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AGRICULTURAL FILMS RECYCLING

Crisis situation for agrifilms recycling in France / Weak demand for recyclates / Price pressure on rPE



Agricultural films for asparagus farming (Photo: PIE)

The slowdown of plastics waste exports to Asia – see PIEWeb of [05.10.2018](#) – has also impacted French collection and recycling of plastics used in agriculture. Non-profit organisation **Adivalor** (Lyon / France; www.adivalor.fr) – which is involved in collection, recycling and recovery of agriplastics – is warning of a potential collapse of the system with regard to polyethylene agricultural films.

"The supply of recycled materials is currently far outstripping demand," says general manager *Paul de Lépinau*. The result is more pressure on rPE prices, which are already affected by falling virgin PE notations. In contrast to packaging and industrial films, some agricultural films are heavily contaminated and

contaminant removal can be costly. Adivalor president *Rémi Haquin* is asking the French government for help with this crisis. In particular, he would like to see measures that raise the use of recyclates and financial incentives for using films with a recycled plastic content.

Associations have their own aims, and would like to see new machines being used to reduce film residue pollution in farming fields, and reach the zero target by 2025. In addition, the capacity for decontaminating films will be increased in southern France, where agricultural production is prominent. There are other more minor measures being targeted, such as an increased usage of biodegradable films. Over the next five years, Adivalor and its affiliates aim to replace nearly 1,000 t of conventional agricultural films with biodegradable variants.

The producers and distributors association for agricultural plastics **Comité français des Plastiques en Agriculture** (CPA, Levallois Perret / France; www.plastiques-agricoles.com) and its subgroup **Agriculture Plastique Environnement** (APE), which is responsible for collection and recycling, are expecting to collect and recover approximately 53,000 t of agricultural films in 2018. Of this amount, more than 10,000 t will likely be so contaminated that recycling will not be worthwhile, according to Adivalor. These films are initially stored until appropriate cleaning and decontamination capacities are available.

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