



---

**EU Belgian Presidency**  
European Conference on  
Bio-waste in Brussels

Page 4

---

**ECN-QAS**  
First Conformity Label  
awarded

Page 4

---

**EU NEWS**  
Environment Policy Review

Revision of the Animal by-  
Products Regulation  
(ABPR) largely completed

Page 5

---

**ECN INSIDE**  
New Constitution of Work-  
ing Groups

EU Working Paper on  
Sludge and Biowaste

Page 6

---

**FROM THE COUNTRIES**  
News from the European  
Countries

Page 7

---

## ECN-QAS

# European Quality Assurance for Compost is launched

Quality assurance schemes for compost and digestion products have been established for over 20 years successfully in various European Member States as a key element for sustainable recycling of organic residues. This development and also the intention of the European Commission to define an End-of-Waste Standard for compost led to a demand for a European uniform quality standard for compost plants and composted products. The European Compost Network ECN met this challenge and developed a concept for a European quality assurance scheme within its working group "Standardisation & Quality Assurance". This project includes a quality standard for compost like it is necessary for a free cross-border movement of goods in the EU. The ECN-QAS started in September with a successful certification of the Austrian Quality Assurance Organisation ARGE Kompost & Biogas.

Background for the development were the long-lasting discussions about an EU-wide legislation for biowaste which lately ended in a Communication of the EU Commission about biowaste [1] and the legal intention to regulate "the point when compost ceases to be waste" in the Waste Frame Directive [2]. Since 2004 the ECN commenced work on a scheme for a Europe-wide quality assurance for compost (ECN-QAS) based on existing national quality assurance systems (QS) and experiences in the member organisations.

### Targets of the European concept

The target of the set-up of an EU-wide quality assurance scheme for compost is to define a Europe-wide standard for quality management and quality compost. Per-condition for a consistent compost quality is to harmonise the

parameter of the treatment process and to check them regularly by an independent control. Further targets of the ECN-QAS are to set a common basis for the existing quality schemes in Europe and to support Member States defining quality standards and developing a quality assurance scheme for composts and for digestates in a second phase.

### Elements of the ECN-QAS

The ECN-QAS represents an independent quality assurance scheme and contains requirements for compost quality assurance organisations (QAO) and basic requirements for a European compost standard in the first instance. Besides the positive list for suitable input materials and requirements for process quality the scheme also includes quality criteria for compost and analysing methods.

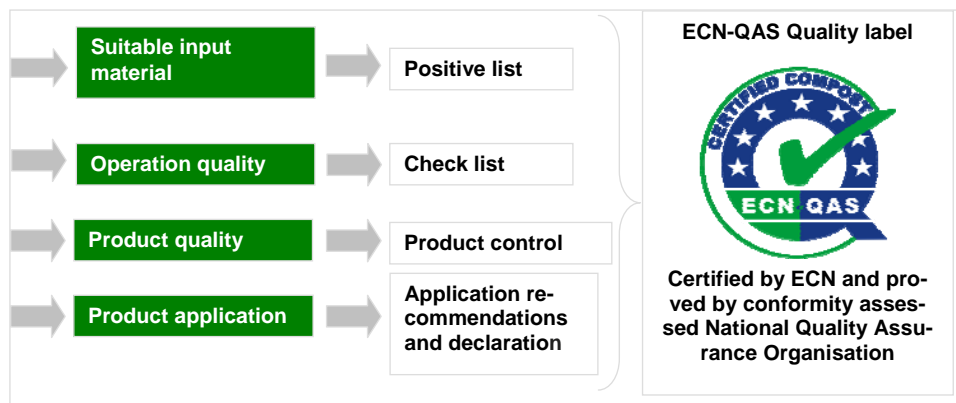


Figure 1: Concept of the European Quality Assurance Scheme (ECN-QAS) for Compost

### Requirements for composting

Process requirements for the production of composts are laid down in the ECN-QAS. They include minimum guidelines about the adherence of process parameters to guarantee a sufficient sanitisation of the product. As a basic principle only separately collected organic wastes are accepted as input material.

