

The Rural Recycling Scheme for agrichemicals, their containers, and farm plastics

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Presenters:

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Scheme background

Priority product declaration and scheme accreditation

- Product stewardship is where producers, brand owners, and others take responsibility for a product's lifecycle and waste management.
- The declaration of a priority product under the WMA creates an obligation for a product stewardship scheme to be developed and accredited for the product as soon as practicable.
- **Agrichemicals, their containers, and farm plastics** - two of six product groups declared as a priority under the Waste Minimisation Act 2008 (WMA) in 2020.
- **Industry developed the Rural Recycling Scheme** - accredited under the WMA in 2023, this scheme was designed to be enabled by regulations i.e. including regulated fees on in-scope products.
- With support of regulations, the Rural Recycling Scheme will bring the existing Agrecovery and Plasback schemes into a **single free-to-use national take-back and recycling scheme**, simplifying and expanding services so they are accessible to all consumers of the in-scope product.

Decisions announced

On 19 November 2025, Cabinet agreed to draft regulations that will enable implementation of the Rural Recycling Scheme.

These regulations will require:

- **Producers** (includes importers, manufacturers and distributors) of in-scope products **to pay specified fees.**
- **The scheme manager (the Agrecovery Foundation) to operate a take-back scheme** for in-scope products inline with the accredited product stewardship scheme.
- **The Ministry to monitor the performance of the scheme,** with the cost being taken from a small portion of the scheme revenue.
- **Regulations are under development** and we anticipate Cabinet will consider the enabling regulations this term.

