

# PLASTIC POLLUTION REDUCTION PLAN

## FOCUS AREA

### AGRICULTURE

CCIQ Powering business potential

Queensland Government

**This outcome area focuses on reducing plastic waste created in the agricultural industry.** This fact sheet will identify strategies and services available to avoid, reduce, reuse and recycle agricultural plastic waste.

**Sources.** Plastic waste from agriculture includes mulches, crop tunnels, protection netting, irrigation pipes, weed matting, as well as delivery, storage and application of fertiliser, chemicals, feed and grain.

**The challenges.** Agricultural plastics such as mulches and silage wrap are often heavily contaminated with soil and vegetation. Additionally, to make collection and reuse economically viable requires minimums of around 20-25 tonnes of product, more than most individual farms produce. Nano and micro-plastics also pose a risk to agricultural soils.

**Collection programs.** To create economies of scale, there are a number of innovative programs to collect agricultural plastic waste for recycling.

Farm Waste Recovery facilitate the collection and processing of polypropylene agricultural bags, and have recovered over 3 million kg of plastic waste, which is reprocessed into furniture like concrete bar chairs and picnic tables, and plastic pipes.

drumMUSTER provide Australian agricultural and veterinary chemical users with a recycling pathway for eligible empty agvet chemical containers, and have collected over 35 million containers to date.

Re.Group can accept and bale T Tape, dripline, drums, crates, tunnel plastic and pots.

These programs also help farmers avoid unnecessary costs under the Waste Levy.

**Regional investment.** As part of the implementation of the Plastic Pollution Reduction Plan (PPRP), the Queensland Government is investing in developing plastic recovery and processing infrastructure, including in regional areas.

**Working in partnership.** The Queensland Government are working in partnership with the Queensland Farmers Federation (QFF) to ensure farmers voices are integral to action. Local governments are also key in providing collection points, such as those co-located with waste transfer stations.

#### QUICK TIPS

1. Be sure to make use of the Australasian Recycling Label on product packaging to be sure of how to dispose of it correctly.
2. Remember to use the waste hierarchy, which ranks the **most preferred** (avoid) to **least preferred** (recycle) options when considering how to reduce waste and save money:
  1. Avoid
  2. Reduce
  3. Reuse
  4. Recycle

#### PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP

Key to successful collection and recycling programs is product stewardship initiatives on the part of product manufacturers.

Incitec Pivot and Impact Fertilisers were instrumental in the development of the Farm Waste Recovery program for example.

The drumMUSTER program is supported through a six cent (6c) per litre/kilogram levy on the sale of agvet chemicals. There are 123 manufacturers participating in the program, representing approximately 90% of all crop protection and animal health chemicals sold nationally.

#### NEXT STEPS

1. Register your business for the free ecoBiz program. to receive a waste assessment, and to measure and reduce your energy, water and waste use and costs.
2. Check out the other resources in this series, including case studies.
3. Look at Farm Waste Recovery, drumMUSTER and Re.Group to see if they can help you.
4. Register for QFF's weekly '10 Things To Know' for all the latest Queensland agricultural news.
5. Know your plastics, with this handy identification guide!

THE ECOBIZ TEAM IS ALWAYS AVAILABLE TO HELP YOU.

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