

# Compost Certification Scheme Producers' Forum

Minutes for the meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2024

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## Attendees

Jane Hall (JH)	Chair
Georgia Phetmanh (GP)	REAL CCS
Oliver Dunn (OD)	REAL CCS
Megan Muller-Girard (MMG)	REAL Research Hub
Duncan Craig (DC)	REAL CCS
Gregor Keenan (GK)	CCS Producers' Representative
Jo Fitzpatrick (JF)	Material Change
Georgina Smith (GS)	Hope Farm
Howard Everson (HE)	TMA Bark
Stacey Allen (SA)	Wastewise
Richard Lynas (RL)	Suez Environment
Martin Jeffers (MJ)	Dundee City Council (Environment Department)
Matthew Lawson (ML)	Biffa Waste Services Limited

## Registration

General chat and informal introductions while waiting for all attendees to join the call.

### 1. Welcome

GP welcomed everyone to the forum and gave a brief introduction to the purpose of the forum – that it is intended to give Scheme Participants the opportunity to raise and discuss issues for the Technical Advisory Committee to consider when overseeing the operation of CCS. Compost producers can feed into the TAC via raising issues with the Producers' Representative at biannual Forum meetings.

OD introduced the meeting programme.

### 2. Previous Meeting Minutes

All attendees accepted the previous meeting's minutes—no comments or corrections were raised.

### 3. Updates on the CCS

#### Actions from the previous meeting

**Producers to consider research ideas discussed (method for distinguishing compostable plastics from fossil plastics; whether stones in compost are a problem for all end markets) and contact Stephen Nortcliff, (or Jenny Grant if REA members) to help produce proposals for January '24.**

MMG explained that this action came from the May 2023 CCS Forum Meeting where two ideas for research projects were raised:

1. Project exploring a method for distinguishing compostable plastics from fossil plastics.
2. Project exploring whether stones in compost are a problem for all end markets.

MMG noted that producers were encouraged at the time to take these ideas to Stephen Nortcliff who is great at working with producers to compile their ideas into proposals to submit to the Hub in the following call for proposals. As far as MMG was aware, these weren't turned into proposals this year – they were not submitted for consideration during the 2024 Call for Proposals.

#### **REAL to provide update on CMCS compostables labelling/design initiative at the next forum**

GP reminded the group that this action related to the design for compostable liners and bags. As an update, CMCS (owned by REAL) is still considering whether to introduce a new labelling/marketing design for these items which would make it easier for composters to identify or collaborate with BBIA (the Trade Association for the compostable packaging industry). GP explained there had been some developments from BBIA that are being considered and handed over to DC to explain further.

DC introduced himself as the Policy Manager for the Schemes. DC continued from GP's updates on the design for compostable liners. On 21st March 2024, BBIA launched the liners in a honeycomb design to assist composters in rapidly identifying compostable materials from standard plastic liners. DC explained that a prerequisite to adopt the design is certification – the industrially compostable materials must be certified with an independent certification scheme's rules and BS EN 13432, BS EN 14995 or ASTM D6400. Similarly, home compostables must be certified with an independently certification scheme's rules and certification codes AS 5810-2010, EN 17427 or NFT 51-800, or TUV Austria's OK compost home certification scheme. To be able to use the design, the user must be a BBIA member or a consumer of a BBIA member. However, the application process includes a requirement to prove that the bags meet the aforementioned prerequisite standards before the design can be printed on the liners.

DC reiterated that discussions are ongoing with BBIA and there will hopefully be more to come soon.

#### **REAL Research Hub to consider research ideas raised in meeting**

MMG reminded attendees that this action was in relation to research ideas raised in the Autumn (October) Forum Meeting of last year. During this meeting, a producer raised four potential research ideas to submit to the Research Hub.

