



# DIGESTATE BIOFERTILISER PRODUCER ACCREDITATION

DBPAS 01 Version 1

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Bioenergy Association

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## Legal Disclaimer:

Biofertiliser producers are not legally obliged to obtain accreditation. Accreditation is voluntary for those producers who wish to benefit from membership of the Bioenergy Association Accreditation Scheme.

Please note that the terminology 'digestate biofertiliser' and 'biofertiliser' are used interchangeably within this document.

The purpose of this document is to assist producers demonstrate their facility meets industry best practice in the production of Fertmark certified digestate biofertiliser.

Compliance with this publication cannot confer immunity from legal obligations.

This publication does not purport to include all the necessary provisions of a contract. Users are responsible for its correct application. In addition to the requirements of this, for application in New Zealand attention is drawn to the following statutory requirements:

Animal Products Act 1999

Animal Products Regulations 2021

Agricultural Compounds and Veterinary Medicines Act 1997

Biosecurity (Ruminant Protein) Regulations 1999

Resource Management Act 1991

## Document Control

This is a controlled document.

It must be reviewed and updated as it is considered appropriate.

Triggers for review could include new information from research including field trials, pollution incidents, a change in the market, a change in legislation or case law.

Updates to will only be made if approved by the Bioenergy Association.

Each version of the document will have a version number and a control sheet which will record its status and a brief comment about the changes that have been made to it.

The document and any associated papers will be published on [www.biogas.org.nz](http://www.biogas.org.nz)

Version	Status	Bioenergy Association approval	Date	Significant changes from previous version
1	Consultation draft			

## 1.0 Introduction

The Digestate Biofertiliser Producer Accreditation Scheme is designed to offer comprehensive support and advocacy to anaerobic digestion facilities within New Zealand and Australia producing Fertmark certified digestate biofertilisers. Herewith referred to as 'the Scheme', its role is to assist and promote the production of renewable energy and fertilisers from the anaerobic digestion of source segregated biodegradable organic materials. Consisting of annual certification, the Scheme ensures certified biofertiliser producers have demonstrated to an independent party their ability to deliver quality biofertiliser and they have the quality assurance processes and procedures in place to consistently deliver these products.

Administered by the Bioenergy Association, the Scheme provides significant benefits to certified digestate biofertiliser producers and verifies that facilities producing Fertmark certified digestate biofertilisers are working to industry best practice. Using learning from both national and international experiences and focusing on continuous improvement, the Scheme offers support in relation to training, technology and procedures and informs digestion facility owners of the importance of quality biofertilisers.

### **How does a producer obtain accreditation for their facilities?**

Producers must first ensure their digestate is produced in line with the *Digestate Biofertiliser Certification Guide* and have obtained certification through Fertmark for their biofertiliser product/s.

Accreditation requires producers to operate their facilities in compliance with the Risk Management Programme requirements set out in the *Digestate Biofertiliser Certification Guide*. Consisting of a Quality Management System, a Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point Plan and a Facility Management Plan, details of the Risk Management Programme accreditation criteria can be found in section 4.0 of this document.

Completed by the Bioenergy Association, accreditation of a facility takes place once they are satisfied the facility is operating as documented and upon receipt of the completed application documentation.

## 2.0 Scope

Accreditation covers facilities that produce Fertmark certified biofertiliser from the anaerobic digestion of biodegradable organic materials in accordance with the requirements of *DPAS 05 Digestate Biofertiliser Certification Guide*.

This Accreditation Scheme document covers:

1. The benefits provided through facility accreditation
2. The producer systems and documentation required for accreditation
3. The steps for Bioenergy Association accreditation
4. Scheme administration details including application and renewal forms

Please note detailed examples of the necessary documents for accreditation can be found on the Bioenergy Association's website<sup>1</sup>. Furthermore it is important that producers make themselves familiar with the Bioenergy Association's *Technical Guidance 8 (The Production and Use as Biofertiliser of Digestate Derived from Source Segregated Organic Waste)*, herewith referred to as 'TG 8' which details current best practice for anaerobic digestion. TG 8 can also be found on the Bioenergy Association's website.

