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School of Integrative Plant Science
Soil and Crop Sciences Section

RAPP PWT Meeting Notes
April 27, 2015, Delaware County Cooperative Extension, Hamden, NY

Attendees:

Janet Aldrich: CCE Delaware - host

Emily Anderson: CCE Chenango – Ag plastics educator – people want to recycle twine and net wrap also – how to include those.

Rose Baglia: CCE Orange – commercial horticulture – greenhouse film and rigid plastics

Jeffrey Barnes: Tioga County SWCD

Jean Bonhotal: CWMI – she'll talk more later

Shereen Brock: DEC Albany – to learn

Erin Campbell-Craven: CCE Ulster – similar concerns with twine and net wrap

Kendall Christiansen: Gaia Strategies – Agilyx advisor (plastics to oil) develop east coast facility

Rick Clarkson: DEC Albany – learn how it's being collected to spread word

Rainy Collins-Vickers: Chenango County Farm Bureau – produces biodiesel from waste vegetable oil – what about the totes that the vegetable oil comes in?

David Cox: CCE Otsego

Bill Cutler: Sullivan County DSW – finding markets and sustainable recovery

Sharon Driscoll: Madison County DSW – former recycling coordinator, now media director – would like to see regional collection there

Karey Foster: Casella – help customers and county

David Grusenmeyer: NYFVI- grant funding – baler program – markets very important

Debbie Jackson: DEC Albany – Hear what's going on across state and facilitate conversations

Ed James: RAPP – logistics of getting bales moved

Patrick Kane: DEC Ray Brook, NY – working toward getting more recycling

Lisa Kempisty: Chautauqua CCE – dairy/ ag film boat marinas – logistics/collection

Jaime Lang: DEC Albany – to learn about to help other counties

Nate Leonard: RAPP – balers have been a useful and necessary tool, but without existing solid waste and recycling, it's not sustainable

Dave Lupinski: Herkimer – need more info for his area

Alex Marks: Tioga County SWCD – wants to learn more

David Mascoli: Davidia Horticultural LLC – research and recycling opportunities (from CT) there's no centralized programs - >100,000 pots in the dumpster – looking to learn more about plastics recycling

Kristine Mascoli: Davidia Horticultural LLC – with husband wants to learn more

Rachel Moody – CCE Orange – info to bring back to Orange County – dairy person

Susan McIntyre: Delaware County DPW – host – aggregate and bale ag plastics coming in.

Lonnie O'Bryan: Casella – did some ag plastics collection pilots

Jeff O'Handley: OCCA – working as local coordinator in Otsego Co. – how to do it better

Wendy Sanfilippo: CCE Chautauqua – recycling educator – markets and future sustainability of program

Mary Schwarz: CWMI - me

Bradd Vickers: Chenango County Farm Bureau – been involved since 2002

David Vitale: DEC, Albany – how to draw in more counties across the state

Russ Welser: CCE Ontario – surveying farmers to find out what type and volume of plastics they have and what they do with it – partner with Casella.

James Zecca: Madison County DSW – working for number of years with companies converting to diesel fuel

Brief History of RAPP: balers and bags

- Struggled for at least a decade – may still be struggling, but have made some progress
- Few markets other than one or 2 items
- NYFVI funded partially and EPA funded some
- Big break was 2009 burn ban – if putting in a ban, then there need to be more alternatives – this gave significant funding
- Lois still works with markets, but is now half-time and has set a retirement date.
- One of the real handicaps of this program was that there were no markets
- The funding was for mobile balers that were contracted with soil and water – started collecting plastics, but then what do we do with it?
- First big break was when a company (sidewalk pavers) started taking bale wrap.
- Also collecting silage bags, bunker cover – no one wanted it. Also, the bales were scattered across farms with less than a truckload in one location. Also started accepting boat wrap. Finally found a company to take other than boat wrap.
- Will talk about other materials beside film later.
- One of the challenges is getting cooperation between farming community with educators and balers, etc. However, getting the stuff to market is a big headache because there's no SW and Recycling in some counties.
- The theme here is – although balers are nice, working with solid waste and recycling is ABSOLUTELY critical.
- Outreach and education is CRITICAL – must have an educator on the farm to keep standards.
- The balers we work with are not going to be replaced unless someone buys them to keep them going. We are moving toward Super Sacks in some avenues.
- There is a baler available if someone wants to make a home for it.

