

Recycling Derived Fertilisers, what are they?

Lead scientists in Munster Technological University (MTU), Ireland, as partners in a European funded project, undertook a four-year study that looked at recycling nutrients back to the farm (ReNu2Farm). Through a survey of over 1,200 farmers, the researchers in MTU found that the farming community are not familiar with the term Recycling Derived Fertilisers (RDFs). In response to this information, they produced a short educational video to help inform the farming community about these sustainable and recycled products. According to Dr Niamh Power, a lecturer at the Department of Civil, Structural and Environmental Engineering at MTU Cork *"RDFs have many benefits, not only for the farmer but also for the environment"*.

The project explored sustainable alternatives to mineral fertiliser use, as mineral fertilisers are a limited resource and in the case of nitrogen are energy-intensive to produce. To increase the sustainability of farming and food production, she said *"The recycling rates for nutrients need to be increased, not just in Ireland but throughout Europe"*.

These recycled products come from animal manure, agri-food businesses, urban green waste and catering/household food waste sources. Dr Aoife Egan one of the lead researchers said *"The benefit of RDFs are that they are sustainable local products that can be used to replace mineral fertilisers, this is a real example of the circular economy in action"*. They are readily available in the form of solids, liquids and granules. RDFs such as composts and digestate from anaerobic digestion are rich in nutrients, compatible with farm machinery and are safe to use. The short informative video gives an introduction to RDFs and can be accessed here <https://sword.cit.ie/rdf/1/>

[For further information on this please contact Dr Niamh Power \(niamh.power@cit.ie\)](#)

This video is also available in

French: <https://sword.cit.ie/rdf/5/>

German: <https://sword.cit.ie/rdf/2/>

Dutch: <https://sword.cit.ie/rdf/3/>

Flemish: <https://sword.cit.ie/rdf/4/>