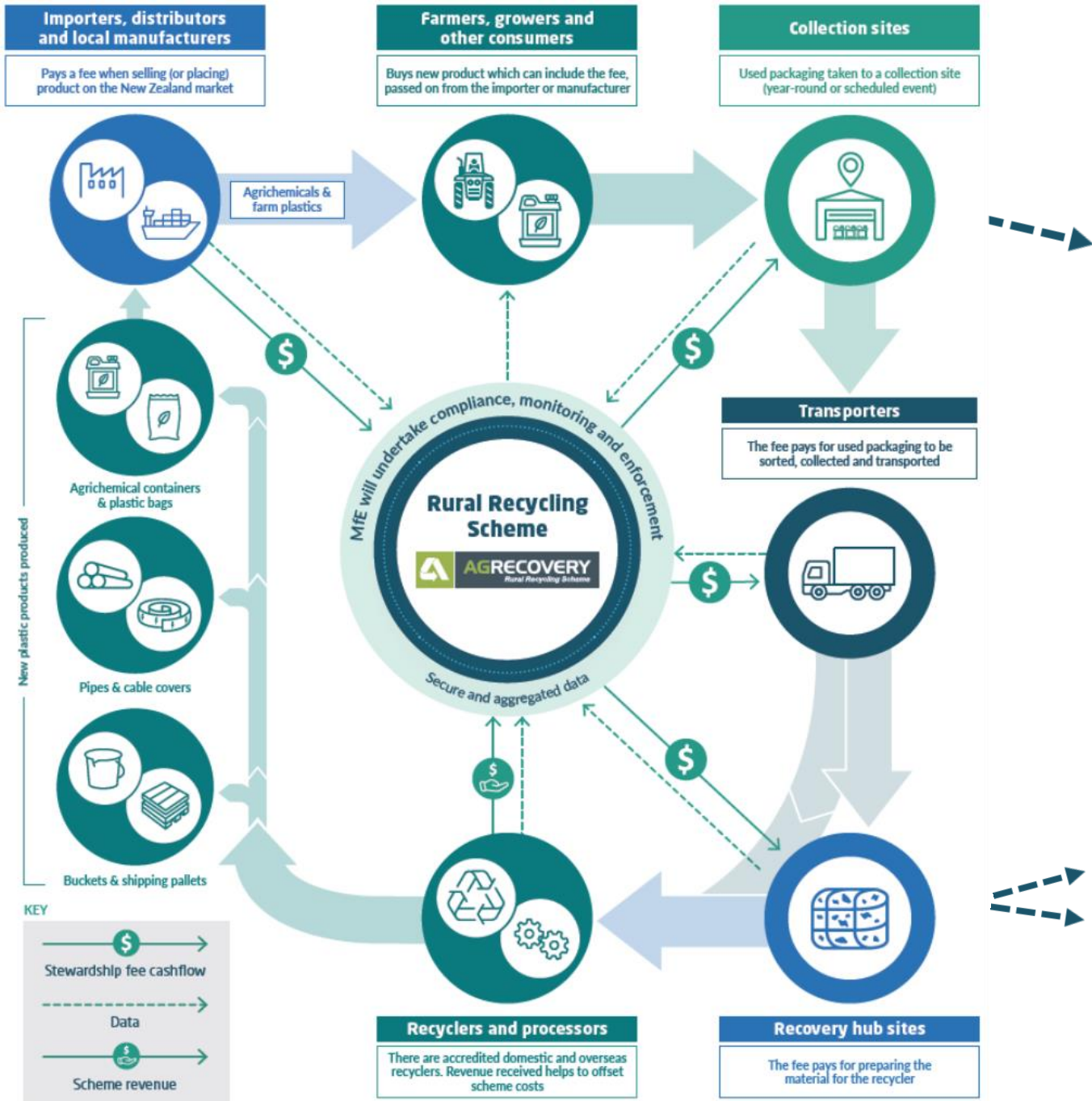


What products are in-scope?

The regulated scheme scope includes:

1. **Agrichemicals sold in plastic containers** and drums of 1,000 litres or less (*including household pest and weed containers*)
2. **All plastic bale wrap and silage pit covers**
plastic bags containing completed agricultural products including, but not limited to seed, feed, fertiliser, soil and crop inputs and farm and animal supplements, in either:
 3. **Small plastic bags** between 16 and 40 kg when full
 4. **Large woven polypropylene bags** over 40 kg when full.





How will the scheme work?



Next steps (towards regulation)

Action	Timeframe
Cabinet agreement to draft regulations	19 November 2025
Regulations drafted	Approximately 6 months
Drafted regulations considered by cabinet	Anticipated this term of Government
Regulations gazetted (if approved)	No later than 28 days after cabinet decision
Regulations take effect (if approved)	TBC, likely 2027 if approved



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Agrecovery Foundation

Rural Recycling Scheme update

The first four products that would come under regulation are:

- Agrichemicals and their containers
 - including Household Pest and Weeds
- Bale Wrap and Silage Pit Covers
- 1T and 500kg large Woven PP Bags
- Small Bags 16kg – 40kg



Take back - what will change?

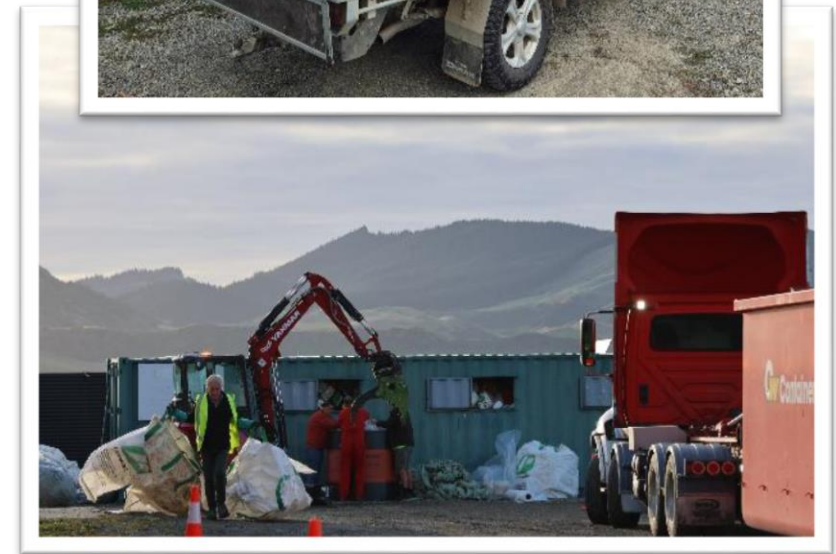
- **Agrichemicals and their containers** - minimal change
- **Bale wrap and silage pit covers** - implement permanent sites and events nationwide
- **Large bags (1T & 500kg)** - develop a national drop-off system
- **Small Bags** - minimal change
- **Household Pest and Weed** - mixture of working with councils and third parties for drop off



How will the collections work?

Collections for farmers and growers:

	Permanent	Event
Target market	Large and Corporate farms	Small/Medium farms
Access	Up to 24/7	Specific targeted week
Collections	All products	Targeting bale wrap and silage pit covers
Marketing	Targeted customers	Widely marketed



Household Pest and Weed

- Trials underway in Christchurch and Blenheim
- Includes a 600L wheelie bin to collect the containers with lids on
- Plastic is being sent for cleaning and recycling (assumed to be contaminated)
- Many councils already have a collection system for hazardous substances
- We look forward to working with the councils to introduce this complementary service – it will take time to roll-out nationwide
- Marketing of the new service will also be undertaken



Outcomes and impact

- The volume of recovered plastic will increase
- One scheme, national coverage
- Different plastic types will need to be kept separate to maximise market value and reduce contamination
- Improvements in service levels and infrastructure – collection, transporting, processing and recycling
- Communicating change and promoting new services to many different sectors



Thank you

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