### Compost quality

Quality composts have a widely homogenous composition based on defined input materials. After composting the lead to high quality humus products which can be placed successfully on the markets as soil improvers and organic fertilisers. They are used to preserve the content of organic matter in the soil and thus influence biodiversity and soil fertility positively.

tion Strategy. The formation of these limit values was the result on the comparing assessment of the present compost qualities in Europe with the precondition that separate collection of biowaste is established in the countries. In order to comply with the precautionary requirements of the environment and consumer protection the long-term accumulation of harmful matter in the soil has been considered when identifying the limit value levels.

Table 1: Quality criteria of the European Quality Assurance Scheme for the characterising of quality compost

	Parameter
Soil improvement	Organic matter
	Alcaline effective materials (CaO)
Fertilisation	Nutrients (N; P, K, Mg)
Biological parameter	Biological activity
	Plant response
Material properties	Water content
	Bulk density/volume weight
	Grain size
	pH-value
	Electrical conductivity

### Aspects of protection of the environment and consumers

Important parameter for the market of recycling products are the not desired ingredients. In quality assured composts they are reduced to a minimum by means of separate collection of biowaste combined with an optimised process management. These composts are environmentally safe for the individual application. Hereby to be named is the content of heavy metals and impurities like plastics, metals and glass, germinable seeds and plant parts.

In order to achieve the quality label all limit values must be met for these parameter (see Table 2). They are based on a research [3] which has been contracted by the Commission's DG Environment in the framework of the development of the European Soil Protec-

### Quality Monitoring

Quality monitoring of composts is realised through regular sample taking and analysis by independent and approved labs. All monitoring results are controlled by a recognised quality assurance organisation.

### Certification

The ECN-QAS includes a conformity assessment of national quality assurance organisations, which are labelled with the ECN-QAS Conformity Label. In addition individual composting plants fulfilling the criteria for the European quality standard for compost can be labelled with the ECN-QAS Quality label.

For the certification procedure ECN has implemented an international Quality Committee as advisory board..



The ECN-QAS Conformity Label



The ECN-QAS Quality Label

**Table 2: Precautionary requirements on the protection of environment and consumers**

	Parameter	Assessment
Hygienic aspects	Salmonellae	0 in 25 g DM
Undesired ingredients	Impurities (glass, metals, plastics)	≤ 0.5 % DM
	Germinable seeds and sprouting plant parts	≤ 2 per litre
Harmful matter Precaution limit values <sup>1)</sup>	<b>Heavy metals</b>	<b>mg / kg DM</b>
	Lead (Pb)	130
	Cadmium (Cd)	1.3
	Chromium (Cr)	60
	Copper (Cu) <sup>2)</sup>	200 <sup>3)</sup>
	Nickel (Ni)	40
	Mercury (Hg)	0.45
	Zinc (Zn) <sup>2)</sup>	600 <sup>3)</sup>

<sup>1)</sup> Amlinger, F. et al. 2004: Heavy metals and organic compounds in waste used as organic fertilisers.  
<sup>2)</sup> Copper and zinc are classified as essential nutrients. Values over 110 mg Cu kg<sup>-1</sup> DM and over 400 mg Zn kg<sup>-1</sup> DM must be declared.  
<sup>3)</sup> These values are classified as benchmarks.

### Forecast

The Commission has already started to work on product standards for composts under the Waste Framework Directive [1] [2]. Member States are asked to actively participate in the process. In the report "End of Waste Criteria" [4] published by the European Commission in 2008 a possible concept for end of waste criteria for composts - as proposed by ECN - was included. It was pointed out that the monitoring of any product standard for composts should be connected to a uniform, independent system of quality assurance. This would definitely contribute to legal security and to a deregulation of national control measures.

