Agriculture Plastics Recycling Program

Program Area: Policy Implementation (PI)
County Farm Bureau: Carroll County Farm Bureau
State: OH
Membership Category: 1,001-3,000
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Program Description: A core team of six members of the Carroll County Farm Bureau, including the area director of the solid waste district and eventually volunteers in eight additional counties, worked together to implement a county Farm Bureau policy initiative to reduce the amount of agricultural plastics sent to land-fills or illegally burned each year. Started as a pilot project, the initial planning committee had to research and design a system to receive, store and process recyclable agricultural plastics. One of the committee's objectives was to make participating in the program a zero-cost activity for farmers.

The program sought after bale wrap, silage bags, bunker covers, net wrap, baler twine, fertilizer bags, feed bags, greenhouse covers and marine shrink wrap to recycle. In order to meet the strict goals of the initiative, the committee found an industrial manufacturing company in California that was able to receive and process these plastics to recycle them into non-concrete modular pedestrian pavement systems.

In order to manage the transportation logistics of moving the recyclable plastics from the farm to the processing plant, the committee put together a network of local businesses that volunteered to receive supersacks of plastic direct from the farm. From the collection sites, the supersacks were then sent to a bundling facility to be re-packaged for final distribution for processing. A $37,000 matching grant was applied for and awarded to the committee to promote and advertise the program. In addition, the committee also purchased the supersacks that would be used on the farms, free of charge, to the farmers who chose to enroll in the program.
While it took several years to refine the process to get the ag plastics recycling program up and running, the program is on track to recycle 79-tons of agricultural plastics.

Photo 1:

Photo 2: