

Agriculture Plastic Recycling Round - Up

The Moose Jaw River Watershed Stewards are very proud to have led an agriculture plastic recycling pilot in Saskatchewan. Held on March 11th and 12th in Milestone SK, in a partnership with the Rural Municipality of Caledonia, Wascana Upper Qu'Appelle River Watershed and EcoAction Community Fund, we collected grain bags and bale twine from local producers. This highly anticipated event was noted by the Western Producer twice and other municipalities were watching with utmost interest. As more plastics gain popularity, everyone is wondering what options are out there other than landfills and burning.

There were approximately 25 producers that participated over the two day event but many more had hoped for an on-going pilot as a lot of the grain was still bagged in the field. One of the lucky volunteers would interview the producer with a short survey asking questions like: How far did you come today? How many grain bags and/or twine do you have? How far would you travel? Would you be willing to participate in a similar event in the future? One producer drove 200km to bring 2 grain bags! Another producer sent two tandem loads with over 17 grain bags between 250 and 500 feet long. The majority of the producers traveled around 20-30 minutes to participate on a voluntary basis.

There was over 50,000 pounds of plastic collected over these two days and shipped to Merlin Plastics in Calgary. Prior to shipping any loose grain bags were rolled with a roller a local producer had built. After arriving at the recycling facility, the plastic will be shredded, cleaned and then made into a recycled plastic pellet which then can be marketed around the world.

We have received many calls and inquiries on this project and the Stewards invite any comments and inquiries or collaboration. There is already a lot of collaboration between provinces, ministries and non-government agencies to address this issue. If you or your municipality would like to take the next step in recycling agriculture plastics feel free to contact us and try to connect with those involved with this pilot.

We would like to thank the following people very much in participating, volunteering and supporting this important initiative:

EcoAction Community Fund
Wascana Upper Qu'Appelle River Watershed
Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture
R.M. of Caledonia #99
Saskatchewan Watershed Authority
R.M. of Lumsden #189
Brown Brothers Family
Saskatchewan Waste Reduction Council
Recycling Council of Alberta