

Cré-WRAP Top Dressing with Compost on the K Club Fairway

It has been recognised that there is a potential application for quality-composted materials to be used within the maintenance of sports and amenity turf. The Sports Turf Research Institute in England has completed research in this area, and the practice is being utilised in the UK and USA. Compost has been found to possess the potential for use as a soil conditioner and nutrient source, and has even displayed natural disease suppressive characteristics, but this as of yet has to be scientifically trialled in Ireland. To address this situation, two field trials are underway to assess the potential benefits of compost application (brown bin and green/landscape material compost) to turf grass on a golf fairway possessing two different soil types.

The management of the K Club Smurfit Golf Course is kindly hosting the trials. The trials are co-sponsored by Cré and the Waste Resource Action Programme (WRAP). Market development such as this 'all-island affair' has always been a focus of Cré.

The project team consists of some of the best experts in their own field to ensure the best possible trials. The team consists of Gerry Byrne (K-Club), Ron Alexander (R. Alexander Associates, Inc., America) Percy Foster (Cré) Kevin McCabe (Enrich) Gerry Bird and Avril Rothwell (OCAE Consultants), David Lawson (Sports Turf Research Institute, UK), Ian Garner (WRAP) and Caolan Woods (Natural World Product).

The trial started in July and finished in November. The trials were monitored every two weeks during this period for turf colour, ground cover by grass, turf disease, turf weed infestation, soil and herbage analysis.

An open day for all the golf course superintendents in Ireland and related turf industries was held in October to get feedback from the golf course superintendents/turf specialists. On the same day, a separate session was held for the Cré members. The open day gave golf course superintendents, turf specialists and member of the compost industry a 'hands on' opportunity to see these research plots using compost, as well as having access to query the researchers.



Photograph is of one of the demonstration plots at the K Club on the day it was set up



It is hoped that this trial is a first step and the Market Development Group will be encouraged to continue on this work next year. A final report on the demonstration trials is to be published in January 2009 and will be sent to all Cré members. The trial has a potential to open a market on the use of compost in the 367+ golf courses in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

The photograph on the left is of some of the golf course superintendents examining the research plots.

Cré Membership Directory 2008

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