

Digestate Information Sheets No.4 – Nutrient Availability

Digestate is available in 3 main forms, whole liquid Digestate, separated liquid Digestate and separated solid Digestate. Full details of nutrient availability and the factors that need to be considered can be found in [Technical Note \(TN699\) – Agricultural use of biosolids, composts, anaerobic digestates and other industrial organic fertilisers](#)

Nitrogen – Nutrient availability will vary depending on soil type and application timing. Table 1 is a reproduction of Table B in TN699 for the nitrogen for liquid and Table 2 is a reproduction of part of Table C in TN699 for solid digestate. Both show the key factors to consider when planning the application of digestate to maximize the value of the nitrogen content.

Table 1 Percentage of total N taken up by the crop following application of whole and separated liquor digestate (use value in brackets for grassland, winter OSR and brassicas).

	% of total N taken up by following crop				
	August - October			February April	Summer
	Readily Available Nitrogen (RAN) category	Sands, sandy loams, shallow soils	All soils	All soils	All soils
Whole and seperated liquid digestate	<50% of Total N	10(15)	15(30)	40*	10*
	>= 50% of Total N	10(15)	15(35)	50**	50**

*Default values in NVZ's of 40% apply regardless of the timing of application, **Default values in NVZ's of 50% apply regardless of the timing of the application

Table 2 Percentage of total N taken up by crop following application of stackable organic fertiliser

	% of total N taken up by following crop					
	August-October		November-January		Feb-April	Summer
	Sands, sandy loams, shallow soils	All other soils	Sands, sandy loams, shallow soils	All other soils	All soils	Grassland
Digestate - seperated fibre	10	10	15	15	20 (25*)	20

*Incorporation by ploughing within 24 hours of application

Phosphate – when applying Digestate only 50% of the total phosphate will be available in the year of application, the remainder will add to soil reserves.

Potash - when applying Digestate up to 90% of the total potash will be available in the year of application, the remainder will add to soil reserves.