

WHICH COMPOST FOR WHERE?

Our products are all peat free and sustainable and made from renewable crops. **Wool Compost™**

Ready to use in pots and when planting out. Has a high natural fertility with a slow release so does not require the addition of fertilizers. 30 litre bags

Double Strength Wool Compost™

Designed for the real gardener to mix your own potting medium, using soil or spent compost. Buy one 30 litre bag and mix at 1:1 ratio to make 60 litres for fully rooted plants or mix at the ratio of 1:2 to make 90 litres for younger plants. Can also be used on borders and is especially beneficial on lighter soils to reduce drought problems. 30 litre bags

Lakeland Gold

Bracken based compost with a high level of potash. Useful for top dressing on clay soils to break up the clay and good in planting pits for excellent fruiting and flowering. 40 litre bags

Horsepower

Traditional rose gardeners favourite. Fully composted and very good as a soil conditioner for top dressing or when planting out. 40 litre bags

Raised beds - an instant success.



We have had great results with our raised beds this year. Filled up with a mixture of Lakeland Gold and Woolcompost™, the lettuces seem to grow in double quick time, sprouting broccoli sprouted and was picked before the caterpillars got it, cauliflowers bloomed (the first time

this has been successfully achieved at Dalefoot) and the red cabbages are huge and perfectly formed! Just got to find someone who will eat them now.

Making sense of it all.

Simon often comments that he can tell a real gardener at the shows, because they come up to the bags of compost, feel it, grab a handful and then smell it - and no....it doesn't smell of sheep...just a nice earthy smell.

It just goes to show how we rely on all our senses to judge things and the garden is the perfect showcase of this. Obviously sight and smell are important triggers—fresh mown grass, flowers and herbs—the list is endless. What about sound—when you sit quietly in the garden, bees hum, birds sing, insects buzz and you can even hear plants growing. Good taste is what the vegetable grower strives for., and of course touch—so many different plants produce hairy, thorny, smooth leaves, and you can feel the soil - hot, cold, crumbly, sticky and so on. So go on— don't forget to take a moment today and indulge your senses.

www.dalefootcomposts.co.uk
01931 713281



DALEFOOT COMPOSTS

Mail Order Compost

Autumn 2009 Newsletter

SHOW STOPPING MOMENTS



Simon was presented to the Princess Royal at Gardening Scotland in May. Princess Anne, the less famous royal gardener, visited the show and was extremely interested in our compost and how it was made and spent quite some time talking with Simon.

Jo Swift of BBC Gardeners World during their Hampton Court Special, screened on Friday 12th July, identified our Wool Compost™ as one of the most sustainable products at the show.



Barker & Bland,
Purveyors of Sustainable
Composts & Manures,
Dalefoot Farm, Heltondale,
Nr Penrith, Cumbria, CA10
2QL.
Tel/Fax 01931 713281

"Hello and a warm welcome to our customers old and new.

It has been great to meet everyone at the shows this year. It gives us a chance to explain how the compost is made and how all these natural ingredients will help you in your garden. We look forward to supplying you with our fine composts and raised beds"

Autumn Offer 2 Free Bags with every order of 14+ Bags - see order form for details.

Blooming results... We have received really positive feedback from growers and plant breeders who are trialling our compost - in the light of peat use being phased out by the RHS. One 'competition' daffodil grower from the north east has reported that, not only has he got good growth from his bulbs grown in our Wool Compost™, but also, the colours of the plants are 'so intense and vibrant - never achieved before with inorganic composts'.



The Gladioli society has also had positive results with good growth in their trials and they are now waiting to lift the corms to see the effects on them. The Clematis Society are also carrying out trials - we await their verdict with interest.

*"For man, autumn is a time of harvest, of gathering together.
For nature, it is a time of sowing, of scattering abroad."*

Edwin Way Teale



Autumn is harvest time and we celebrate the fact that our efforts over the summer have given us produce in one form or another. In the old days, as the last sheath of corn was cut, it was left in the field (as a corn dolly) to symbolise the fertility of the soil and to leave something for mother earth.

