

## About the CQA laboratory accreditation program

Participating CQA-laboratories across Canada and the United States are involved in the CAP (Compost Analysis Proficiency) program, a laboratory quality assurance program to calibrate procedures and evaluate inter-lab method performance. **The Test Methods for Examination of Composting and Compost (TMECC)** forms the basis of the analytical test methods. CAP is administered by Dr. Robert Miller of Colorado State University.

A list of CQA-approved laboratories is available by visiting [www.compost.org](http://www.compost.org).



**The Compost Quality Alliance ...**

**For the Growth of our Industry**

**The Composting Council of Canada** is a national non-profit, member-driven organization with a charter to advocate and advance composting and compost usage. It serves as the central resource and network for the composting industry in Canada and, through its members, contributes to the environmental sustainability of the communities in which they operate.



For more information about CQA, please call the Council @ 1-877-571-GROW(4769) or email: [cqa@compost.org](mailto:cqa@compost.org).

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# THE COMPOST QUALITY ALLIANCE

A voluntary industry  
quality program  
for compost



ALLIANCE DE LA QUALITÉ  
**COMPOST**  
QUALITY ALLIANCE



**The Compost Quality Alliance (CQA) is a voluntary program established by the Composting Council of Canada and the compost producers utilizing standardized testing methodologies and uniform operating protocols to improve customer confidence in compost selection and utilization.**

### Key Elements of the Program

- Standardized product sampling
- Uniform laboratory testing
- Appropriate product attributes and usage guidelines

### Benefits of the Program

#### To Consumers

- ability to select the right compost for the right use

#### To the Compost Industry

- supports regulatory compliance
- enhances compost market development
- builds industry credibility and reputation



### How the CQA Program Works:

- open to all compost producers
- focused on product versus process
- participants follow prescribed sampling frequency and reporting methods
- annual licensing arrangement to use CQA logo on packaging and product promotion
- CQA program managed by the Composting Council of Canada and marketed by both the CCC as well as CQA licensees

### The Specifics:

- compost facility signs up to be part of Compost Quality Alliance
- frequency of product testing based on annual production volume (Table 1)
- product samples submitted to CQA-accredited laboratory
- product testing involves regulatory requirements as well as agronomic parameters
- lab results reported back to compost producer and the Composting Council of Canada
- product attributes to be communicated on an ongoing basis to product users in a prescribed manner (Table 2)
- if the compost product sample fails to meet analytical requirements, producer has the right to rework and resubmit for further testing. Inability to achieve satisfactory analytical results would lead to non-compliance.
- annual license timeframe: September 1<sup>st</sup> - August 31<sup>st</sup>
- annual licensee fee: \$700 for CCC members; \$1,000 for non-members (each licensee is also responsible for the costs of lab testing)

**Table 1 Compost Testing Frequency**

<u>Annual Compost Production</u>	<u>Frequency of Testing</u>
1 to 5,000 tonnes	4 samples during production season
5,000 - 15,000 tonnes	6 samples during production season
More than 15,000 tonnes	12 samples during production season

**Table 2 Product Attributes Declaration**

<i>Name of Product:</i>	
<i>Guaranteed Analysis:</i>	
Organic Matter	___ %
Maximum Moisture	___ %
pH	___
C/N ratio	___
Particle Size	___
Soluble Salts	___
Na	___ %
<i>Directions for Use:</i>	
<i>Net Weight:</i>	___ kg (plus
<i>Volume declaration at discretion of producer)</i>	