1. Research looking into an ideal mix for a blended topsoil product containing compost, potentially to assess whether the material could be used as an alternative to peat in the PRT test (i.e., whether topsoil blend might be more fit for purpose than peat, depending on the end-market).
2. Project on application rates, dilution factors, and nitrogen sensitive zones to inform customers of recommended quantities to apply.

3. Project on oversize for use in biomass, considering different biomass grades and whether oversize would need to meet the input criteria (e.g., plastic removal step)
4. Project on real-world behaviours around the maturation stage (e.g., why operators do or don't do it) to feed into a wider study to demonstrate the value of a maturation stage (e.g., if it helps more useful fungi grow).

MMG noted she did follow up with the producer who suggested these to see if they might be interested in writing them up into a proposal. They were not submitted to the Research Hub this year (2024) but could be submitted in 2025 if producers felt they were of use/interest.

#### **Producers to raise the issues around markets for oversize and the potential for development of a QP for oversize with trade bodies**

GP reminded attendees that this was an action for producers to consider raising queries about the use of oversize for different markets (including the potential to develop an end-of-waste route for oversize) with Trade bodies such as the REA.

No attendees had updates to share on this item.

#### **Producers to contact Megan with any additional feedback on the Hub proposal process (e.g., any barriers to submitting proposals, and suggestions for improving the process)**

MMG noted that she did not receive any further feedback from producers on this item but reiterated that producers are always encouraged to get in touch with her directly ([megan@realschemes.org.uk](mailto:megan@realschemes.org.uk)) if there is any way the process can be made more accessible

#### **GK to raise physical contaminants and stones reporting issue for discussion at TAC**

GK reminded attendees that this was regarding an issue discussed in a previous forum regarding testing for revalidation after a failure on stones. When retesting for stones after the corrective action, the lab reported not only stones but also PCs (even though the sample passed initially on PCs). The producer wanted the labs only to report the results for retesting on stones.

GK took this question to the TAC. The result of this discussion was that the method for testing stones also involves testing for PCs. The TAC felt that PC results could not be ignored. If there were separate test methods for stones and PCs there may be an argument that only one parameter be re-tested after a failure. However, as it's the same method, the TAC's view was that if a producer fails for stones, they must also be retested on both stones and PCs – the lab couldn't simply ignore the PC result, and this would have to be accepted.

#### **Any questions on the summary paper**

There were no questions raised in relation to the Summary Paper sent to attendees prior to the forum.

## **4. Update on the CQP revision**

DC explained that the Resources Framework will replace the Quality Protocols. The EA recently produced a draft of an Interim Resources Framework for the EA-led Task and Finish Group (T&FG) to review. REAL has reviewed the draft document and have added comments and suggested edits. The next TF&G meeting will look to finalise the draft Interim Framework. DC noted the meeting had not been scheduled but he hoped it would take place this month.

Once the Interim Resources Framework is confirmed and implemented, the TF&G plan review the Interim Framework to create the finalised Resources Framework. This is estimated to occur Summer 2025.

In terms of the contents of the draft Interim Resources Framework, DC confirmed that the current document contains plastic limits reduced to meet SEPA limits. While the document has not been finalised, it appears as though this is likely to go ahead and the general consensus from the TF&G seems to be that this is a good next step. In future, should the implementation of reduced plastic limits go well, between the time of implementation and review period, will look to review and update in the future.

GS queried when these changes would come into effect.

DC commented that the plan is for this to occur this year, noting the deadline was initially April but this has been delayed due to external pressures. DC explained that it is for the EA to give an indication on timings, and he would share more with interested parties whenever more information is provided.

## **5. Feedback from the last Technical Advisory Committee**

GK noted that in addition to the item on stones (covered in actions above), the issue of plastic contamination levels specified in Local Authority contracts was raised again, as it has been repeatedly. GK expressed that this will be increasingly concerning for producers throughout the UK when plastics limits in finished composts are reduced to SEPA levels across the board.

