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Wednesday, 28th October 2009

Prestigious recycling award for Keenan Ltd

Published Date: 20 October 2009

Keenan (Recycling) Ltd of New Deer has won one of the most prestigious awards in recycling. The firm has picked up the Scottish Waste and Resources Award for 'Best Private Sector Initiative for Demonstrating Innovation and Best Practise'.

Some 400 people were at the awards ceremony in the sumptuous surroundings of the Hilton Hotel in Glasgow last week to see Keenan collect the industry's top prize from television presenter Kaye Adams.

The award was made for Keenan's new vertical composting plant, the largest of its type in Europe.



Richly-deserved: Keenan (Recycling) Ltd collect the coveted award

The facility takes a mix of kitchen food scraps and garden clippings, and turns it into organic fertiliser.

The Scottish Waste and Resources Awards are allied to an annual two-day conference and exhibition organised by a steering committee comprising the Chartered Institute of Waste Management, Scottish Environmental Services Association, Keep Scotland Beautiful, the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency, Scottish Enterprise, Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee, Scottish Government, the Caledonian Environment Centre and Community Recycling Network for Scotland.

John Summers OBE, chairman of the Scottish Waste and Resources steering committee, said: "These awards demonstrate that there is a wealth of commitment, innovation, and entrepreneurial and skill in Scotland when

it comes to sustainable waste and resource management, and we are delighted to be able to recognise some of the excellent work that is going on."

Keenan had reached the final along with two of the industries big players.

Company director Grant Keenan said: "We did not expect to win - we were happy to be in the final three alongside two much larger companies.

"Our success is down to our vision, determination and team work.

"Together with my brother, Gregor, and all our staff, we strive for excellence in everything we do."

The Keenan operation at New Deer is also providing significant economic and environmental benefits in the North-East of Scotland as well as providing employment in a rural community for 14 staff and a number of main contractors.

Local authorities are also saving many thousands of pounds by recycling through the Keenan facility rather than paying high costs and tax to dump valuable biodegradable material in landfill.

The premium compost fertiliser produced by the new plant is rich in nutrients and is much sought after by local farmers.

Orders placed range from 500 to 5,000 tonnes.

Mel Keenan, a member of the family and a farmer himself, said: "Many local farmers have used the green compost to good effect by using it to replace more expensive artificial fertiliser and to increase the fertility of their soils by raising the organic matter content.

"Some have been astounded by the results. One neighbouring farmer said to me he had farmed the ground for 50 years and had never seen such good runs of barley before."

Keenan are scarcely keeping up with the demand and are about to add a third train of six vertical composting units for which planning permission already exists.

This will increase premium compost fertiliser production by 50 per cent to 12,000 tonnes per annum.

This is an addition to 15,000 tonnes of green compost made solely from garden clippings.

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- **Last Updated:** 20 October 2009 10:21 AM
- **Source:** n/a
- **Location:** PETERHEAD, ABERDEENSHIRE

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