

# Agricultural Plastics Update

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**SWANA**

**June 20, 2013**

# Outline

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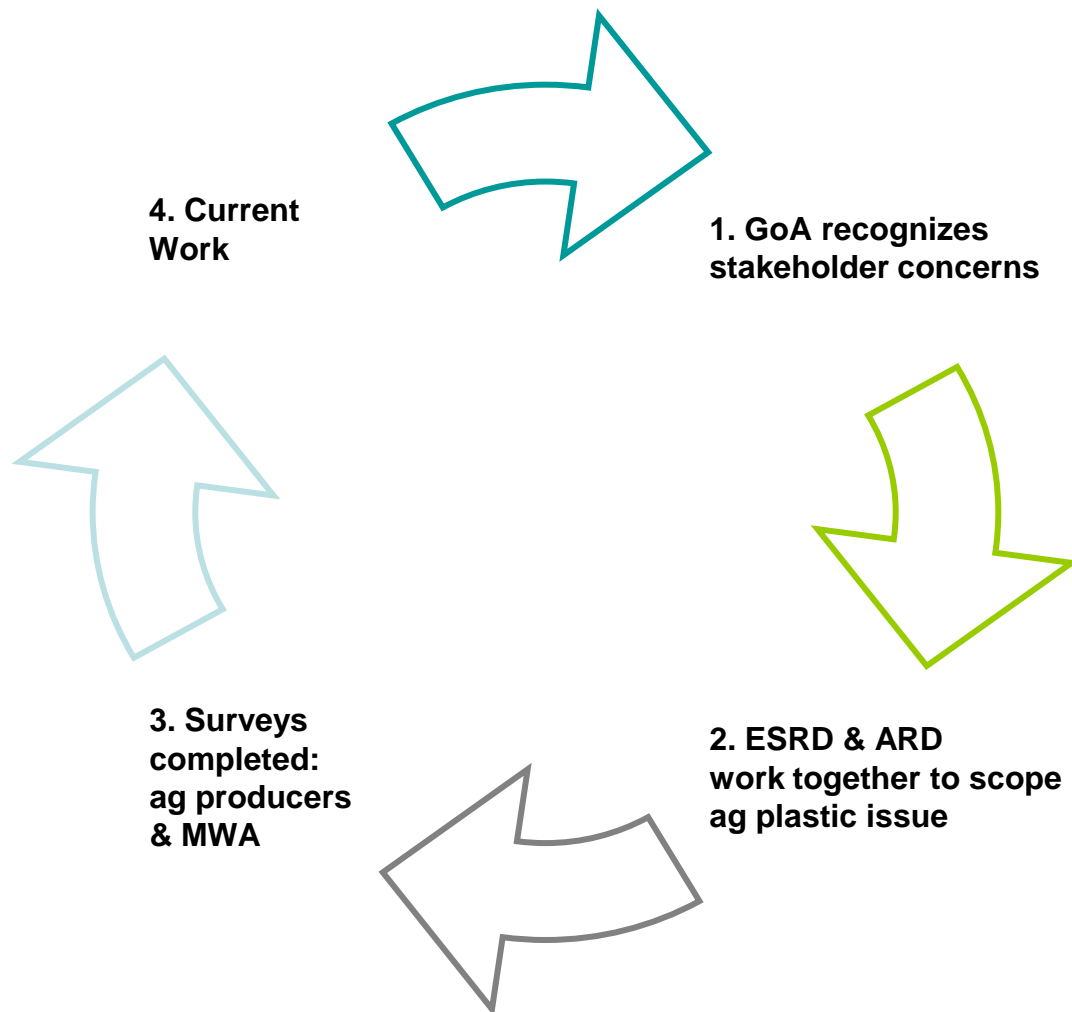
- 1. Background**
- 2. Key Messaging**
- 3. Next Steps**