#### Sources:

- [1] EU KOM (2010): Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on the future steps in bio-waste management in the European Union. COM (2010)235 final; <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/compost/developments.htm>
- [2] 2008/98/EC: Directive 2008/98/EG of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on waste and repealing certain Directives. L 312:3; <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32008L0098:EN:NOT>
- [3] Amlinger, F., Favoino, E., Pollak, M., Centemero M. and V. Caimi (2004): Heavy metals and organic compounds from wastes used as organic fertilisers. Study on behalf of the EU Commission DG ENV. A.2, <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/waste/compost/index.htm>
- [4] EU KOM (2008): End of Waste Criteria. Final Report of the Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (IPTS) / Joint Research Centre (JRC) / European Commission. <http://susproc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/Endofwastecriteriafinal.pdf>

### More Information

The Quality Manual of ECN-QAS including the concept of the European Quality Assurance with all requirements is now published. It can be ordered at the ECN-office.

Printed version 50 € + VAT + shipping costs: Download version: 35 € + VAT.



A more detailed description of the ECN-QAS can be downloaded as ECN Info paper from the ECN website.

<http://www.compostnetwork.info>

Questions and applications to participate in the ECN-QAS will be kindly responded by the ECN.

#### Contact:

European Compost Network ECN e.V.  
 Am Landhagen 64a  
 59302 Oelde (Germany)  
 T.: +49 (0) 234 4349447  
 F: +49 (0) 234 4349448  
 Email: [siebert@compostnetwork.info](mailto:siebert@compostnetwork.info)  
 Internet: [www.compostnetworkinfo](http://www.compostnetworkinfo)



## Don't waste your bio-waste

In the context of the Belgian EU presidency the Belgian Environmental Agency (OVAM) organised a bio-waste-conference under the title "Don't waste your bio-waste" which was held in Brussels on 21 September 2010. More than 200 participants from 21 European Countries followed the ongoing discussion for an European legislation on the management of bio-waste.

As keynote speakers Mr. Karl Falkenberg (EU Commission DG Environment), Mr. Toon Wassenberg (Assistant of the MEP Kathleen Van Brempt) and Mr. Stephane Ardit (European Environmental Bureau) were invited. Mr. Falkenberg expressed again, as expected, that the European Commission does not see a necessity for a specific regulation on bio-waste. He pointed out that with the existing Landfill Directive and the revised Waste Framework Directive (WFD) the Member States are in the responsibility to implement the specific legislative measurements for a sustainable management of bio-waste. "The waste hierarchy, as a guiding principle," he stressed "is the key issue which member states have to respect".

In contrary to the Commission the speaker of the European Parliament, Toon Wassenberg, as well as Stephane Ardit from EEB stressed that there is still a gap in the legislation for a sustainable bio-waste management. Neither the EU Landfill Directive nor the WFD regulate this management in an effective and binding way. The risk of the Commission's intended fragmented legislation is that the valuable bio-waste as resource for organic matter and as a substitute for mineral fertilisers and peat, is thrown away. Mieke de Schoenmakere (OVAM, organiser of the conference), pointed out that an integrated approach for the sustainable management of bio-waste is necessary which takes all resource related benefits and values of bio-waste into account. For this a clear guidance, like a specific European bio-waste legislation, is urgently needed.

The presentations of the conference will be published on the website of OVAM: <http://www.ovam.be>



Info: [www.kompost-biogas.info](http://www.kompost-biogas.info)

### ECN-QAS

## First Conformity Label awarded

During the bio-waste conference in Brussels organised by the Belgium EU Presidency the European Compost Network awarded the first conformity label of ECN-QAS to the Austrian Quality Assurance Organisation **ARGE Kompost & Biogas**.

The requirements for quality assurance organisations in the ECN-QAS are based on the European Standard "General criteria for certification bodies operating product certification" (EN 45011). The certification included the audit of the organisation and on-site

visits of composting plants certified by ARGE Kompost & Biogas.