GK suggested it might be worthwhile for producers to approach Local Authorities to share that the plastic limits are expected to be tightened in the near future, making it more difficult to achieve compliance if the quality of wastes received is poor (contaminated). GK expressed that he'd done this when SEPA reduced the limits and encouraged producers approach their Local Authorities in a similar manner.

GK queried whether most producers on the call have 5% contamination specified in their contracts?

GS shared that their contract(s) specifies 1%

ML commented that they had 5% in their contract in Somerset

JF commented that the contracts range from 1% to 5%. Further, JF noted that one council disregards contamination limits altogether, taking the view that the Local Authority is the collector, and composters are the disposer, so the responsibility is on the composter to deal with contamination. JF had to involve the EA to mediate the issue.

HE noted that TMA has a Standard Rules permit limit at 1% reducing. HE expressed that they'd made it clear at the point of tender when they entered into contracts with three Local Authorities that if the site received any loads in excess of this, they'd reject the whole load. The waste then has to be removed by the contractor and goes to general waste. HE noted that the 10% levels he'd seen recorded in previous minutes is far too high and expressed that the cost of disposing highly contaminated waste offsite or sorting it is far beyond what producers earn from the Local Authorities for taking/processing the waste. HE expressed that when producers say they're losing contracts because they're unable to implement a sensible level of contamination, they're not thinking. They added that they were not sure that prices you're getting from Local Authorities but 1 tonne of waste, cost of not fly-tipping (disposing properly) just doesn't add up if you've got high cost of disposal. You're losing contracts because you're accepting

high levels of waste. GS noted a recent experience where the supplier didn't have any interest in reducing contamination in the feedstock and the site had to let the supplier go because they couldn't meet permit conditions and the EA couldn't help. GS further commented that Local Authorities especially don't seem to be taking this issue onboard considering the likely reduction in plastic limits by 2025 – finds this issue very frustrating for producers as it repeatedly comes up but has not been solved.

JH commented that there will be more food waste collections coming into effect in 2027 with Simpler Recycling reforms, so this issue is only likely to worsen as more people begin recycling food waste and may not have the education/knowledge about keeping plastic from contaminating food waste bins. JH queried what practical steps could be taken to address the issue with more collections upcoming, focusing on the root cause of this problem.

HF shared that TMA has had a very open relationship with the Local Authorities where they'd been in regular discussions, site meetings, measuring contamination and reporting contaminated loads – and felt that from their perspective, the site had done everything they could to address the problem.

GS commented that Local Authorities can target the roads where there have been issues but noted that for their site, the kerbside collection tends to be cleaner than other sources.

GK expressed that he'd experienced the opposite (kerbside collections generally more contaminated). GK further reiterated that 5% is excessive since plastic is the most common contaminant, this can cause a huge amount of plastic contamination.

GK notes that when feedstocks are cleaned up, they might land closer to 1-2% PCs, at which point the Local Authorities claim they're within spec and have no motivation to do more. Greater communication is needed with the Local Authorities as things can't continue in this way, considering that permits are changing and QPs are changing. To bring down limits in the finished material, its necessary to also bring down the permissible limits for Local Authority contracts to 1% contamination.

GK further commented that since PAS 100 was drafted, 5% has been the default limit, but this is far too high. Scotland has a procurement framework where composters bid for work and Local Authorities pick from the bids – here a 5% limit is the go-to. However, Scottish composters have put together a letter to Scotland Excel to insist on limits of 1% rather than 5%. GK understands, however, that in England where Local Authority procurement works with individual tenders, it may be more difficult to bargain in this way.

JH noted that in England, there have been issues around Bespoke Permits, which creates a scenario where some permits are currently allowed higher limits. The EA needs to step up and update all permits rather than doing so gradually. JH further commented that permits typically take 18 months to be processed, although permit variation may occur more quickly.