RAPP in Delaware County

Janet Aldrich, CCE

- Work very closely with Delaware County Solid Waste and area farmers.
- Started in 2013 – outreach to farmers was intentionally low key
- Introduced the program via newsletters, radio, County Fair exhibits, and workshop side exhibits.
- CCE does not call farmers – farmers with an interest call CCE or sign-up at our exhibits for more info
- Most powerful outreach is word of mouth.
- For those that show an interest – make appointment, go to the farm, explain procedure and demonstrate how to do it. For those that want to proceed: given bags, laminated instruction sheet and a sign to post if they wish. Farmers are responsible for getting it to solid waste on their own. At solid waste, they get more bags.
- Key Points:

- Clean – no pebbles
- Dry – in winter dry under cover
- Do not mix plastics – one type per bag
- At the far: demonstrate how to bundle, help find the best place for the bag; let the farmer figure out the solution – they are in control; farm must be identified on the bag; transfer of bags to solid waste facility is the farmer’s responsibility.
- Maple Tubing is accepted – PVC is NOT accepted – must remove metal and wire, spouts can stay
- Horticultural Farms enroll –
- Farmers’ major reason to enroll: saves money, makes them feel good.
- Currently have 74 farms enrolled and growing.

Sue McIntyre, Solid Waste

- Some problems – mixed plastic – fairly typical of farms to accumulate 8-10 bags before making the drive – typically one of them is the “catchall” bag.
- An advantage of the Super Sack is that it keeps the plastic inside clean and dry.
- Definite need to develop expanded marketplace for “dirty” material. Different degrees of “dirty”
- They’re using a vertical baler – can take as long as you want to make a bale – can leave plastic in compressed condition.
- On average get about 10-17 totes in one bale – hand unload the plastic out of the bags into the vertical baler.
- Works well for them – purchased this particular baler from someone going out of business – not their main baler for their other stuff.
- Seasonality of feedstock – starts about Sept/Oct, runs through May – but only if animals are pastured.

Similarities and Differences in Madison County – Jim Zecca

- Their program is pretty similar to Sue’s.
- They are a little fussier than Madison County.
- He likes the idea of putting the farmer’s name on the super sack.
- Big dairy county. Knew there would be a big crisis when the burn ban came out.
- Trying to get a Plastics to Oil plant – put together brochure – started collecting material – education and outreach – got a lot of support from a lot of folks.
- Collect at the main location, but also at transfer stations – dedicated roll-off container at 3 different transfer stations. Did not have to sign-up for the program, but did have to register when dropped of the material. Shipped a lot of stuff out to JBI (Plastics to Oil).
- A couple of years ago, they decided to sell their plants out and shut down their pre-processing facility – ended relationship with them and are looking at other companies.
- They really want a company to come in and develop plastic to oil right on site.
- Want to make the program as easy and as convenient as possible to encourage participation.

Market Update

- Nate gave a short history of markets – who we’ve dealt with – he will give out more information if people want it.
- What is taken by different facilities (even within the same company, such as Casella) depends on where they are located and who they deal with. For example, Casella in Oneonta takes greenhouse

rigids because they bring their recyclables to a third party in Tioga County, whereas other Casella's may not because they have nowhere to take it.

- Greenhouse film is desirable, but not very well concentrated, hard to collect as well as seasonal.
- Boat wrap markets available.