By the end of 2010 two further quality assurance organisations (BGK-Germany and KGVÖ-Austria) will start with the conformity assessment of ECN-QAS. Further information about ECN-QAS: [www.compostnetwork.info](http://www.compostnetwork.info)



**Dr. Jane Gilbert, Chair of ECN, awarded the ECN-QAS certificate to Robert Tulnik, General Manager of Austrian ARGE Kompost & Biogas.**



## EU Commission

# Environment Policy Review shows the need to address the challenge of Resource Efficiency

**The European Commission has published the 2009 Environment Policy Review. It reports on EU policy developments from last year and looks in detail at EU and Member States' environmental trends and policy performance.**

The Environment Policy Review details EU policy developments under the four priorities of the 6th Environment Action Programme, namely Climate change, Nature and biodiversity, Environment and health and Natural resources and waste. It also indicates key issues for 2010 and the coming years.

As a cross-cutting issue, the Review shows that Member States included many green initiatives in their economic recovery plans, seeking to move towards a low-carbon and resource-efficient economy. The Europe 2020

strategy, which was proposed by the Commission in 2009 and formally adopted by the European Council in June 2010, supports this shift to a resource efficient Europe.

In the policy area of waste and natural resources the European Commission ask for a better waste management. The total amount of municipal solid waste (MSW) in the EU 27 is still increasing. In 2007, almost 40% of municipal waste was recycled or composted, 20% was incinerated while more than 40% are still landfilled. This EU mean value shows clearly that some countries still have a long way to meet the EU Landfill Directive targets.

The 2009 version of the European Policy Review can be downloaded from: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/>

## EU Commission

# Revision of the Animal by-Products Regulation (ABPR) largely completed

**New Animal By-Products Regulation (EC) No. 1069/2009, which lays down health rules for Animal By-Products not intended for human consumption, will come into effect on 4 March 2011. With the latest decisions for the implementation rules SANCO/7066/2010 in September the consultation between Commission, Member States and stakeholders are nearly completed. As expected - the results are ambiguous for the compost and biogas sector.**

An important achievement is that in addition to catering waste, Member States can apply national rules for former foodstuff (raw meat exempted). No final conclusion could be achieved on the definition of approved "other composting systems", though the interpretation of the Commission repeatedly confirmed quality assured open windrow composting as alternative.

Thanks to the intensive comments of the European Compost Network and few Member States a meeting of the Commission and the Scientific Committee EFSA will be arranged in November. It is intended to discuss important simplifications and the introduction of more flexibility in the definition of alternative processing parameters for composting & anaerobic digestion.

Process validation schemes and flexible time-temperature-regimes - e.g. 55°C - will be subject of the meeting. Several studies have shown satisfying sanitation effects of such alternative processes which also emphasise the importance of a well managed maturation.

ECN's extensive comments to the draft implementation rules can be ordered at <http://www.compostnetwork.info>



## New constitution of ECN Working Groups

The ECN has started to reorganise its working groups (WG) which cover the hot topics of the biowaste sector in Europe. ECN Members and their delegated experts are invited to participate actively in these working groups.

The intention is to define projects and work items (WI) which respond to specific bio-waste approaches and problems. Most of the work will be done by email and telephone conferences.

The working groups with their specific work items are:

### WG 1 European Policy

Chair: Florian Amlinger

- WI EU Biowaste regulation
- WI End of Waste
- WI Animal By-Product Regulation
- WI Life Cycle Thinking and Life Cycle Assessment
- WI Industrial Emission Directive (IED)

### WG 2 Quality Assurance & Standards

Chair: Stefanie Siebert

Extension of the European Quality Assurance Scheme to digestion outputs.

### WG 3 Integrated Waste Management

Chair: Enzo Favoino

Aim: Management of biowaste with an integrated approach in conjunction with different waste treatment options.