JH also commented that, most permits issued in England are 'Standard Rules' permits, but as the rules change and sites fall out of compliance, the EA will require sites to move to bespoke permits – this especially tends to occur due to recent changes which have made location rules far more stringent. JH explains that this is a considerable disparity to be ironed out but gives an edge to Local Authorities with older-style permits.

GK shared that he'd raised this issue with the TAC as the EA usually attend; individual Local Authorities can decide 1 for 1

JH queried whether there was a way to raise the issue through LARAC?

GK agreed that speaking to LARAC was another good way to potentially approach the issue. GK commented that he was aware that Jenny Grant from REA Organics had been in touch with LARAC but that it didn't necessarily seem like a priority. GK further expressed that it may have been easier to rectify if it had been addressed sooner, but getting things to change is an uphill struggle rather than starting off on the right footing to begin with.

GK further commented that for producers, the difficulty is that the contracts create revenue which is difficult to turn away when running a business. The moan from producers is that producers that are regulated with permits and by joining CCS are trying to do the right thing but end up being the companies that are most punished when something goes wrong. GK acknowledged that sometimes mistakes happen but if there wasn't so much waste in the waste stream to begin with, these issues would be even less likely to occur. GK further commented that on some level, the time and cost requirements to clean up contaminated loads make it nearly impossible to create quality compost.

GK noted he'd raise the issue again at the next TAC and keep chipping away – GK queried if there were any further questions.

HE commented that PAS 100 provides end of waste status and he was aware that some Local Authorities can only claim recycling credits when the material has achieved End of Waste status. Otherwise, the material counts as waste, not recycling. HE queried if 'shred and spread' onto farmlands controlled by EA permits is allowed to count toward recycling credits.

JH noted that sites can technically self-declare End-of-Waste, but this is not recommended. JH further commented that it depends how councils work – if the council says they only count PAS 100 material as End-of-Waste, they may count other materials (e.g., self-declarations) as recovery but not recycling.

GP asked for further information.

GK shared that in 20 years operating in the sector, he'd had one Local Authority contact him to ask for an estimate of how much he recycles and how much is contaminated. Otherwise, the day they – rejects not taken for recycling targets, waste deployed not taken -not obligated to tell SEPA; not required to report on that (suspects)

JH commented that this depends on the rigorousness of the sender of waste (e.g., how much they trust the operator and how much they follow-up).

GK commented that in Scotland, all tenders specify that the site must have PAS100 certification.

HE confirmed that in the last tender they bid for, PAS 100 was required in tender document.

JH noted she was unsure every Local Authority requires PAS 100, noting the LA might specify waste recovery rather than recycling (as recycled material must meet end of waste)

GK commented that another issue that has come up regarding resale of compost is that people have claimed resold compost meets PAS100. GK felt this is not a 'grey area' and re-sellers should not be permitted to use the conformity mark unless they were part of the audit process and the auditor would need to know/confirm that claims aren't being unfairly made.



HE shared that he was aware of local recycling centres selling compost that created through collection and processing—the bags are not marked for PAS100 compliance nor declarations of who produces it. The material appears to just be a general compost in bags marked ‘compost recycled from your local garden waste.’ HE queried whether this was legal.

JH expressed that this seemed dodgy and whether or not it was legal, would not recommend buying it unless there’s an audit trail.

MJ commented that producers do make their own compost and sell it loose from their site for £1 a bag. Instead of bagging they have the conformance information on site and customers can bag the product themselves. This is done to avoid having their branding and conformity information being sold on by thirds parties. MJ continued by saying there was considerable demand for this practice in Scotland.

GK notes that this is technically not a scheme issue if the producer/supplier is not claiming that the material meets PAS100, but the concern is that if something dodgy happens with an unscrupulous compost producer, it puts the whole industry at risk of negative perceptions.

