

NEWS RELEASE**Agricultural Waste Plastics Collection and Recovery Programme****PROGRESS UPDATE**

The Agricultural Waste Plastics Collection and Recovery Programme has released an Interim Report that provides an update on Phase One of the Programme. Information about three trials recently commissioned is also released.

The Programme aims to provide the Agricultural Waste Stakeholders Forum and Defra with robust research into the economics and practicalities of collecting and recycling of farm plastics, to inform the development of Producer Responsibility legislation.

The Interim Report, parts of which are available from the Programme website www.agwasteplastics.org.uk, publishes analysis of the comprehensive surveys of collection schemes and material reprocessors that have been undertaken across the UK.

As part of its brief, the Programme proposes to identify good practice for the collection of farm plastics through the commissioning of trial activities that aim to maximise the tonnage of waste plastics collected, taking account of reasonable cost and optimum recycling/recovery levels. So far, three trial projects have been agreed, looking at baling options and logistics in Somerset and Dorset, reducing contamination of farm plastic film waste in Lincolnshire and a farm hub bring scheme for small producers and farms in remote areas, in Shropshire.

The objectives of the Programme have been constructed in the first instance to inform the development of producer responsibility which might eventually support a sustainable infrastructure for the collection and recycling of all farm plastics.

CIWM (EB), the Chartered Institution of Wastes Management Environmental Body, is managing the Programme being delivered by Valpak and ADAS. Further details can be found on the Programme's website www.agwasteplastics.org.uk

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Notes to Editors

- **About the Programme trials**

It should be emphasised that the Programme is only able to fund a small number of trials, each carefully designed to meet specific objectives. The Programme is not in a position to help fund new start-ups or otherwise provide subsidy to existing collection schemes. It is the intention, however, that efficient collectors should be able to operate successfully within the producer responsibility system that the Government is establishing. It is also expected that where possible, the trials should take full account of current and past activities in this area.

- **About the Programme**

The Secretary of State for the Environment has awarded the Agricultural Waste Stakeholders Forum (AWSF) £1million of BREW* funding to develop a programme of work to look at how farm plastic waste can best be collected and recovered.

This programme of work will feed into the development of a producer responsibility scheme for the collection and recovery of non-packaging farm plastics, announced by Defra on 21 March 2006.

The Programme proposes to examine current collection and reprocessing activities in the UK in order to establish where there are limited or no collectors currently operating and identify barriers impeding the growth of collection schemes. A small number of pilot projects will subsequently be run to trial expansion opportunities and efficiency improvements, that if successful, will help inform the development of a more comprehensive and sustainable collection coverage across the UK.

The Programme will be delivered between April 2006 and June 2007. Information collated and analysed will be reported through the project website www.agwasteplastics.org.uk, using databases, material specifications, cases studies and Good Practice Guides.

** Defra's BREW Programme recycles revenue generated through Landfill Tax to fund a range of free services and targeted support for businesses.*