Scope: Develop specific issue and info paper which supports policy and decision making like:

- Cost effective separate collection
- Optimisation of process sites
- integration of anaerobic digestion in composting plants
- Benefits of compost/digestate to tackle climate change
- Role of mechanical biological treatment in waste management etc..

### WG 4 Anaerobic Digestion

Chair: Henrik Lystad/Angelika Blom

- WI Anaerobic Digestion in policy developments
- WI Quality aspects of digestates
- WI Use of digestate
- WI Emissions from AD plants

### WG 5 Eastern and Starting Countries

Chair: Mait Krispalu/Josef Barth

- WI Education and Training – Development of Workshops in “Policy options for biowaste management” and “Implementation of sustainable biowaste management”
- WI Info Paper - Evaluation of existing handbooks and guidelines for composting, digestion and separate collection, application, marketing etc.

A request for participating in the working groups will be sent out to all ECN Members in due time.

Contact:  
European Compost Network ECN e.V.  
Dr. Stefanie Siebert  
T.: +49 (0) 234 4349447  
Email: siebert@compostnetwork.info

## ECN involved in consultation on the EU Working Document on sludge and biowaste

The Directorate-General of the European Commission has sent out a working document on sludge on biowaste on the 21 September 2010.

The working document is intended from the EU Commission as a basis for the discussion with key stakeholders and Member States. It proposes three quality classes with a "product" quality compost/digestate (End of Waste) for

source separated biowaste, a “minimum” quality for composted mixed municipal waste and sewage sludge (regulated in Sludge Directive) and a quality below that which Member States can regulate. ECN will send its comments until October 21st.

Contact:  
European Compost Network ECN e.V.  
Josef Barth - T.: +49 (0) 2522 960341  
Email: info@compostnetwork.info

### United Kingdom

## New Method for determining the residual biogas potential of digestate

The Waste & Resources Action Programme (WRAP) has published a test procedure for determining the Residual Biogas Potential (RBP) of anaerobically digested materials complying with the british standard for digestate (PAS 110). The PAS 110 Advisory Committee has adopted RBP as the preferred parameter for indicating digestate stability and process performance and is included in the PAS 110 specification. The test procedure has been developed through research work carried out by the Open University, Southampton University and WRc Plc.

Important characteristics of the test procedure were that it:

- should be carried out in a minimum time scale (preferably 28 days or less),
- could be provided by laboratories already undertaking similar testing

regimes, and

- would be suitable for the analysis of a range of separated fibre and liquid fractions (whole digestate or separated liquor) from different digestion process types, e.g. wet and dry.



The research also proposed a 0.25 l biogas / g VS threshold value to be set in PAS 110.

To download the RBP research report and test procedure please go to: <http://www.wrap.org.uk> (WRAP/AFOR)

### SWITZERLAND

## New Quality Guideline for Compost and Digestate 2010 is published

The compost and biogas organisation of Switzerland has published the new "Quality Guideline for Compost and Digestate 2010".

The new quality guideline replaces the VKS-guideline 2001. The objective of the revised guideline was to give a better overview on the different quality products from composting and digestion and their specific use. It includes further criteria for the differentiation between digestate and compost and a clear definition for the maturity of compost.

The Quality Guideline 2010 is informative for producers of compost and digestate as well as for users like farm-

ers, gardeners and landscapers. It describes in details the use of compost, liquid and solid digestates.

The Guidelines can be downloaded in German and French from the following websites:

- [www.compospect.ch](http://www.compospect.ch)
- [www.biogas.ch](http://www.biogas.ch)
- [www.kompost.ch](http://www.kompost.ch)
- [www.kompostverband.ch](http://www.kompostverband.ch)





**8 October 2010, Amsterdam (NL)**  
**Modern Waste Management: Key to a Sustainable Use of Resources**  
 FEAD Annual Conference  
<http://www.fead.be>

**11 October 2010, Amsterdam (NL)**  
**Life in Growing Media**  
 6<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on 'Peat in Horticulture', a joint symposium of Commission II of the International Peat Society (IPS) and the Dutch National Committee of IPS. This symposium is recognized by the International Society for Horticultural Science (ISHS).  
<http://www.veengenootschap.nl>