## 3.0 What are the Benefits of Producer Accreditation?

The Scheme has been established as a mechanism for ensuring the professional integrity of those producing and supplying Fertmark certified digestate biofertilisers. Through participation in the Scheme, members benefit from the collaborative promotion of Fertmark certified biofertilisers, greater user confidence in biofertiliser products and knowledge that their facilities are achieving best practice. Figure 1 overleaf illustrates these benefits alongside the details below.

The Scheme's direct benefits for producers are:

- Assistance with obtaining Fertmark Certification for biofertiliser products (as an Associate Member)
- Assistance with obtaining Accreditation (as an Associate Member)
- Access to promotional materials covering the benefits of using Fertmark certified biofertilisers
- Access to training and best practice guidance for the production and use of biofertilisers
- Demonstration that the biofertiliser is produced from sustainable feedstocks and fertilisers meet regulatory requirements
- Access to the Annual Biofertiliser Forum for producers, their facility operators and their technical advisers
- Support through the Bioenergy Association's complaints resolution process in the unlikely event of a customer complaint

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.biogas.org.nz/resource/biofertiliser-certification-scheme>

Furthermore, the Scheme's Governance Committee are committed to:

- Assisting producers achieve certification and accreditation
- Implementing the Scheme's Code of Conduct
- Providing advice to producers and biofertiliser users
- Advocating on legislation and regulations that affect the sale, supply and application to land of Fertmark certified biofertiliser
- Participating in research and development of the digestate biofertiliser market including field trials
- Providing peace of mind to customers that the product manufactured by an accredited producer meets strict quality assurance specifications
- Assisting with any customer complaints backed by the Bioenergy Association

### Digestate Biofertiliser Producer Accreditation Scheme

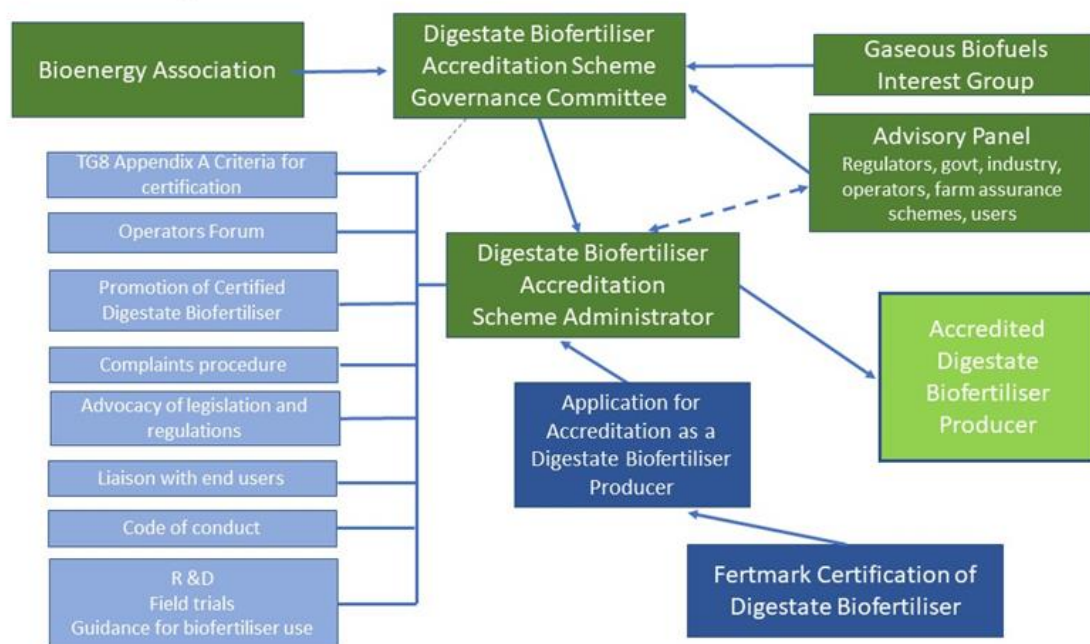


Figure 1: Key benefits and structure of the Digestate Biofertiliser Producer Accreditation Scheme