# Background

# Overview

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# Surveys

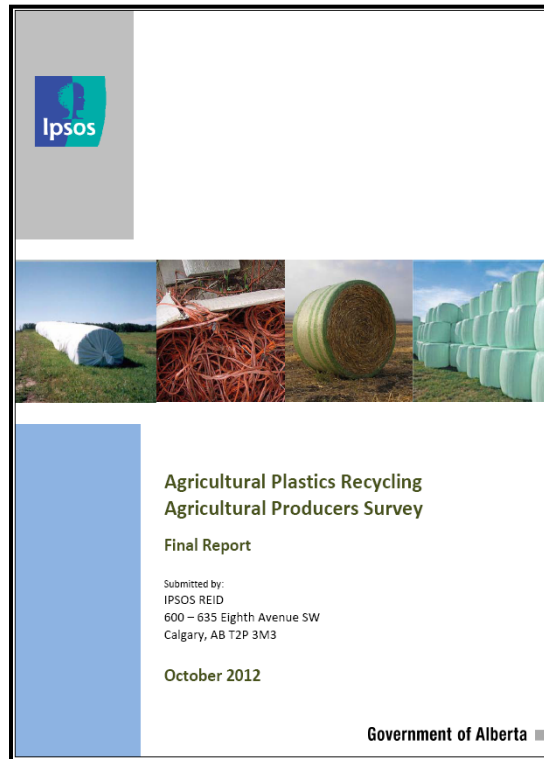
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- **Agricultural producers and municipal waste authorities**
- **Goal: determine the types and quantity of plastics generated as waste and how these ag plastics are managed at end-of-life**

## **Survey Results:**

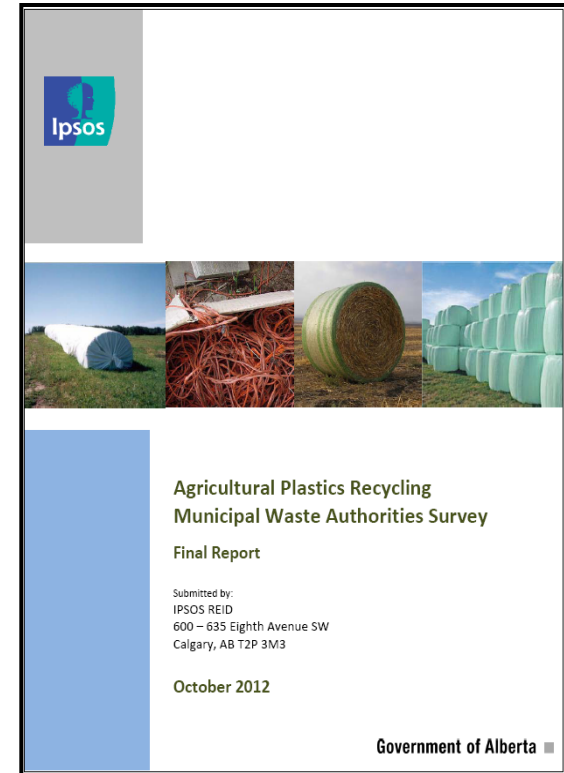
- 3,000 tonnes of waste agricultural plastics generated
- > 50 percent of agricultural producers are burning plastics
- 43 municipal waste authorities will accept agricultural plastic
- The overall incidence of recycling is low (13 percent agricultural producers, 33 percent municipal waste authorities)
- 87 percent of agricultural producers said it's important for them to be able to recycle their agricultural plastics

# Reports Available



## Agricultural Producers:

[http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/com14390](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/com14390)



## Municipal Waste Authorities:

[http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/com14390](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/com14390)

# Current Activities

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- Focus our efforts on educating agricultural producers and municipalities about the harmful effects of burning plastic and current options for proper end-of-life management
- Objective: ensure agricultural plastics in Alberta are managed in an environmentally responsible manner

- Burning plastics is illegal under the *Substance Release Regulation* and it releases harmful toxins to the environment
- Agricultural producers want to do the right thing when it comes to managing their waste plastics

# Education and Awareness Plan

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## Timeline of activities:

- **June - September 2013** : engaging stakeholders with key messages; development of extension resources
- **October 2013 – September 2016**: distribution of extension resources; various education activities
- **October 2016**: evaluation of program effectiveness