JH advised MJ to discuss the issue with his local EA officer. JH commented that if the material hasn’t gone through any end of waste process, the EA could technically recall everything they’ve sold and classify it as waste. JH noted that the EA have done this previously at great cost to the producer -one million bags of compost recalled. JH commented that the producer would be unwise to risk this, unless they were certain there would be no challenge. EA reiterated that the best way to avoid legal issues is through PAS100.

## 7. Policy Updates

DC shared as a brief point of information, building on the comment GK raised regarding the TAC, that the CCS/BCS policy team has been trying to better understand what data the EA collect on how non-certified compost producers are able to spread non-certified compost. DC expressed he hoped to gain a better insight on this from the EA in the next TAC meeting.

DC moved on to main policy updates, noting that the CQP has comprised the majority of his policy work for this period, but there are two other key items on the policy agenda – Simpler Recycling reforms and the EU FPR:

DC acknowledged producers may have some concerns about the implementation of Simpler Recycling in terms of the cleanliness of organic waste but is optimistic that the standardisation of collections and weekly required food waste collections will result in cleaner and more plentiful feedstocks. DC noted that this will depend on the manner in which the reforms are rolled out, commenting that it will apply not just to houses but also flats. DC noted that the EA and WRAP have been working on this and he will continue to stay up to date on any developments before the reforms are rolled out.

DC also shared that discussions about the EU FPR have continued picking up steam, particularly whether/how the regulations will be transposed to a UK context in some capacity. The main area of focus for the CCS/BCS policy team is understanding whether/how the regulation will impact the Resources Frameworks (formerly Quality Protocols) if it is adopted in the UK, though it is currently too soon to tell. DC commented that the pace of the adoption of the FPR will likely depend on the timing of the election as the current government is unlikely to work on this as a high priority. In the meantime, he is continuing to familiarise himself with the EU Regs and stay up to date on any developments.

There were no questions.

## 6. Research Hub Updates

MMG recapped the scope and aims of the Research Hub, explaining that the Hub works alongside CCS and BCS to support the organics recycling sector through the production of research. MMG noted the research could focus on a particular operational/technical challenge, R&D for potential market development opportunities, or a number of other relevant topics.

GK further shared that, prior to the Research Hub's existence, anytime PAS100 was put to a review, the regulators required evidence when the industry wanted to make changes. Therefore, the Research Hub was also created, in part, as a way to fund evidence-gathering research to support the case for requested changes to PAS100.

MMG thanked GK and encouraged attendees to get involved in the research process so that the Research Hub can better understand what topics would be of interest/use to industry.

MMG then explained the Research Hub's process for selecting projects. The process is broken into roughly four phases – starting with the annual Call for Proposals in January, we invite people to submit their research ideas to the Research Hub for consideration. Then, CCS and BCS participants are invited to provide feedback on each proposal. The proposals then undergo a two-stage evaluation, conducted by a 'Research Panel' of professionals from across the organics recycling sector (including GK as CCS representative, regulators, an REA Organics representative, etc.) First proposals are shortlisted – during this process, the Research Panel takes industry feedback into consideration. Shortlisted proposals are developed further and then evaluated for a second time and 1-2 projects are selected for funding.

MMG shared an update regarding the project selection process for this year (2024). MMG explained that eight proposals had been submitted to the Hub during the Call for Proposals, four of which were relevant to CCS:

- Proposal 1: Alternative control growing media for REAL CCS plant response tests
- Proposal 2: Annual Survey of the Organics Recycling Industry
- Proposal 3: Do biodegradable plastics fully degrade in commercial compost and anaerobic digestion systems?
- Proposal 8: Monitoring the quality of organic waste arriving at Composting and AD sites and fed into the process

MMG reminded attendees that the online survey to provide feedback on the proposals was currently open and would close on 17<sup>th</sup> May. MMG also highlighted that the Hub had put together several resources to help scheme participants make informed decisions when filling out the survey. These included a paper containing the complete proposals, a paper containing a summary of each proposal, and a webinar on the following Friday (10<sup>th</sup> May) to present the proposals and give an opportunity for discussion, questions and verbal feedback.

