

PLASTIC CONTAINER MANAGEMENT: THEN, NOW, AND IN THE FUTURE

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While plastic has many valuable uses, half of all containers and products are designed to be used only once, before being thrown away. As a result, we produce more than 300 million tons of plastic waste every year, with severe environmental consequences.

In agriculture, plastic is used for pesticide containers, fertilizer packaging, seed bags and polytunnels among many other uses. The industry has a responsibility to manage the lifecycles of those products.

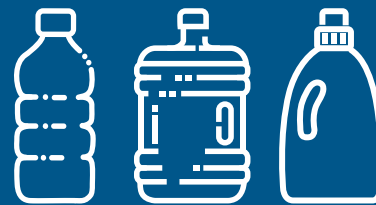
CropLife International, the global federation representing pesticide manufacturers, is very aware of our responsibility to the planet. That's why we have helped establish pesticide container recycling and management programs in 58 countries across our global CropLife network. Since 2005, the network has collected close to 800,000 metric tons of plastic - this is equal to the weight of 110 Eiffel towers.

Standout programs, like those in Brazil, Canada, France and South Africa set an example for programs in other countries and remind us of the importance of plastic container management.

Brazil Leads the Way

Over the last 10 years, we have seen fantastic progress with plastic container management in regions around the world. For example, in Brazil, the inpEv container management program has disposed of more than 450,000 tons of empty pesticide packages since 2002.

They lead the world in plastic container management because of a high level of



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manufacturer, government, purchaser, and distributor cooperation that has allowed for the recycling of enough plastic to equal the weight of more than 700 Christ the Redeemer statues.

Plastic collection in China

Meanwhile, plans are coming together for a plastic container management project in China that could have a huge impact. With close to 230 million rural households, 560 million farmers, and the largest population in the world, there is both a need and an opportunity to make a significant difference in the amount of plastic recycled there.

According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, there are currently no wide-spread collection services available to dispose of used plastic pesticide containers. Our ambition is to implement a project to collect and manage millions of plastic containers every year.

If we can continue to work in countries like China to help local governments establish and maintain effective mechanisms for managing and recycling plastic pesticide containers, we can make a significant reduction in plastic pollution.



Picking up the rate

CropLife International is also working on increasing collection rates. Sometimes, in a country we find there are a certain number of containers which come from farms that are close to main roads or close to the plastic processing facility. It is easy to collect from those locations. If plastic containers are just collected from the closer farms, there is no way to achieve country-wide responsible plastic container management. Supporting regional initiatives to strengthen infrastructure that accommodates more challenging collections is one way that could help alleviate the rate plateaus that management programs are experiencing today in places like India.

Our potential to grow together

Full cooperation within the entire supply chain is essential for us to grow. In areas where the government shares responsibility with the farmers and manufacturers, we find there are fewer collection rate plateaus. And when production companies make commitments to plastic container management, and follow through with them, the circular economy becomes a reality.

In the future, agriculture-based recycling programs have the potential to diversify and assist the collection and management of plastic containers and other recyclable agricultural products. From better designed packaging, to closed-transfer systems, these processes will help the industry take better advantage of resources within a circular economy approach.

Closed-transfer systems allow farmers and anyone responsible for spraying pesticides to fill, spray, and triple rise a pesticide container with no human contact and no risk of environmental fallout. The containers coming out of the system are impurity free and ready to be recycled.

With awareness and action, we can continue to upscale plastic container management to help farmers, producers, and consumers achieve a better future with less plastic waste. As an industry, we must prioritize plastic container management. We have a duty as stewards of the land not only to feed the world's population, but to protect the planet.



3 TIMES

A PLASTIC CONTAINER SHOULD BE
RINSED OF PESTICIDES



800,000 METRIC TONS

OF PLASTIC WAS RECYCLED BY THE GLOBAL
CROPLIFE NETWORK SINCE 2005