**We're encouraging industry to get involved!**

- **Developing industry engagement plan**

**Several groups have volunteered space in their newsletters to pass along key messages**

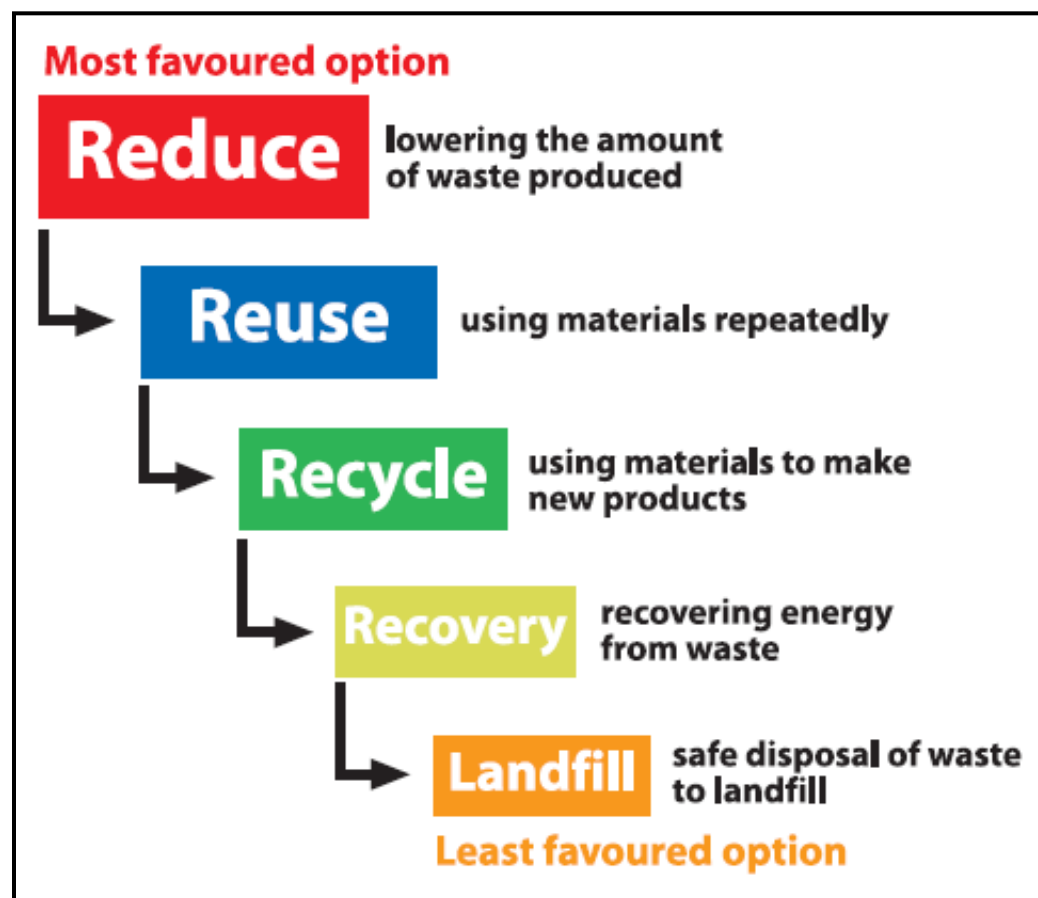


# Education and Awareness

## Key Messages

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- Maximize environmental outcomes



# Key Messages continued

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## 1. Recycle:

- **Sheet plastics: Hussar, AB**
- **Twine: Minnesota, USA**

## 2. Landfill:

- **If recycling is not an option plastics should be taken to a landfill rather than burning them on farm**



# Next Steps

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- **Government staff will be engaging agricultural producers, industry groups and municipalities to help inform the development of key messages and outreach materials**
- **Working on a fact sheet and best practice guide**



# Thank You

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## How can SWANA help us?

- **What options do agricultural producers have if a municipality does not accept agricultural plastics (e.g. turns farmers away)?**

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