



Measure, monitor and
benchmark carbon
levels in your soil



CarbonCheck



CarbonCheck is the first and most comprehensive soil carbon testing service available in the UK. It was developed by NRM following consultation with industry experts, customers and government advisors and is rapidly becoming the industry standard for soil carbon analysis.

CarbonCheck includes the following analyses which combine to give a Carbon stock measurement in tonnes per hectare:

- Bulk density
- Inorganic carbon
- C:N ratio
- Organic carbon
- Total nitrogen
- Total carbon.

CarbonCheck Plus also includes Active Carbon.

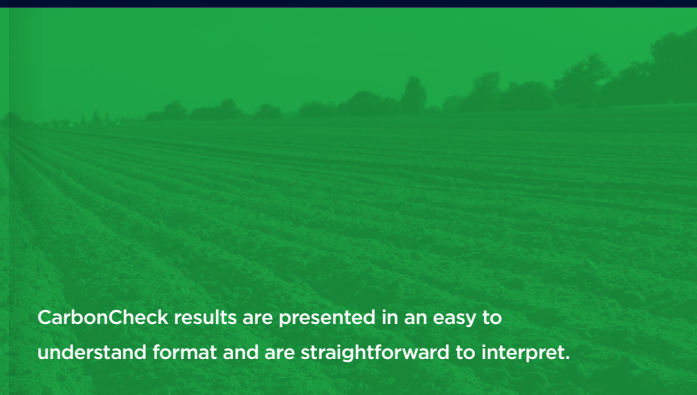
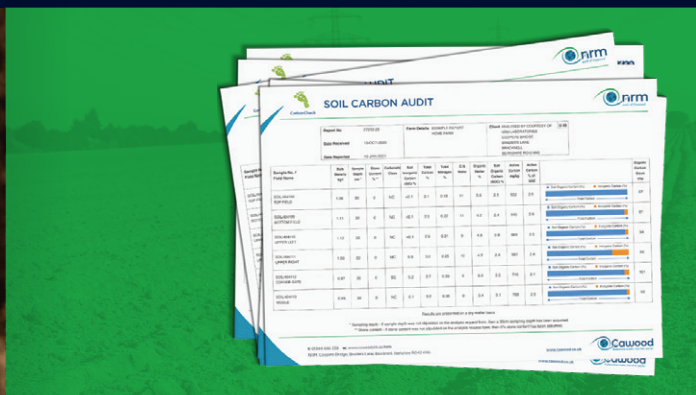
What is soil carbon?

Soil carbon is made up of organic and inorganic carbon stored in soils. Inorganic carbon is present in mineral form and levels depend on the soil type, whilst organic carbon is a component of organic matter and is vital to the soil ecosystem. The sequestration of carbon dioxide by soils is seen as a key opportunity to reverse atmospheric carbon dioxide pollution.

Why measure soil carbon?

The UK Government has committed to reducing carbon emissions to net zero by 2050. The agricultural industry is in a unique position to become part of the solution. Soil can hold three times more carbon than the atmosphere so the land acts as a huge carbon sink. It is likely that farmers and landowners will be required to understand the carbon storage capacity of each of their fields in order to comply with future environmental schemes. Accurate measuring and monitoring of soil carbon will be key to any future income opportunity relying on carbon sequestration.

Measuring soil carbon, especially the active carbon element, is an effective way to monitor soil health. Benchmarking will allow ongoing assessment of the impact of sustainable farming practices and regenerative agriculture. Growers who achieve optimal organic carbon levels will see increased microbial activity, enhanced nutrient supply and greater yields. Soil structure will be improved, along with its ability to hold water and retain nutrients. We recommend analysing soil carbon now, in preparation for ELMS and the Sustainable Farming Incentive, and then every 3 – 5 years to monitor progress.



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For those aiming to improve soil health, the Active Carbon measurement in **CarbonCheck Plus** shows the readily available portion of soil carbon that provides a food source for soil microbes. This is therefore considered a key soil health indicator. Changes in active carbon levels can be identified more rapidly than changes in organic matter, so will highlight the effect of different soil management techniques quickly and easily.

Your CarbonCheck report

CarbonCheck results are presented in an easy to understand format and are straightforward to interpret. We will support you with advice on how your results compare with our UK databank of over 2,500 samples analysed during 2021 so far.

How to order CarbonCheck

We will provide you with a sample kit which contains everything you will need to place an order for CarbonCheck analysis: sample bags, analysis request forms (specific to CarbonCheck) and postage boxes/ bags. You can order your kit through your agronomist, on our website or by contacting customer services at NRM.

Sampling for CarbonCheck is straightforward and similar to other soil sampling practices:

- Identify the different field areas, considering the environmental landscape, soil type, land use and areas of where different treatments have been applied
- Avoid patches with animal manure, animal pathways, field entrances, areas near water or feed troughs and other unusual features
- As recommended by the FAO, sample to a depth of 30 cm. This may vary depending on the depth of your soil and also if you wish to take samples at a range of depths
- Take a minimum of 5 cores at random within each strata, in a 'W' pattern, to make a composite sample. A greater number of cores provides a more representative sample, and the number taken should be appropriate to the size of the area covered.

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