## 4.0 Accreditation Scheme Criteria

In order for Fertmark certified biofertiliser producers to achieve Accreditation, they must ensure their facility:

- Has a Risk Management Programme in place that meets the requirements specified in the *DPAS 05 Digestate Biofertiliser Certification Guide*
- Operates in line with its Risk Management Programme

Table 1 below summarises the key criteria of the Risk Management Programme (Quality Management System, Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point Plan and Facility Management Plan). Compliance with each point can be demonstrated through a variety of ways. Examples of evidence include, but are not limited to, the provision of site and company documentation, photographs and site visits. During the application process, the Scheme Administrator will communicate with producers in relation to the evidence requirements and ensure that the accreditation process is straightforward and efficient.

Table 1: Accreditation Criteria

Criteria	Evidence	Pass/ Fail
Quality Management System	Management, engagement and leadership	
	Adequate operational people resourcing	
	Clear roles and responsibilities	
	Quality commitment	
	Effective communication processes	
	Regular reviews	
	Reporting	
	Appropriate product labelling	
Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point Plan	Hazard analysis	
	Critical control points	
	Critical limits	
	Monitoring systems to control CCPs	
	Corrective actions	
	Verification procedures	
	Adequate documentation of procedures and records	
Facility Management Plan	Facility details	
	Input controls	
	Process management, separation and storage	
	Process equipment	
	Process monitoring	
	Sampling of digestate	
	Actions in the event of test failure	
Distribution and storage		



## 5.0 Accreditation Application Process

A producer of certified digestate biofertiliser who wishes to be accredited can make an application to the Scheme by sending the completed application form (DBPAS02) found in Appendix A to the Accreditation Scheme Administrator.

Upon receipt of the application, the Scheme Administrator:

- Checks that the digestate produced has been audited by Fertmark and has received the Fertmark Certificate as a recognition of compliance as a Certified Digestate Biofertiliser

If the digestate manufactured by the producer has a Fertmark certificate, the Administrator will:

- Review the application from the producer
- Assess whether the criteria for accreditation as set out in section 4.0 has been met

If the criteria for Accreditation is met, the Administrator will advise the Governance Committee that the producer should be accredited. The Administrator monitors the digestate producer to ensure that compliance with the scheme criteria is continually being met. The producer accreditation must be renewed annually through completion of the Renewal form (DBPAS03) found in Appendix B

In the event of a producer not being accepted for accreditation, the producer can appeal to the Accreditation Scheme Governance Committee. Each appeal will follow protocols defined by the Bioenergy Association's appeals process (<https://www.bioenergy.org.nz/BPP10-professional-standards-complaints>).

A producer of digestate biofertiliser whose product has not yet received a Fertmark certificate may apply to be an Associate Member of the Scheme. An Associate Member can participate in the scheme and receive assistance towards obtaining certification of digestate product. They may use promotional material on the use of certified digestate biofertiliser but may not associate that material to their brand. Any promotional material used by the Associate member must be provided under the scheme logo.

Accreditation will be withdrawn in the event that a producer's annual product certification is not renewed by Fertmark. Additionally in the event of evidence of non-compliance with the requirements of the Accreditation Scheme then the accreditation may be temporarily withdrawn whilst the areas of non-compliance are addressed.

Application fees and contact details can be found in Appendix C.

## 6.0 Accreditation Scheme Details

The Scheme consists of a range of key stakeholders that administer and provide overall governance to the scheme. These consist of the Bioenergy Association, the Accreditation Scheme Administrator, the Governance Committee, Fertmark, the Operator’s Forum, the Gaseous Biofuels Interest Group, the Technical Advisory Panel and also End Users. Table 2 below and overleaf provides details regarding each of these including their roles and responsibilities.