**12 October 2010, London (UK)**  
**Food Waste 2010**  
 Collection, processing and energy recovery  
<http://www.recyclingwasteworld.co.uk>

**11-14 October 2010, Bleiswijk (NL)**  
**First International Conference on Organic Greenhouse Horticulture**  
 Production of plantlets, Compost and substrates, Soil and water management, Weed control etc.  
<http://www.organicgreenhousehorticulture.com>

**12-14 October 2010, Štrbské Pleso, High Tatra, (SK)**  
**Enviro-management 2010**  
 Landfills In Europe: Experience with waste disposal through waste storage  
<http://www.greenhorizon-online.com>

**8-12 November 2010, Venice (IT)**  
**VENICE SYMPOSIUM 2010**  
 3<sup>rd</sup> International Symposium on Energy from Biomass and Waste  
<http://www.venicesymposium.it>

**15-20 November 2010, Hamburg (DE)**  
**ISWA World Congress 2010**  
 Urban Development and Sustainability  
<http://www.iswa2010.org>

**17-19 November 2010, Valladolid (ES)**  
**Between Waste Framework Directive and New Spanish Waste Law**  
 ORBIT Special international congress about soils and organic matter on

waste. The conference will address a multiplicity of aspects, such as prevention, separate collection, the use of compost and digestate into the soil and energy recovery from methane and hydrogen.  
<http://www.isrcer.org>

**11-13 January 2011, Nuremberg (DE)**  
**20th Anniversary and Annual Conference with trade fair and study tour**  
 The large range of event attractions, including expert presentations and workshops, is precisely tailored to the needs of the biogas sector. The main subject during the three days of the conference organised by the Fachverband Biogas e.V. will be the amendment of the German Renewable Energies Law  
<http://www.biogas.org>

**10 February 2011, Birmingham (UK)**  
**AfOR's Annual Conference and Awards**  
 The event "Organics - the big issue" shows the importance of organics in the recycling agenda of UK.  
<http://www.organics-recycling.org.uk>

**24-25 February 2011, Dublin (IE)**  
**Future of Anaerobic Digestion of Organic Waste and Residues in Europe - Situation, Constraints, Changes**  
 Conference jointly organised by the European Compost Network and the Composting & Anaerobic Digestion Association of Ireland CRE. **NEW DATE!**  
<http://www.compostnetwork.info>

**27-30 March 2011, Philadelphia (USA)**  
**26th International Conference on Solid Waste Technology and Management**  
 Call for Papers due 31 October 2010  
<http://www.widener.edu/solidwaste>

**4-7 April 2011, Adelaide (Australia)**  
**Organic Matter Management & Compost Use in Horticulture**  
 The International Symposium on Organic Matter Management & Compost Use in Horticulture will present, discuss and explore options of using compost and other organic soil amendments for managing and improving horticultural soils and production systems.  
<http://compost-for-horticulture.com>

Editors:  
**EUROPEAN COMPOST NETWORK e.V. ECN**  
 Dr. Stefanie Siebert (v.i.S.d.P.)  
 Dipl.-Ing. Josef Barth  
 Am Landhagen 64a  
 D - 59302 Oelde  
 Germany  
 T. 0049 (0) 2522 960 341  
 F. 0049 (0) 2522 960 343  
 Email: newsletter@compostnetwork.info  
 Internet: www.compostnetwork.info

Contact:  
 Dr. Stefanie Siebert  
 T. 0049 (0) 234 438 944 7  
 F. 0049 (0) 234 438 944 8  
 Email: siebert@compostnetwork.info

Registered at :  
 Amtsgericht Weimar  
 VR 827

Photos:  
 © European Commission  
 © David Wilken  
 © Horst Müller

Issue-No.: 02\_10  
 Date: 01.10.2010