



Ag Plastics Recycling Roadmap, 2018 – 2020

Last update: November 27, 2018

Project overview

This multi-phased project will examine the development of a long-term, province-wide, sustainable plan for managing agricultural plastic waste such as grain bags, bale and silage wrap and twine. These items are valuable tools; however they can be difficult to manage at the end of their life.

Recycling markets, in North America and overseas, are available and continue to develop. Developing these markets ensures that material is recycled, and not stockpiled.

Developing a solution requires a multi-stakeholder approach. This project will outline a plan, which can be implemented to develop a long-term approach.

Project deliverables

Cleanfarms has been asked to:

1. Identify key stakeholders that will be impacted by an industry-funded stewardship program for ag plastics.
2. Inform key stakeholders on program development processes and best practices typically used to deliver an efficient and equitable end of life management system.
3. Develop a roadmap
 - a. Outline how an industry-funded program might work using an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) model.
 - b. Engage with and get feedback from key stakeholders
4. Consolidate the information and input gathered and submit it to Manitoba Sustainable Development.

Who is doing what?

Cleanfarms

Cleanfarms is a not-for-profit industry stewardship organization known for its empty container recycling program and obsolete pesticide and livestock collection campaigns. These programs are industry-funded and delivered in partnership with ag-retailers and 110 municipalities across the province.

The organization is one of Manitoba's 12 Producer Responsibility Organizations (PROs) that operate industry-funded programs that manage items like beverage containers, electronics, paint, used oil, tires and batteries.

Cleanfarms is sometimes contracted to deliver short term, government-funded projects like this one.

Cleanfarms is the project manager and also operates the pilot projects.

Ministry of Sustainable Development

Manitoba's Ministry of Sustainable Development is funding this project and the current pilot projects (see next section). A total of \$125,500 in funding has been provided to Cleanfarms - \$50,000 for this consultation/road map work and \$75,500 for the 2018 to 2019 (up to April 2019) pilot projects.

Stakeholders

The project deliverables are only valuable when stakeholders provide open & direct feedback. Stakeholders are asked to evaluate how the ideas and concepts discussed will impact their sector as a whole, its day-to-day operations and industry/province-wide initiatives.

Key stakeholders include:

- Growers & grower groups
- Municipalities and municipal associations
- Provincial government – Agriculture & Sustainable Development
- Other Western Canadian stakeholders
- Stewards

Creating this roadmap

To create this roadmap, we've examined industry-wide best practices for end-of-life stewardship program development, completed/completing pilot projects and drawn on experts in our fields.

The roadmap includes the following key elements:

2013 – 2018 pilot projects

Pilot projects provide hands on experience, demonstrate proof of concept, determine what collection and processing options are currently available and help explore end markets. Here is a snapshot of key metrics from the pilots:

Phase	Year	No. sites	Volume collected
I	2013	3	4,000
	2014	N/A	N/A
II	2015	7	11,000
III	2016	7	19,700
	2017	16	41,900
IV	2018	23*	tbd

*As of October 2018.

Pending approval, pilot projects may continue in 2019.

Ag waste study

An ag waste study uses desktop research to estimate waste composition and generation. It is typically based on:

- Units of production – e.g. head of cattle, acres per crop, which are available through Statistics Canada and other sources, and
- Waste generated per unit of production – taken from various farm level activities waste and reviewing how these inputs are packaged.

A 2011 agricultural waste study reported that 6,000 tonnes of agriculture waste is generated on Manitoba farms each year. A 2018 study is currently being updated.

Cross Canada scan

While this project is Manitoba-focused, it is important to note that activities and regulations, or lack thereof, from outside of the province have a significant impact. Cleanfarms has always recommended a broader, Prairie-wide approach, to managing agricultural plastics. A relevant regulatory and program scan has been drafted and will be updated through the course of the project.

Grower survey

This component will help assess behaviours and attitudes. It will help determine the portion of farmers who generate the various types of agricultural plastic waste and how they currently dispose of each type. Baseline data related to the awareness of the pilot program will also be measured.

The grower survey is also a key component of the stakeholder consultations (see below). It will assist in exploring interest in and potential uptake of a collection program, measure potential support for a province-wide program and obtain input and reaction to the financing model proposed.

The survey is currently under development and will likely be fielded in January 2019.

Draft program outline

This provides an outline of how an industry-funded program is likely to operate and will address the following:

- Governance and administration
- Targets
- What's in/out
- Reporting
- Financing

Please note that the outline will provide preliminary program costs based on assumptions and learnings from the pilot project and a similar program in Saskatchewan. Without confidential sales data (from industry/sellers), program costs can only be estimated.

Multi-phased stakeholder consultations

From fall 2018 to spring 2019, Cleanfarms will be seeking feedback from stakeholders who are impacted by this work. Stakeholder groups will be asked to provide feedback throughout the process and a written statement towards the end of the project.

Reporting

A final report is due to Manitoba Sustainable Development on July 31, 2019.