

UNL Extension again offering plastic pesticide container recycling

Written by Gothenburg Times

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Forty locations across Nebraska are accepting empty, plastic pesticide containers for recycling in the 19th year of this statewide University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension program.

Plastic from collected containers is used to make industrial and consumer products such as shipping pallets, drain tile, dimension lumber and parking lot tire bumpers. Last year, the UNL program helped recycle about 25 tons of containers, contributing to an 18-year total of about 950 tons of containers, said UNL pesticide safety educator Clyde Ogg, who coordinates the program for the University of Nebraska's Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

The UNL Extension program helps recycle 1- and 2.5-gallon plastic pesticide containers and 15-, 30- and 55-gallon plastic crop protection chemical drums, Ogg said.

Recycling sites, guidelines and program details are on UNL's Pesticide Education Resources website at <http://pested.unl.edu/recycling>.

The program accepts pressure-rinsed or triple-rinsed 1- and 2.5-gallon plastic pesticide containers. They must be clean and drained, inside and out. Caps, labels and slipcover plastic labels must be removed since they cannot be recycled as part of the program. Those items should be disposed of as solid waste.

Of the 40 collection sites, 24 accept 15-, 30- and 55-gallon plastic crop protection chemical, crop oil and adjuvant drums. These drums must be thoroughly rinsed before delivery to collection sites and should not be cut or opened in any way. Seven of the sites are collecting year-round, 14 collect May through August, 13 collect on specific dates and six are by appointment only.

Mini-bulk, saddle tanks and nurse tanks, which can be made of fiberglass or plastics not compatible with the recycling program, are not accepted.

Before delivery to collection sites, containers and drums should be cleaned, rinsed and drained.

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Rinsate should be returned to the spray tank. Remove and properly dispose of booklets and caps from containers; and remove and properly dispose of plastic shrink-wraps. Glued-on paper labels can be left on the container.

The program is funded by a national coalition of agrichemical manufacturers through the Agricultural Container Recycling Council, Washington, D.C.

Some sites accept 15-, 30- and 55-gallon plastic drums.

All Points Cooperative in Lexington is among the year-round collection sites taking items, including drums, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The Custer County Recycling Center in Broken Bow is one of the sites collecting pesticide containers, including drums, by appointment only. Call (308) 870-0313.

Another is the North Platte Transfer Station, 308-535-6710, which also accepts drums.