

Compost and digestate training resources in your hands

***DC-Agri* may be drawing to a close, but the wide range of project resources will continue to be available, providing key information to help farmers, contractors, advisers and students. Extending the project's impact into the future, these resources are accessible at www.wrap.org.uk/dc-agri To help with this, we're asking you to share the link with someone who will benefit from understanding better how to use renewable fertilisers.**

One strength of the *DC-Agri* project has been the focus, not just on delivering robust evidence, but on translating this into practical resources for industry.

DC-Agri has shown that, whilst digestate and compost are valuable renewable fertilisers, some straightforward steps should be followed to maximise their benefit. Farmer focussed events across England, Scotland and Wales have provided training on this to over 3,000 people, whilst a range of materials will continue to be hosted online enabling convenient access to training and guidance whenever it is needed.

In addition to the series of project bulletins, the range of resources includes:

- [Videos](#): two short video clips covering how best to use digestate to optimise its value, and a third on how best to use compost to benefit crops and soils.
- [Good practice guidance](#): for farmers, advisers and agri contractors on maximising renewable fertilisers.
- [Renewable fertiliser matrix](#): detailing when renewable fertilisers can be used to grow different crops (adopted by the Red Tractor Assurance Scheme).
- [Farm adviser training materials](#): for training professionals delivering courses to farmer advisers.
- [College materials](#): for lecturers – providing an off the shelf summary lecture, as well as more in-depth modules to mix and match on the composting/AD processes and using renewable fertilisers.

If you are interested in the detail, the full research reports, the project data and a readily accessible research summary report are online via the project homepage www.wrap.org.uk/dc-agri



The value of robust evidence

It's not obvious that we should get excited about knowing how much of the nitrogen in digestate will be taken up by crops. But we should.

This one fact helped farmers convert the more than 1.5 million tonnes of food waste that went to digesters in 2015 into loaves of bread, pints of milk and boxes of vegetables. It has helped farmers apply digestate with precision, allowing them to balance crop requirements and save on fertiliser costs whilst maintaining quality. Without the application of robust science, farmers and advisers would still be 'guesstimating'.

The *DC-Agri* results provide clarity that both compost and digestate have no negative effects on crop quality or safety, and that compost can increase soil organic matter more quickly than other organic materials.

Just as importantly, the results support clear guidance on how and when to apply renewable fertilisers in order to avoid unnecessary cost and potential harm to the wider environment.

How you can help

We would like you to help secure the project's legacy by sending a link to the project homepage to someone who you think will benefit. Send one email to help another farmer, contractor, or adviser grow healthy crops on healthy soils:

www.wrap.org.uk/dc-agri

They will be joining a strong community that already values the *DC-Agri* resources. The project bulletins alone have been downloaded over 6,000 times and the videos viewed over 4,000 times.

We enjoyed great industry support and coverage when the project results and good practice guides were launched at the beginning of February 2016. Feature articles in *Farmers Weekly*, the *Scottish Farmer* and many other publications prompted some interesting discussion which can be picked up at [#DCAgri](https://twitter.com/DCAgri)

Within just weeks, the good practice guides were downloaded over 350 times and the reports 400 times. It's over to you now – help industry continue to take informed decisions and embed these resources in good farming practice.

New compost video

The latest addition to the online *DC-Agri* resources, the video '*Benefits of compost in agriculture*' can be watched online at www.wrap.org.uk/compost-digestate-video

Brian Chambers Soils Fund

We remember Professor Brian Chambers with warmth and affection. As one of the leading figures in the *DC-Agri* team, he delivered his role with enthusiasm but sadly passed away in 2014. Brian worked tirelessly to apply science to the complex problems of soil, nutrient and organic manure management. With his outstanding technical knowledge and critical thinking, he was always prepared to push the boundaries and challenge convention, but only when supported by 'sound science' – one of his favourite phrases. The *DC-Agri* team would never have achieved so much without his unrivalled experience and tireless commitment.

The Brian Chambers Soils Fund was established to provide grants to help fund the learning and development costs of students and early career scientists. Encouraging the skills and knowledge needed to manage soils effectively to meet the demands of modern farming systems is essential for the future sustainability of agriculture and to provide research scientists for the future.

If you would like to find out more, please visit:

<http://soils.org.uk/bcsf-brian-chambers-soils-fund>

Project partners:



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