

**Patricia D. Hastings**

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**Sent:** Friday, April 27, 2007 8:48 PM  
**Subject:** NJDA's 4 Ag Plastics Recycling Programs-- 11th Year

Friday April 27, 2006: Press release from the NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, courtesy of Lynne Richmond; PO Box 330 Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0330; <http://www.nj.gov/agriculture>. For more information, see below press release.

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## NEW JERSEY AGRICULTURAL PLASTICS RECYCLING PROGRAM ENTERS 11<sup>TH</sup> YEAR

(Trenton) – As New Jersey celebrates the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of mandatory recycling this year, Secretary of Agriculture Charles M. Kuperus is calling on growers to continue to recycle their agricultural plastics.

“Recycling of agricultural plastics keeps these materials out of landfills and saves growers money in disposal costs,” said Secretary Kuperus. “Recycling plastics reduces the need for new plastics that are made from petrochemicals. By recycling film, New Jersey growers help reduce our country’s dependence on foreign oil.”

The state has been recycling **greenhouse film** since 1997 and expanded the program to include nursery pots, trays, cell paks, drip irrigation tape and plastic pesticide containers. Since implementing the nursery and greenhouse film recycling program, growers have recycled more than 4.6 million pounds of film, saving Garden State farmers almost \$140,000 in landfill tipping fees.

A new recycling program opportunity the Department announced in 2006 allows growers to sell their agricultural plastics directly to plastics recyclers. Through this program, growers sold almost 400,000 pounds of used greenhouse film, nursery pots, plug trays, and flats directly to a plastics recycler. Instead of paying almost \$15,000 in landfill tipping fees, growers were able to generate almost \$8,000 in revenue by selling directly to the plastics firm.

Ten growers from Burlington, Cumberland, Hunterdon, Monmouth, Morris, and Salem County participated in the program. The participants generated 3,320 pounds of polystyrene pots, 65,980 pounds of low-density polyethylene nursery film and 104,195 pounds of high density polyethylene nursery pots.

The Department hopes to expand this direct marketing recycling program to include landscapers and garden centers in the future.

“While recycling is important to protect our environment, it also is a wonderful opportunity for growers to turn what is normally an operating expense into a revenue generator,” said Kuperus. “We encourage more growers to get involved in recycling.”

There are two regional year-round collection sites for nursery and greenhouse film: the Cumberland County Solid Waste Complex in Deerfield and the Burlington County Occupational Training Center in Mount Holly. Out-of-state growers may take their used film to the Mount Holly site; the Cumberland site only accepts New Jersey growers’ film.

Growers can recycle their drip irrigation tape year-round at the Cumberland County Solid Waste Complex for \$30 per ton, a 50 percent savings in landfill tipping fees. Farmers are asked to recycle only drip irrigation tape that is free of foreign matter.

The Department of Agriculture, in partnership with the Cumberland County Improvement Authority, also sponsors a seasonal plastic pesticide container recycling program on specific collection dates. The collection program is held at the Cumberland County Solid Waste Complex in the Township of Deerfield. This is a free program and participants who hold a NJDEP pesticide license are issued one core credit each time they participate in the program. The Department is looking to partner with public and private entities to establish additional collection sites throughout the state.

Vehicles used to transport the agricultural plastics for recycling are not required to be licensed by the NJDEP as long as the used film is transported directly to an approved recycling collection site.

Detailed information on all of the Department's agricultural plastics recycling programs is available at [www.nj.gov/agriculture/divisions/md/prog/recycling.html](http://www.nj.gov/agriculture/divisions/md/prog/recycling.html), or for more information, call (609) 292-5536.

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For further information:

1. Contact the Recycling Program Manager New Jersey Department of Agriculture at (609) 292-5536 or by e-mail at [karen.kritz@ag.state.nj.us](mailto:karen.kritz@ag.state.nj.us).
  2. New Jersey Agricultural Recycling Programs webpage: [www.nj.gov/agriculture/divisions/md/prog/recycling.html](http://www.nj.gov/agriculture/divisions/md/prog/recycling.html)
    - o [Nursery and Greenhouse Film \(Year-Round\)](#)
    - o [Pesticide Containers \(Seasonal\)](#)
    - o [Agricultural Plastics - Drip Irrigation Tape \(Year-Round\)](#)
    - o [Nursery Pot/Plug Trays/Flat Recycling Opportunity](#)
  3. 2007 Plastic Pesticide Container Recycling Schedule Flyer with Dates Through Fall 2007: [www.pestmanagement.rutgers.edu/NJinPAS/postings/recycleHPDE07.pdf](http://www.pestmanagement.rutgers.edu/NJinPAS/postings/recycleHPDE07.pdf)
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