Table 2: Accreditation Scheme Stakeholders roles and responsibilities

Bioenergy Association	Scheme owner providing overall governance of the Digestate Biofertiliser Producer Accreditation Scheme. The Bioenergy Association will appoint a scheme administrator who coordinates and manages the day-to-day activities of the Accreditation Scheme and the Accreditation Scheme Governance Committee.
Accreditation Scheme Administrator	<p>Provides assistance to digestate producers obtaining and maintaining accreditation. The Accreditation Scheme Administrator has the following responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Receive and manage assessment of applications for accreditation</li> <li>- Checks that the producer is making digestate which has a valid Fertmark Certificate as Digestate Biofertiliser</li> <li>- Handles enquiries about the scheme</li> <li>- Assists producers with required application documentation ahead of being audited by Fertmark</li> <li>- Monitors accredited producers to ensure compliance</li> <li>- Issues a Certificate of Accreditation as a Producer of Certified Digestate Biofertiliser to the producer if all requirements are met</li> <li>- Advises the Accreditation Scheme Governance Committee on performance of the Accreditation Scheme and any need for adjustments to the Accreditation Scheme</li> <li>- Ensures that criteria for compliance is always consistent with any changes to legislation, regulations, and Biosolid Guidelines Technical changes</li> <li>- Liaises with Fertmark and the Fertiliser Quality Council</li> <li>- Receives and manages resolution of complaints</li> <li>- The Accreditation Scheme Administrator can offer advice to help resolve any problems including formal complaints through referral to the association's <a href="#">Professional Standards and Complaints Committee</a>.</li> <li>- With the assistance of the Bioenergy Association/Fertmark Technical Advisory Panel, oversee the adequacy of TG8 and make changes if both parties agree</li> </ul>
Accreditation Scheme Governance Committee	<p>The Accreditation Scheme Governance Committee consists of three members appointed by the Bioenergy Association Board one of which is an independent person (not involved with ownership or operation of AD facilities) who acts as the Chair, each with equal votes. This committee provides governance and ensures that the Accreditation Scheme meets the performance standards of the Bioenergy Association and fulfils the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reports to the Board of the Bioenergy Association</li> <li>- Minimum of one member of the Committee has regulatory experience</li> <li>- Reviews running of Accreditation Scheme</li> <li>- Comments on Accreditation Scheme rules</li> <li>- Reviews strategies and develops programmes to promote use of certified digestate biofertiliser and the Accreditation Scheme</li> <li>- Considers and decides appeals on resolution of complaints regarding member biofertiliser supply activities</li> <li>- Ensures representatives from farming bodies, govt agencies, operators, scientific advisors. (For example, Fonterra, Fertiliser Quality Council, MPI) are adequately involved in the scheme to ensure credibility</li> <li>- Meets twice a year and when required</li> </ul>

Fertmark	Receives biofertiliser certification applications, undertakes audits and issues certificates that digestate biofertiliser meets the criteria for being classified as a Certified Digestate Biofertiliser.
Operators Forum	Forum for producers, facility operators, and technical advisers sharing information and technical aspects of digestate biofertiliser that meet at least twice a year. The Operators Forum will have a Steering Group of representatives of Accredited Producers. The Operator Forum provides the opportunity for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Steering Group to develop a forum for events and activities</li> <li>- Members to assist associate members to become accredited</li> <li>- Discussion of issues relating to the administration of the scheme and other issues that may impact on the scheme</li> <li>- Sharing best practice</li> <li>- Providing training for new operators</li> </ul>
Gaseous Biofuels Interest Group	The Gaseous Biofuels Interest Group is a division of the Bioenergy Association for members interested in gaseous biofuels. The Group provides leadership to the gaseous biofuels sector with regard to policy development, advocacy to Government, and the establishment of best practice standards. Its role is to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide sector guidance and oversight to the Governance Committee and the Scheme Administrator of the valorisation of digestate</li> <li>- Provides technical advice to the Accreditation Scheme Governance Committee and its Administrator</li> </ul>
Technical Advisory Panel	The Technical Advisory Panel, established by Fertmark and the Accreditation Scheme Governance Committee, advises on the appropriateness of the digestate biofertiliser certification criteria which Fertmark requires to audit product compliance against. Members consist of Steering Group members that established the digestate biofertiliser certification criteria and producer accreditation criteria. Note membership of the Advisory Panel has been adjusted as interested parties made themselves known and specific aspects related to the safe use of digestate biofertiliser on land arose. The advisory panel's responsibilities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reviewing scientific and policy context for the Accreditation Scheme and advising Fertmark and the Governance Committee</li> <li>- Reviewing the results of technical research including field trials</li> <li>- Ensuring the Panel has an independent chair appointed jointly by The Fertiliser Quality Council and the Accreditation Scheme Governance Committee</li> <li>- Inviting representatives of larger users such as Fonterra and Pamu to participate in the Panel</li> <li>- Ensuring other interested end users may, on request, join the Panel</li> <li>- Convene as required</li> </ul>
End Users	The Accreditation Scheme provides end users with independent promotional and factual material on the characteristics and benefits of using Certified Digestate Biofertiliser

