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Silage Wrap Recycling – Volumes Up, Cost Unchanged

The low dairy payout and uncooperative weather are putting pressure on many Kiwi farmers but on-farm recycling company Plasback says its collection rates for used silage wrap are climbing steadily.

Plasback manager Chris Hartshorne says he is pleased with the company's ability to handle growing volumes of silage wrap and its ability to keep the cost of its collection service low.

He encourages all Plasback customers to maintain their commitment to disposing of their waste silage wrap responsibly and urges others to join the programme.

"Our collection year runs from June to June. Figures for the first six months of the current year show that our volumes are significantly higher than what we collected last year. We are well on track to collect 2000 tonnes for the 12 month period ending June 2015," Chris says.

While collection levels in all regions are increasing, some regions have seen particularly strong growth.

"In Southland/Otago, Taranaki, Bay of Plenty, Hawkes Bay and Nelson/Blenheim we have already collected more in the first half of this year than we collected in the whole of last year. These results are spectacular. Waikato and Canterbury are also tracking well up on last year."

Chris is proud of the fact that the \$40 fee to collect each bin liner full of waste silage wrap from the farm is the same as it was when the service started in 2006.

"The more farmers we have on board, the cheaper and more efficient the service we can provide. With more people in the scheme, our collectors can stop at more farms on each pick up run and they can make their runs more frequently.

"We constantly push to make the service more efficient to keep the costs down. We are currently building two new balers so that we can process the recycled plastic wrap more quickly. The faster we process the plastic we have gathered, the faster we can get back out there to collect more from our customers.

"Collection can slow down during the busy summer months when the contractors who collect the liners are tied up with hay and silage making, so we urge our customers to have a bit of patience."

Plasback also collects 200 litre Ecolab and Agpro plastic drums from farms, and collection rates of these for 2014-2015 are also well up on last year. The collection service has recovered 1483 large drums during the first six-month period compared to a total of 1688 during the full 2013-2014 year.

Chris says he is delighted that Ecolab and Agpro recognise the clear benefits of a scheme that allows farmers to have their drums picked up from their properties rather than having to carry them to distant collection points.

“We recognise that many farmers are having a difficult year but despite this their commitment to recycling their waste is growing. They are to be commended for their environmental awareness and product stewardship. All New Zealanders should give them a round of applause,” Chris says.

For more information or to book on-farm collection visit www.plasback.co.nz or contact Chris Hartshorne: 0508 338 240 or chartshorne@agpac.co.nz.

Figure 1: Plasback collection rates 2013-14 vs 2014-15

	2013/14	2014/15 (6 months)
Taranaki	53.734	89.351
Southland	303.71	317.986
Canterbury	323.43	189.685
Waikato	241.101	224.153
Northland	90.36	45.888
Manawatu	76.83	50.924
Nelson/Blenheim	39.15	62.458
West Coast	80.46	72.1
BOP	10.08	22.626
Hawkes Bay	5.62	14.52
National Park	5.88	11.6
Total	1230.355	1101.291