MMG then shared project updates. MMG shared that a report for the project entitled 'Developing a carbon accounting methodology for compost and digestate under the Greenhouse Gas Protocol' had recently been published and was available for Scheme Participants to use to calculate the carbon footprint of their compost products.



MMG then shared updates about continuing work. MMG explained that the project entitled 'Plastic contamination method assessment: Evaluating current mass-based methods and possible alternative methods of assessment for plastics in compost and digestate' looked to explore methods of testing for PCs in compost (and digestate) in three ways: by exploring the efficacy and robustness of the current (mass-based) method(s) specified in PAS100 (and PAS 110), by exploring the feasibility of implementing area-based methods of assessment for plastics, and looking into the possibility of assessing for microplastics in compost. MMG shared that this project report would likely be published this summer.

MMG shared that the project entitled 'Plant Response Test Interpretation and Comparison: Investigating performance of the UK Tomato Plant Response Test and German Spring Barley Test on CCS Compost' looked to compare standard PRT analysis results to Spring Barley results to determine whether/if the spring barley outcomes can help interpret and understand Tomato PRT results. MMG explained that the Research Hub has recently appointed a Project coordinator to take this project forward and hope to announce them by name soon.

MMG shared that for the project entitled 'Risk assessments updates for compost and digestate to inform Compost Quality Protocol and AD Quality Protocol revision', this project was intended to conduct an updated risk assessment of the compost and AD industries to support the revision of the CQP and ADQP. However, the EA indicated that a review of a Hazard Analysis document would also be necessary and the Research Hub is now in the process of working to appoint an independent party to carry out the Hazard Analysis review.

There were no questions.

## **8. Issues raised with CCS Producers' Representative**

GK shared that the only issue raised over the last few months was the aforementioned item regarding contamination and Local Authority contracts, as previously discussed.

## **9. An opportunity to discuss other issues raised by producers**

GK reiterated that this part of the forum is an opportunity for Scheme Participants to raise anything for him to take to the TAC and asked if there were any issues operators wished to raise at this time.

JF shared that she had an issue that was not directly about the Scheme, but about lab couriers unsatisfactorily collecting samples. JF expressed that this was frustrating as she works with sites producing only on batch per month. For these sites, when samples are not collected, it sets things back by a month each time. JF noted she'd had issues with DPD THL, TNT. JF commented that the labs control the collections and don't follow up to make sure that the sample has been received and often the site managers don't inform her when the sample hasn't been collected.

GK noted that he'd also experienced this issue – sometimes a sample will be taken on a Monday evening to be collected by the courier on Tuesday and often the courier will not collect the sample on the specified date or if they do, the sample will still not arrive to the lab until Friday. GK reiterated that this was quite a frequent occurrence.

Another attendee stated that they'd had the same experience.

JF explained that her sites use Eurofins which works with three different couriers. JF noted that after several issues (e.g., couriers going to houses rather than the site, not following instructions, not calling the phone number she provided when they're having trouble finding the site), she'd tried providing whatthreewords to give a precise location, but it has still not solved the problem which is frustrating.

GK queried if this might be an action point as something to investigate. GK further asked JF if she complains to the lab each time this occurs.

JF confirmed that she does complain but that the lab rarely returns her emails recently. JF explained that she works as a consultant so must charge the sites for her time each time she works with them and may have to go back to site if the courier doesn't collect the sample. JF expressed frustration that the site personnel doesn't always notify her when a sample hasn't been collected.

Action: check with the labs that they're following up on the performance of their couriers.

GP asked JF what she thought was the main reason for lack of pickups.

JF stated she was unsure of the cause – whether the courier is too busy or don't know to go to a rural site. JF noted she often gets notified by the courier that the 'householder wasn't at home.'

