

## Agri-environment Scheme Management Plan

### 12.13 Managing Used farm plastics

The use of plastic on farms is unavoidable and increasing. It is an extremely versatile material used for covering silos, wrapping bales, covering crops and as a packaging material for almost everything that arrives in the farmyard. This widespread use results in 2500 tonnes of used silage plastic for disposal off Northern Ireland farms each year.

After use, plastic litter is unsightly and can be blown some distance, ending up in trees and hedges. On getting into a waterway, it can cause blockages, often ending up hanging on riverbank vegetation or fences. Farmers who participate in Agri-environment schemes must keep their farms free from litter and eyesores.

#### **Disposal of plastic waste**

Until recently, the most common method of waste plastic disposal was to burn it. Other methods included burial or disposal along with household waste in the dustbin. With the introduction of the Waste Management Regulations (NI) 2006, these practices are now prohibited.

All waste, including plastic waste, must now be taken to an appropriately licensed facility for disposal e.g. a landfill site or alternatively it can be collected and or recycled by an individual or company holding the appropriate permissions from Environment and Heritage Service (EHS).

Recycling is encouraged and should always be the preferred management option as it helps to reduce resource use and the requirement for space at landfill sites. Farmers have a duty of care to check that the individuals or companies they choose to manage their waste hold the appropriate permissions from EHS.

#### **Storing plastic waste prior to collection**

It is permissible under the Waste Management Regulations (NI) 2006 to store your own agricultural waste on the farm of origin for up to 12 months. Plastic should be kept as clean as possible for two reasons. Firstly, dirty plastic costs the recycling industry more by being less efficient to recycle and secondly it costs farmers more to dispose of it. It is worth noting that contaminated silage cover weighs roughly twice as much as it does when clean!

To prevent stored plastic from blowing around the farmyard and to prevent it from becoming further contaminated, a storage system such as a cage, a silage trailer or other trailer with high sides or a recycling bin is recommended. Farmers who have signed Agri-environment agreements since May 2005 may be eligible for partial funding towards the purchase of a plastics recycling bin.

#### **Operators involved in the collection of used farm plastic**

A number of companies are operational in Northern Ireland and these are listed below. Others are expected to open up shortly. Please note that this is the list of operators known to DARD at present and that DARD does not recommend any operator in preference to another.

Emerald Isle Services Tel: 02894 473583

Roy Livingstone Mob: 07889 126895

(Operational) E-mail: [roy@emeraldisle.com](mailto:roy@emeraldisle.com)

Agri-Cycle Services Tel: 07899 967849 (AC)

Adrian Cathers E-mail: [adriancathers@hotmail.com](mailto:adriancathers@hotmail.com)

Simon Stringer Tel: 02891 271525 (SS)

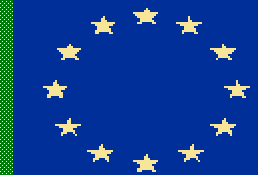
(Operational)

Lecale Group Ltd Tel: 07711 725941

Patrick Magee

(Operational)

Management plans are provided for  
participants in the  
**Environmentally Sensitive Areas and  
Countryside Management Schemes**



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