions pro-

Cre meeting and tour of Galway City Council facility

Galway City Council hosted the most recent Cre meeting on 24 March in Galway City. The event began with presentations given to the 50 attendees followed by a site visit to the Galway City Council Composting facility at Carrowbrowne. Presentations were given by The UK Composting Association, VCU Technologies and VAROM.

Karl Beck of VCU Technologies presented some perspective on how the VCU system was rigorously tested by DEFRA on its way to being the first ABP technology clearance in the UK.

Mary Messer of the UK Composting Association presented details of Mechanical Biological Treatment in the UK.

Ruurd Van Schaik presented details of how the VAROM system works in advance of the site visit which followed.

At Carrowbrowne, Galway City Council Engineer, Garry Loughlin described the facility operation in detail to attendees. Biowaste is collected over 3 consecutive days every second week from brown bins in Galway City and delivered to the facility. In the reception building, the biowaste is mixed with bulking agent from trommel screen. The prepared waste is placed on an aerated static pile under a covering layer for 8 weeks. At the end of this period, the material is screened through the 40 mm screen. The >40 mm fraction are recovered and used as bulking agent. The <40 mm fraction is moved to another aerated static pile for a further 4 weeks to complete the maturation process. After 4 weeks, the material is screened at 15 mm. Screen unders are used by Galway City Council Parks Department.

The ASP's are under negative aeration and spent air is treated by the biofilters provided. Leachates and condensates are collected and discharged to foul sewer for treatment.

The facility handles c.100 tonnes per week of source-segregated biowaste from Galway City with designed-in capacity to expand this throughput significantly.



The photograph (at right) shows Garry O'Loughlin explaining operations at Galway City Council Composting Facility

National Biowaste Strategy draft — comments sought



National Strategy on Biodegradable Waste

DRAFT STRATEGY REPORT

April 2004

A draft of the National Biowaste Strategy was launched in early April. The draft document is available on the Departments website at under 'news items' at www.environ.ie/doi/doihome.nsf?Open.

The Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government also launched a Public consultation process with advertisements in the national press inviting comments from relevant stakeholders and other interested parties on the draft document. It is envisaged that the National Strategy on Biodegradable Waste will be finalised on foot of submissions received.

The Strategy will outline the Government policy for the diversion of biodegradable municipal waste from landfill. Accordingly, Cré is preparing a submission representing views of Cré members. Cré has already invited and welcomes submissions from all members for inclusion. The closing date for submissions is May 7, 2004. Please email submissions to Fiacra Quinn **before May 3, 2004**.

Alternatively, individual submissions on the draft report may be made directly to the Department to Mr. Paris Beausang, Waste Prevention & Recovery Section, Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government, Custom House, Dublin 1 (Tel: 01-888 2606), submitted by fax to 01-888 2994 or be e-mail to paris_beausang@environ.ie.