

# Green Estate Compost

## Putting Green Waste to Work

CO2Sense Yorkshire funded the trials that have shown that compost made from recycled green waste has left traditional peat-based alternatives in the shade.



A series of rigorous demonstration trials were carried out to test the performance of the compost, which is produced by a social enterprise in Sheffield called Green Estate. The compost is made from green waste sourced from parks, gardens, open spaces, street trees, civic amenity sites and Sheffield City Council's green bag scheme. It is composted at six sites across the city.

The compost was tested in three different applications: grounds maintenance, landscape gardening and turf growing. In all cases, the green waste compost significantly outperformed traditional growing mediums.

In the first trial, the compost was used as a top dressing for a new district park – part of a larger sustainable urban drainage scheme (SUDS). Poor soil had made it difficult to establish grass on this former coal mine site, but within four weeks of applying the compost, the grass appeared significantly greener, and the area's ability to absorb water during flooding incidents was improved.

## Composting

### Benefits:

- 84kg of CO<sub>2</sub> are saved for every tonne of compost used
- Green waste compost is easier to handle, cheaper and more sustainable than dug topsoil
- Composting green waste helps local authorities meet challenging waste reduction targets
- Businesses that generate green waste can avoid landfill tax by disposing of it via Green Estate
- Green Estate generates valuable funds by selling compost to landscapers and developers, the profits of which are ploughed back into the local community.

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Matt Hill – PROJECT MANAGER – CO2SENSE YORKSHIRE

The compost was also used as a substrate for turf laying, during a restoration project of the old Manor Farm House. Contractors working on the project found the compost was cheaper than importing traditional topsoil, lighter, and easier to work with. The turf was well established within weeks, and continued to perform well through the summer.

Finally, the green waste compost was trialed as a growing medium for turf, by comparing its performance with an 'as-dug' soil and a mix of half compost and half soil. Grass grew well on all three trial plots, but there was a significant difference on the 100 per cent green waste compost.

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Here, the grass grew more quickly, and was significantly taller and greener. The sward knitted together much more quickly, resulting in less weed content.

Matt Hill, Project Manager at CO2Sense said: "The green waste compost delivered excellent results in all the trials, highlighting its versatility in a wide range of applications. Putting the region's green waste to work has never been more important. Yorkshire and Humber is required to divert around 640,000 tonnes of organic material away from landfill by 2010. Achieving this target relies on forward-thinking composting schemes such as this one."

CO2Sense supports regional composters by providing free planning advice to help set up composting sites; offering funding support; running specialist conferences and events, managing a virtual network for organic waste processors, and by publishing a regional directory of local suppliers.

**CO2Sense Yorkshire was established by Yorkshire Forward to help businesses in the region to prosper in the low carbon economy. We provide expertise and funding to help environmental companies to grow. We work with partners to help all organisations to fund and develop initiatives that reduce their carbon emissions.**

