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Donaghys adds support to on-farm product stewardship scheme

Donaghys Crop Packaging has joined the Plasback product stewardship scheme, New Zealand's only effective on farm collection service for waste plastics.

Plasback is focused on making it as easy as possible for farmers to recycle their waste plastic. To that aim it pioneered the on-farm bin and liner collection system.

Over the past decade it has built an extensive, nation-wide network of collectors and baling operations to recycle agricultural plastic. Much of the waste film is reprocessed in New Zealand and used to make Tuffboard plastic plywood.

Plasback national manager Chris Hartshorne says the scheme has recovered and recycled more than 10,000 tonnes of crop packaging products, and he is pleased that Donaghys wants to be part of a system that delivers results.

"Plastics play a vital role in agriculture, but there is growing concern about the problem of plastic waste in the environment.

"For years farmers have enjoyed the benefits of using plastic silage film to maximise feed value. Now, in the 21st century they are also increasingly aware of the need to recycle their used plastic," Chris says.

"We are seeing record numbers of farmers joining Plasback and that is to be applauded. Crucially, the companies that supply plastic to the primary sector also now recognise that they have to take responsibility for their products once they have been used."

Chris says the Ministry for the Environment has signalled that 'product stewardship' is a valuable tool to combat the growing volumes of waste we create across all sectors of the economy.

Under product stewardship schemes, all the parties involved in the life of a product (the producer, importer, retailer and consumer) share responsibility to reduce that product's environmental impact.

For producers, this can mean designing products that are easy to reuse or recycle. For retailers and consumers it means taking responsibly to recycle or responsibly dispose of used products.

“The Ministry of the Environment now has a particular focus on responsibly handling agricultural plastics,” Chris says.

Donaghys Crop Packaging general manager Tony McDonald says his company recently undertook a review of its operations is now focused solely on supplying and servicing the agricultural and horticultural sectors.

“We have created a specialised sales and customer service team that is supported by the main rural merchants,” Tony says.

“Along with refocusing our commercial operations, we have had a closer look at plastic recycling. We are pleased to join the Plasback scheme because it will allow us to play a bigger role in this regard. We will work with our customers to recycle as much waste plastic as possible.”

Tony says with government targeting agricultural waste recovery, it is a very good time to join forces with other major suppliers in the agricultural sector. Donaghys will support Plasback and offer its customers bins and liners to make recycling easier.

The farm plastic that Plasback recycles includes silage wrap, silage covers, polypropylene bags and twine. This range gives Donaghys’ customers more recycling options.

For further information contact Plasback’s Chris Hartshorne on 03 338 2400 or chartshorne@agpac.co.nz.



Plasback national manager Chris Hartshorne (left) with Donaghys general manager Tony McDonald.