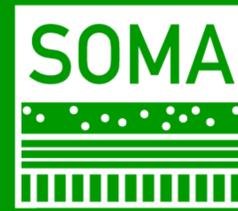


Spreading Organic Materials Assurance (SOMA)



Spreading
Organic
Materials
Assurance



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Introduction

In the UK it is acknowledged that the land spreading of wastes is beneficial to agriculture. However, the application of waste-derived materials to land at the operator level is where the least training takes place, and is where the most risk to the environment is encountered. The Spreading Organic Materials Assurance (SOMA) aims to create a base level of competency amongst personnel applying waste derived materials to land and increase the awareness of the responsibilities; both from a legal perspective as well as an environmental and social. SOMA has been established to provide certification and continual professional development for operators, contractors and organisations involved with the application of organic materials to land.

SOMA is a WAMITAB accredited course, and as such, is recognised as the only training, and qualification scheme focussed specifically on 'point of application' as well as operator standards and good practice. The aim is for all individuals and organisations involved in waste to land application to be certified with the SOMA scheme. This course will benefit industries aiming to demonstrate corporate responsibility in the recycling of waste to land safely and appropriately.

Principal Objectives of SOMA

- ❖ Create a base level of competency amongst operators applying waste derived materials to land
- ❖ Reduce the inherent risks associated with applying waste derived materials to land, primarily the environmental risks (**Figure 1**)
- ❖ Increase awareness of the regulations currently in place regarding applications of waste derived materials to land (**Figure 2**)
- ❖ Ensure a basic understanding of the crop need for the material being applied (**Figure 3**)
- ❖ Improve the accuracy with which wastes are applied to land
- ❖ Increase the safety of operators and the general public through increased awareness

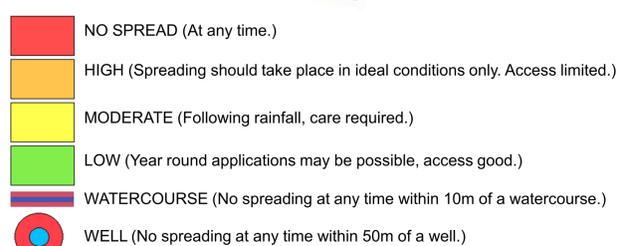
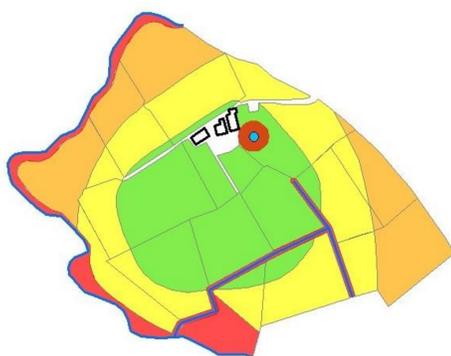


Figure 1. Risk Assessment for Manure and Slurry (RAMS) maps.

Target Audience

SOMA is a CPD accreditation targeted specifically at contractors and operators involved of the spreading of organic waste materials to land. It is aimed at the person controlling the machine spreading the organic materials and who has been tasked with applying the material at a given rate to a given field. This is not the person dealing with the EA/SEPA/NRW permitting or exemptions. The scheme is open to individuals and any business that employs a person who boards a machine with the purpose of spreading organic materials to land. The scheme accredits an individual and not a whole organisation. Each person, either as an individual or part of a company, would need to take an approved course and pass the assessment in order to be accredited.



Figure 2. Mind the gap with buffer strips; legal working distances near watercourses.



Figure 3. Effective nutrient and waste management using technical guidance notes.

Course Outline and Syllabus

Course Outline:

- ❖ Introduction to the scheme
- ❖ Overview of benefits/risks of recycling waste to land
- ❖ Basics of crop nutrition and the need for accurate nutrient planning
- ❖ Environmental issues associated with poor application timing and techniques
- ❖ Legislation at field level linked to environmental protection
- ❖ Health and Safety
- ❖ Machinery maintenance and accuracy of application

Course Syllabus:

- ❖ Module 1: Use of waste derived materials for agronomic benefit
- ❖ Module 2: Regulations relating to the application of waste to land – overview
- ❖ Module 3: Health and Safety
- ❖ Module 4: Application techniques and equipment

Further Information

Further information regarding SOMA and the rules, course details and cost, course syllabus, operational detail and penalties can be found in the SOMA Technical Document produced by SAC Commercial Ltd (2018). Please contact Neil Carter, Senior Consultant, SAC Consulting by e-mail neil.carter@sac.co.uk or by mobile 07825781347 or alternatively e-mail soma@sac.co.uk or visit www.sruc.ac.uk/SOMA