It is prudent for all of us who try to garden in tune with nature, to remember that the earth only has so much goodness to give us and that we need to replenish it regularly to get good produce. This is the time to think about the use of soil conditioners. Clay soils have a lot of nutrients held in the soil but do not release them unless they can be 'opened' up. This means adding lots of humus to allow the air into the soil and our Lakeland Gold is perfect for this. The small pieces of bracken stem, made of lignin, act to break up the clay particles and allow the nutrients to be released. Lakeland Gold is also high in natural potash - essential for fruiting and flowering. Chalk and Sandy soils leach out all their nutrients as the water passes through them - so the addition of Horsepower in the autumn would help add substance. Wool Compost would also add humus and help bind the soil structure together - through the wool fibres, as well as adding in the important nutrients like Potash and Nitrogen.

Education projects. We are always keen to help schools with 'grow your own food' projects. It is important that the message gets delivered to the young that food, farming and sustainability go hand in hand. Our raised bed kits are an easy way to start any garden - with almost instant results - and this can be enhanced by the story of wool, bracken and wildlife. If you are a teacher (or a parent), then please do contact us for resources or look at our website.

Good Companions There is a powerful reason to plant flowers and herbs amongst your vegetable plants as they not only attract beneficial insects—but are also known to deter certain pests. It is thought that basil planted among tomatoes may repel hornworms, and garlic planted under gooseberry bushes will deter sawfly. Marigolds, mint, thyme and chamomile may repel cabbage moths and nasturtiums grown near squash, helps repel squash bugs. Radishes can make excellent trap crops for cucumber beetles. Garden borders planted with low growing thyme or lavender may deter slugs and tansy and pennyroyal repel ants. You will note "may"- as there is no proven science—just observation from "old gardeners". So go ahead—be inventive and add colour, smell as well as taste to your veggie plot.

Autumn is a season followed immediately by looking forward to spring

Around the shows:

RHS Cardiff was our first RHS show and Simon found himself talking on BBC Radio Cardiff. However, as well as talking about the composts, he admitted that he was at the show (enjoying himself?), while Jane was left at home in charge of the lambing and foaling. This left him open to a lot of flack from Welsh farmers visiting the show!

BBC Radio 4 "On your farm" was recorded here at Dalefoot on an horrendously wet lake-land 'summer' day. Charlotte talked to Simon about cutting the bracken on the fell and the benefits that this has on the biodiversity of this very sensitive area, and also the use of wool in our compost - that also creates a useful outlet for wool.

Also interviewed was the **Natural England North Lake-land Team Leader**, who reinforced the importance of our Bracken harvesting and environmental work to the biodiversity of the Lake District.

Heating the house from compost— we are looking at ways of converting the heat from the compost process and using it to heat the water for the house. However this may involve Simon, and farm engineering techniques (usually a hammer, welder and baler twine) so it may not happen just yet.....

Dalefoot Diary

It's been a very wet summer here at Dalefoot - even the sheep could have done with webbed feet. We haven't managed to get any hay this year and are now having to buy crop. In the garden the apple trees are positively laden - don't really know how much chutney I can make and why did I plant so many cookers!



Our six foals have bloomed as the mares have milked well during our 'growy' summer. Finisterre (4) and Jimini (foal) are destined for a new home in Galloway and a 'snigging' career in the woods. Still looking to 'place' some of the other 8 boys.....

I have to admit to twinges of 'empty nest' syndrome as Arabella, now 4, has started school. She isn't convinced about the need to go every day and feels she

would rather stay at home. My ideas about all that 'spare time' and maybe having some time to garden or ride have evaporated as work has inevitably expanded.



All this wet weather has not been conducive to my most recent environmental contract - installing 550 metres of 'boardwalk' on a peat bog for the RSPB. A lovely location near the Solway coast, but all too clear why it is a reserve for wading birds. Simon has managed to get a start on his bog contract - restoring the very precious blanket bog on top of Skiddaw at over 3000 ft in the northern lakes. The habitat is of European importance and involves Simon taking the greatest of care with a 7.5 ton digger! He will be blocking over 20 km of drains created in the 1950's in order to re-wet the peat and stop it from degrading further which would release more carbon into the atmosphere. *Jane*



RHS Chelsea 2010

We have received our invitation to exhibit at Chelsea Hope to see you there....



Christmas is coming and the geese are getting fat - so now is the time to think about presents for nearest and dearest. Who isn't on the hunt for that elusive present?

We have come up with a practical and useful gift to satisfy any gardener young or old. You can purchase a gift voucher from us - to be redeemed for any of our products at any time of the year. Just let us know the amount you want to spend. Alternatively, you can make an order and we will deliver the compost to the recipient - along with a gift card from you. What could be simpler?