GK shared that he thought the issue largely came down to the quality of people employed in driving jobs, noting that he also often is notified that the courier rang the doorbell and no one answered, which might occur for residential properties but should not apply to a place of business.

GK then queried if those in attendance are content with the auditors

JF stated she was happy with the auditor. However, she'd noticed that NSF had been sending renewal paperwork six months in advance, at which point the site can't report tonnage and don't have the full panel of test results, so often the auditor is chasing the site for information they don't yet have and need more time to gather.

GK suggested simply sending whatever information the site has at the time and when the audit takes place, the site can share updated test results. GK also noted that a considerable benefit of conducting the audit well in advance is that if a significant problem arises, the site has sufficient time to sort it out.

JF also expressed that there was an issue with several sites where the Local Authority has begun using a paid kerbside collection scheme. The dustcarts will finish the job by lunchtime, so they're put onto another collection (e.g., glass). The following day, they're back to collecting green waste, going to site having glass stuck under pushcart so these sites end up having a lot of contamination from glass collections. JF queried if others have had a similar experience.

HE confirmed he has experienced issues when dustcarts switch from green waste to other types of waste. If carts are not properly cleaned, general waste can get stuck inside and contaminate green waste streams. HE considered this may be an occasion where contamination is due to the drivers' negligence, rather than the public contaminating bins. HE further shared that glass is a big issue and if their site receives a load with any glass contamination, they reject the entire load. HE notes that this is a matter of whether the site has sufficient space to quarantine the rejected load for the contractor to come and recollect the contaminated load.

GK stated that sites will have to ask their own Local Authorities about this issue and noted that Authorities tend to do more about issues like this because they actually can. If the issue comes down to a driver not properly cleaning out a collection vehicle, the Local Authority is more able to identify the source of the problem and do something about it (compared to the public contaminating bins). GK further expressed that if something's inconvenient for the Local Authorities (e.g., needing to re-collect

contaminated loads) they're more likely to do something about it. GK further recommended showing photos of contamination in loads when tipped and putting complaints in writing.

JF shared that, in her experience, capturing glass contamination on video was more helpful than photos as the glass fragments could be heard when the load is tipped. JC noted the sites have started quarantining and sending loads contaminated with glass back, however the issue is that FCC is the waste contractor, so the Local Authority is not the direct issue in this case.

## 10. AOBs

### Research Hub webinar for universities

MMG explained that in a previous BCS Forum, JH raised the idea of webinars to promote the Research Hub to university students/faculty. The premise currently under consideration is to engage with students about the different ways young professionals can get involved in the organics recycling sector. MMG asked any composters who'd be interested in briefly presenting (~10-15 mins) to university students about their experience in the sector to please email [megan@realschemes.org.uk](mailto:megan@realschemes.org.uk).

### International Compost Awareness Week (ICAW)

OD introduced himself as the new Schemes Manager for CCS and BCS. OD then explained that REAL and REA are taking part in International Compost Awareness Week, an event organised by the Compost Research and Education Foundation. OD shared that REAL has released a paper on the industrial composting process and some of the main benefits it provides. Information about the REA's work can be found on their social media channels.

## Actions

- REAL to share an update with producers on the CQP revision after the next T&FG meeting
- GK to raise issues around contamination allowances in LA tender requirements/contracts again during the upcoming TAC meeting
- Producers to consider approaching LAs to share that the plastic limits are expected to be tightened in the near future, making it more difficult to achieve compliance if the quality of wastes received is poor
- HE to consider contacting local EA officer about waste-derived compost sold by local council
- GK to raise issues around lab courier collections during the upcoming TAC meeting
- Producers to consider contacting LAs about collection vehicles being improperly cleaned between different types of collections (e.g., glass then green waste) if this is a regular issue for them
- Producers to contact Megan ([megan@realschemes.org.uk](mailto:megan@realschemes.org.uk)) to raise any queries or express interest in presenting to university students through REAL Research Hub-led webinars