



REPORT

To: Solid Waste Committee

Report Number: ENV-SWC-178

From: Environmental Services

Date: April 11, 2025

Subject: Agricultural Plastics Pilot Program 2025-2026 Extension

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Solid Waste Committee recommend that the Regional Board continue to offer the Agricultural Plastics Program in partnership with Cleanfarms to accept grain bags and twine for recycling at the Peace River Regional District's solid waste facilities as part of the Solid Waste Program's regular activities.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

On February 17, 2021, the Regional Board passed the following resolution:

MOVED, SECONDED and CARRIED,

That the Regional Board partner with Cleanfarms to develop and deliver an agricultural plastics pilot program for bale wrap, grain bags, and twine at an estimated cost of \$43,416 between 2021 and 2023.

On February 8, 2024, the Regional Board passed the following resolution:

MOVED, SECONDED, and CARRIED

That the Regional Board extend the Agricultural Plastics Pilot Program to accept grain bags and twine at regional solid waste facilities for recycling, in partnership with Cleanfarms, for a one-year term ending June 2025, at a maximum cost not exceeding \$63,477.

In 2021 the Peace River Regional District (PRRD) partnered with Cleanfarms, a non-profit organization that specializes in agricultural plastics recycling throughout Canada. The partnership piloted a program to collect agricultural plastics and grain bags and twine for recycling with all associated costs being shared 50/50 between the PRRD and Cleanfarms. The initial pilot took place over a three-year period, ending in June 2024.

The program operates at eight PRRD Solid Waste Facilities including:

- Rolla Transfer Station
- Tomslake Transfer Station
- North Peace Regional Landfill
- Buick Creek Transfer Station
- Prespatou Transfer Station
- Chetwynd Landfill
- Cecil Lake Transfer Station
- Bessborough Landfill
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In 2024, a three-year extension to the program was proposed to the Solid Waste Committee, however due to concerns with the funding model changing to 100% PRRD funded, only a one-year extension was

awarded. This one-year extension allowed for the continued collection of materials from July 2024 to June 2025. In 2024, an additional 6,780kg of grain bags and 1,980 bags of twine were collected.

Between July 2021 and December 2024, 51,924 kgs of grain bags and approximately 2,300 bags of twine have been collected in the PRRD, with most of the material coming into the Rolla Transfer Station. As part of implementing this program, the PRRD bought a grain bag roller that farmers can rent for \$50/day.

This program has been successful in diverting agricultural plastics from being burned or disposed of in the landfill and is in alignment with Strategy 3 of the PRRD's Regional Solid Waste Management Plan (RSWMP). Staff recommends continuing to offer this program to collect grain bags and twine on an ongoing basis.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

1. That the Solid Waste Committee provide further direction.

STRATEGIC PLAN RELEVANCE:

- Not Applicable to Strategic Plan

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION(S):

Through the initial three-year pilot, this program was funded 50% by the PRRD and 50% by Cleanfarms through a grant from Agricultural and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) through the Canadian Agricultural Strategic Priorities Program (CASPP). As part of this initial three-year pilot, the Regional Board approved a maximum spend of \$43,416. Table 1 below outlines the annual cost of the pilot between 2021 and 2023.

Table 1: 2021 – 2023 Agricultural Plastics Pilot Actual Costs

	July 2021 - June 2022		July 2022 – June 2023		July 2023 – June 2024	
	Program	PRRD 50%	Program	PRRD 50%	Program	PRRD 50%
Collection	\$4,874.30	\$2,437.15	\$9,970.88	\$4,985.44	\$4,042.50	\$2,021.25
Communications	\$6,846.72	\$3,423.36	\$8,030.52	\$4,015.26	\$0	\$0
Administration	\$4,628.98	\$2,314.49	\$6,340.01	\$3,170.01	\$4,030.35	\$2,015.18
Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$400*
Annual Totals	\$16,350.00	\$8,175.00	\$24,341.41	\$12,170.71	\$8,072.85	\$4,036.43
Total Program Cost	\$48,764.26					
Total PRRD Cost	\$24,382.13					

*Revenue is from rental of the grain bag roller, revenue is not used to offset cost of the program or reflected in the total program costs.

In 2024, the Pilot Program was extended for one year, funded 100% through the PRRD as funding through the CASPP was uncertain. As part of the extension an additional \$63,477 was allocated to the program. Table 2 below provides a summary of the one-year extension.

Table 2: 2024-2025 Agricultural Plastics Pilot Costs

	2024-2025 Budget	July 2024 – Dec 2024	Jan 2025 - June 2025
	Budget	PRRD Costs	Projected PRRD Cost
Collection	\$36,782	\$6,205.25	\$4,403.98
Communications	\$17,500	\$2,762.84	\$3,400.49
Administration	\$9,195	\$2,242.02	\$1,951.12
Revenue	\$0	\$50*	\$0
Annual Totals	\$63,477	\$11,210.11	\$9,755.58
Total PRRD Cost	\$63,477	\$20,965.69	

*Revenue is from rental of the grain bag roller, revenue is not used to offset cost of the program or reflected in the total program costs.

In total, \$106,893 has been allocated to the Agricultural Plastics Program. Based on the spend to date and projected remaining costs to June 2025, the anticipated total spend is \$45,347.82 leaving \$61,545.18 in unspent dollars. Table 3 below outlines the estimated cost of the 2025-2027 program based on the previously proposed three-year extension:

Table 3: 2025 – 2027 Agricultural Plastics Program Costs

	2025-2026	2026-2027
Collection	\$35,842	\$37,402
Communications	\$12,000	12,000
Administration	\$8,960	\$9,351
Revenue	\$0	\$0
Yearly Total	\$56,802	\$58,753
Total Program Costs	\$115,555	

The full cost of the 2025-2026 program can be supported using the remaining \$61,545.18 in unspent funds.

At this time, funding from CASPP has not been secured by Cleanfarms, therefore the PRRD will have to continue to cover 100% of the costs of the program. Cleanfarms is still investigating other funding options to assist in offsetting the costs to the PRRD. If funding is renewed or sourced elsewhere, Cleanfarms will be able to fund 50% of the pilot extension.

COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATION(S):

Cleanfarms is an integral partner in ensuring the success of this program as they develop all educational materials, conduct research on viable end markets for the material, and arrange the collection and transportation of material to end markets. PRRD and Cleanfarms plan to increase communication to farmers via radio, website, and social media to promote the program.

OTHER CONSIDERATION(S):

Following the depletion of the remaining unspent funds, funding for the Agriculture Plastics Program will be completed through the annual adoption of the Solid Waste operational budget and the PRRD Financial Plan.

External Links:

1. [November 5, 2020 Solid Waste Committee Meeting](#) – See Item 9.2 “Agricultural Plastics Pilot in Partnership with Clean Farm, ENV-SWC-022”
2. [January 15, 2021 Solid Waste Committee Meeting](#) – See Item 9.2 “Agricultural Plastics Pilot Program Costs, ENV-SWC-032”
3. [May 13, 2022 Solid Waste Committee Meeting](#) – See Item 9.6 “Cleanfarms Agricultural Plastics Pilot 2022 Q1 Update, ENV-SWC-097”
4. [January 19, 2024 Solid Waste Committee Meeting](#) – See Item 9.3 “Agricultural Plastics Pilot Extension, ENV-SWC-142”