Ideas for Mainstreaming Ag Plastics Recycling

- Major issue is funding – Farm Bureau guy was hoping for recycling dollars to help fund this.
- Rose – concern with pesticide use in greenhouses – Nate says legitimate concern, but has not been experienced – greenhouse plastics very desirable for the markets.
- Pots – maybe the problem is dirt
- Masoli said that he spoke with someone in NJ that does pots who said that dirt/soil was not a huge problem – double wash system takes care of it.
- With different types of greenhouse pots – polystyrene, HDPE, PE – may need to market them differently.
- Many companies have proprietary processes to clean/grind/separate – tractor trailer load is the hard part to do.
- Ontario County is currently doing a survey – flat, has more diversification of agriculture. The survey is asking about any and all ag plastics. The reason behind doing this is because Ontario County just went through their annual review with DEC who said they need to increase recycling. They viewed ag plastics as fairly easy to do and so are working with Casella, CWMI and the County to get this done.
- Casella is a waste company that has really stepped up for this work. We need to get the plastics to that point where Casella can get to it.
- Farm Bureaus supports recycling of ag plastics and will give letters of support for grants.
- What about dirty super sacks: Erin from Chenango wanted to know if Sue washes her super sacks prior to giving them to another farm. Yes, they wash them prior to sending them out.
- However, there are a LOT of them in the warehouse in Western NY. We want to get them out to anyone who wants/needs them. Then send the dirty ones on for recycling themselves.
- Some counties have limited collection to certain types of plastics.
- OCCA has started taking feed bags as well, because there was a lot of interest in it. They needed to call OCCA to participate in the collections they had (one in March and one in April). Reception for the events was good – will want to do better advertisement if they do it again and maybe in a different area that will be easier for the whole county to get to.
- They did this centralized collection to try to get around some of the issues that others have had with bales not being able to leave the farm – logistics.
- Plastics to Oil cannot be localized – it must be regional. Jim feels that there could be a lot of regional plastics to oil facilities. They are collecting from Madison now until they get a commitment but then expect to expand.
- What is the critical mass for that? Jim said 20 tons/day. He wants to know what DEC's stand is on plastics to oil
- DEC supports it for “non-recyclable” plastics as it is not considered recycling because it was once oil and is being made into oil.
- Sue says there's a volume of low grade plastics that don't have any value to them that are considered recyclable and probably don't have any other value.
- How do we keep this going? Where will the funding come from?

- For boat plastic, do we separate blue from white? Yes, if possible, but if not, do one side blue, one side white.
- Farm Bureau can reach many growers.
- DEC reaches through municipal planning units. Will visit recycling during planning reviews. Does DEC look for the markets to help them with it. They don't actively generate marketing information nor give it to them. They share what they know, but only what they know.
- How about a recycling summit? Convince the governor that this is important.
- How about take-back programs and product stewardship.
- How about re-using some things (i.e. such as greenhouse pots). Problem with that is that re-use involves a lot of labor because they need to be sterilized and dried.
- It would be good to be able to get an accurate account of how much plastic is available – types, seasonal, etc. How much is sold in the state per year? Approximately how much is being recycled or how much could be recycled?
- Is there some way to work with private industry to combine plastics?

NYFVI Grant information from David Grusenmeyer

NYFVI is pleased to announce that we are working on behalf of New York State's Department of Agriculture and Markets to manage the competitive grant program portion of New York State's 2015 USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program.

NYFVI is soliciting proposals that solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops and benefit the greatest number of beneficiaries. The priority area for this year is Specialty Crop Research and Grower Education. Please note that marketing-related proposals will not be accepted.

Grants will range from \$50,000 to \$125,000. Please note that Indirect charges will be limited to 8% of the budget for all applicants. Projects may start after October 1, 2015 and must be completed by December 31, 2017.

The RFP is open now. The deadline for completed applications is Tuesday, May 26, 2015 by 11:59 pm.

For more information, including the full RFP and information about how to apply, [click here](#).

Feel free to contact me with any questions, though please note that, per USDA requirements, we will be limited to general advice and unable to provide the project-specific assistance that is provided in other NYFVI grant programs.