

## **Twine Recycling Project**

**Adapted from: Country Life in BC, April 2007**

Frustrated by having no other option but to send used plastic baler twine to the dump, Vancouver Island resident Jill Ackerman has launched a grassroots campaign to begin recycling twine and other plastic hay coverings.

"I wanted to find a new life for the used orange, black, blue, green, yellow plastic baler twine that wraps hay and straw bales," says Ackerman, "even the Liquor Stores use clear twine."

"The twine is just the first step. Silage and round bale plastics plus green house nursery sheeting have also been added into the collections," Ackerman reports.

Ackerman received the green light from Genesis Recycling in late January 2007 and within five weeks had already secured 15 delivery sites across Vancouver Island. She has now secured 25 delivery locations – mostly farm and feed stores – from Victoria to Campbell River and 4 in the lower mainland.

"Simply Plastics in North Delta is already processing any clean twine that is received, but the silage and round bale plastics tend to be more of a problem with contamination particles and until we reach a level of acceptance, these plastics are still in limbo, reports Ackerman, "I can only hope that the volumes of plastics will generate a system to deal with the problems."

Simply Plastics melts the twine and agricultural plastics and forms it into pellets. The recycled product is then sold to manufacturers throughout North America.

"To my knowledge ... this is the first time in Western Canada that a recycling agent is going to actually process the twine and sell the product," Ackerman notes.

Ackerman and her 3 assistants pick up the twine and agricultural plastics on a weekly basis from feed stores in Campbell River/Courtenay and south to Sidney. In the Lower Mainland, twine can also be delivered to Vanderveen Hay, Roddick Farm & Feed or directly to Genesis Recycling in Aldergrove or Simply Plastics, N. Delta.

"I have to watch my gas and the economics as well as the environmental damage of me driving to each place picking up twine and plastics; but at least I am only one truck," notes Ackerman.

The pilot project became an Agriculture Environment Partnership Initiative in June 2007; partners include the Comox Valley Farmer's Institute, Vancouver Island Milk Producers and The Comox Valley Therapeutic Riding Society who act as administration assistants.

The Agriculture Environment Partnership Initiative is an Agri-Food Futures Fund program created to help the agri-food industry contribute positively towards resolving wildlife and environmental issues. Agriculture and Agri-food Canada and the British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture and Lands provide funding for this initiative through a trust agreement with the Investment Agriculture Foundation of British Columbia. The British Columbia Agriculture Council manages the program.

### **Still Needs Volume**

With the system now in place, the pilot's success now rests on farmers to deliver a consistent supply of twine and prepare the silage and hay wrap for collection.

"Farmers need to know they have a choice," she adds. "Helping them is a huge thing for me because there never was a choice before. Now the choice is up to them: do they burn it, bury it, dump it or recycle it? It's pretty simple."

Ackerman hopes to one day see the grassroots campaign expand into a national program, and notes the project has already sparked interest from other areas of the country. A major twine distributor in Ontario has committed to advising his distributors about the project and a French twine manufacturer has contacted her requesting information on how her project is being managed.

“If everyone participates in the recycling process, the volumes of plastics we collect will represent those that have been diverted but were headed to the landfill or burn piles.” says Ackerman. “I encourage everyone to please have their twine ‘hay free’ before delivery. The processing stage is compromised when debris is in the plastic....

Easy Tip: Hold the knot then cut near by; pull the knot and the twine is removed hay free. This method also keeps the bale in tact.

If you use multi-coloured twine, store any black twine separately from the other colours. This way the processors don't have to re-dye the black if it is already delivered separated. Store on a hook or clean container, then take it to the nearest delivery site when the container is full. Easy Step information for silage and round bale wrap is also available on hand-outs or on her website.

For information, contact Jill Ackerman at 250-703-0048 or [acker944@shaw.ca](mailto:acker944@shaw.ca)  
<http://www.islandhorses.com/services/ads/ackerman.html>

**Vancouver Island delivery sites include:**

Black Creek - Black Creek Farm & Feed  
Black Creek – Saddlebags Consignment Store  
Campbell River – Shar-Kare Feed  
Cobble Hill – Laughing Llama Country Store  
Courtenay – Shar-Kare Feed  
Courtenay – South Country Feeds  
Duncan – Buckerfield's  
Duncan – Shar-Kare Feed  
Duncan – Top Shelf Feeds  
Ladysmith – The Trading Post  
Ladysmith – Walker Creek Feed & Tack  
Langford – Willow Wind Feed & Tack  
Nanaimo – Buckerfield's  
Nanaimo – Shar-Kare Feed  
Parksville – Bridles and Bits/Okanagan Hay Sales  
Parksville – Buckerfield's  
Saanich – Buckerfield's  
Saanich – Dan's Country Market  
Saanich – Integrity Sales & Distributors  
Saanich – White House Stables  
Victoria - Borden Mercantile  
842 Finlayson Arm Rd. private residence

**Lower Mainland deliveries** are accepted at Genesis Recycling Ltd., 26049 30A Avenue in Aldergrove. Contact Al or Doug Surtees at 877-607-1117.  
Simply Plastics, 7700 Vantage Rd. Tilbury Industrial Park, N. Delta  
Vanderveen Hay Sales, Surrey and Roddick Farm and Feed, Ladner