## 7.0 Scheme Logo Use

The Scheme logo is permitted to be used by producers who are accredited members of the Scheme. The logo is the mark of product quality and producer knowledge, trust and responsibility. It demonstrates to users that products have met the rigorous standards required by Fertmark and the Scheme.

## Appendix A: Accreditation Application Form

<b>DBPAS02: Accreditation Application Form</b>		
Name of producer		
Trading name of the producer		
Date of application		
Producer's representative		
Contact details		
Biofertiliser products which have a Fertmark certificate		
	Name of product	
	Fertmark certification number	
	Date of certification	
	Name of product	
	Fertmark certification number	
	Date of certification	
Membership of the Bioenergy Association		Yes/no
Declarations		
1	Agree to assist in the Accreditation Scheme promotion activities	Yes/no
2	Agree to abide by the Code of Conduct of the Bioenergy Association	Yes/no
3	Declare that there have been no convictions in a court of law or complaints upheld by an investigating body that relate to the production, sale or supply of digestate as fertilizer.	Yes/no
4	Agree to assist with research projects run by the Accreditation Scheme	Yes/no
5	Agree to assist with the operation of the Accreditation Scheme to further the interests of all members.	Yes/no
6	As agreed from time to time to assist with the financial viability of the Accreditation Scheme	Yes/no
As a member of the Accreditation Scheme the member will:		
	Hold a single voting right for the undertaking of Accreditation Scheme activities	
	Receive all the services of the Accreditation Scheme	
Signed		
Dated		

## Appendix B: Accreditation Renewal Form

Producers accredited under the Accreditation Scheme must renew their accreditation status annually by submitting the declaration below and paying the annual renewal fee.

<b>DBPAS03: Accreditation Renewal Form</b>		
Name of producer		
Trading name of the producer		
Date of application		
Producer's representative		
Contact details		
Biofertiliser products which have a Fertmark certificate		
	Name of product	
	Fertmark certification number	
	Date of certification	
	Name of product	
	Fertmark certification number	
	Date of certification	
Membership of the Bioenergy Association		Yes/no
The producer confirms that the declarations made at the time of application for accreditation are still true:		
1	Agree to assist in the Accreditation Scheme promotion activities	Yes/no
2	Agree to abide by the Code of Conduct of the Bioenergy Association	Yes/no
3	Declare that there have been no convictions in a court of law or complaints upheld by an investigating body that relate to the production, sale or supply of digestate as fertilizer.	Yes/no
4	Agree to assist with research projects run by the Accreditation Scheme	Yes/no
5	Agree to assist with the operation of the Accreditation Scheme to further the interests of all members.	Yes/no
6	As agreed from time to time to assist with the financial viability of the Accreditation Scheme	Yes/no
Signed		
Dated		

## Appendix C: Fees

Initial accreditation fee (includes first year's membership): \$

Annual accreditation renewal fees: \$

Annual Associate member fee: \$

### Contact us

Accreditation Scheme Administrator  
Digestate Biofertiliser Producer Accreditation Scheme  
C/o Bioenergy Association  
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