



# **The 8th Agricultural Plastics Recycling Conference & Trade Show (APRC 2025)**

## **Moderator and Speaker Compendium**

August 13-15, 2025  
The Dana on Mission Bay  
San Diego, California



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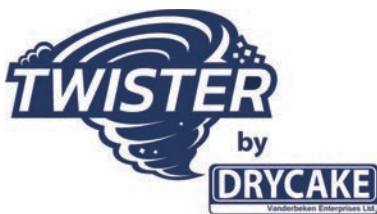


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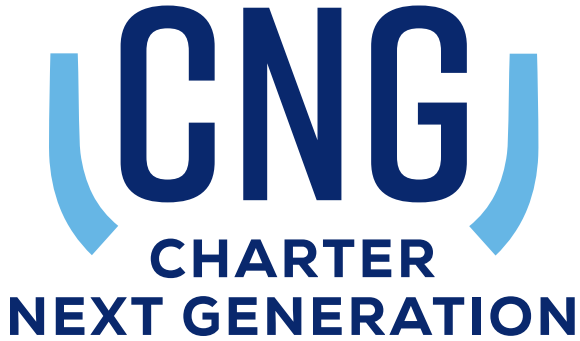
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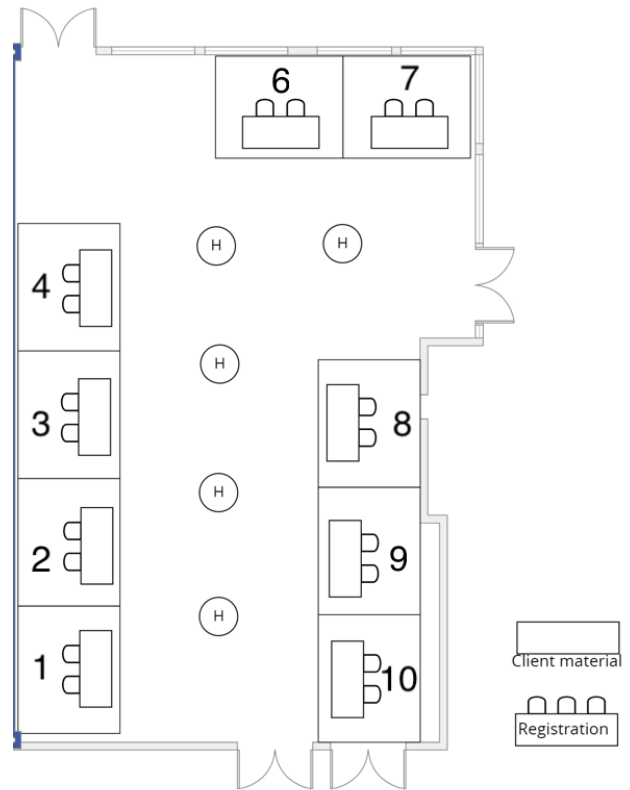
### SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS:





## APRC 2025 List of Exhibitors

Organization .....	Booth #
Ag Container Recycling Council (ACRC) .....	2
Andros Engineering Corporation .....	7
BritAS Recycling-Anlagen GmbH .....	10
Charter Next Generation Films, Inc. ....	4
Dock 7 Materials Group, LLC .....	3
eFACTOR3, LLC .....	6
Flipping Iron, Inc. ....	9
Granul Tech Solutions, Inc. ....	8
HydroDyn .....	1



### Key Exhibition Times

#### Wednesday, August 13, 2025

Exhibitor Setup: 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm

#### Thursday, August 14, 2025

Continental Breakfast: 7:45 am - 8:30 am

Refreshment Break: 10:00 am - 10:30 am

Lunch: 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

Refreshment Break: 2:30 pm - 3:00 pm

Reception: 5:00 pm - 6:30 pm

#### Friday, August 15, 2025

Continental Breakfast: 7:45 am - 8:30 am

Refreshment Break: 10:00 am - 10:30 am

Exhibitor Breakdown: 10:30 am - 12:00 pm

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## Agricultural Plastics Recycling Conference & Trade Show (APRC 2024)

### Agenda

#### Wednesday, August 13, 2025

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2:00 pm - 6:00 pm	Registration Open	Mission Bay Ballroom Foyer
2:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Exhibitor Set-up	Mission Bay Ballroom - Marina/Pacific
5:00 pm - 6:00 pm	Reception	Mission Bay Ballroom Terrace

#### Thursday, August 14, 2025

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7:45 am - 6:30 pm	Registration Open	Mission Bay Ballroom Foyer
7:45am - 8:30 am	Continental Breakfast	Mission Bay Ballroom - Marina/Pacific
8:30 am - 10:00 am	<b>Opening Session</b>	Mission Bay Ballroom - Sunset

Welcome: **Eugene (Gene) Jones**, Executive Director, Southern Waste Information eXchange, Inc.

Moderator: **Sam Sugerman**, Sustainability Manager, Toro Ag

#### ***Markets for Ag Plastics***

Ted Kaiser, President, Dock 7 Materials Group, LLC

#### ***Beyond the Field – Rethinking Ag Films for a Circular Future***

Neil Weisensel, Director of Marketing - C&I, Charter Next Generation

#### ***Utilizing Recycled Agricultural Plastic Mulch in Asphalt Pavements***

Dr. Yuefeng Zhu, Postdoctoral Researcher, Department of Civil Engineering, California State University, Chico

10:00 am - 10:30 am	Break: Exhibit Hall	Mission Bay Ballroom - Marina/Pacific
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## Thursday, August 14, 2025 (Continued)

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10:30 am - 12:00 pm	<b>Session I:</b> <b>The Role of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) in Agricultural Plastics</b>	Mission Bay Ballroom - Sunset
	Moderator: <b>Mark Hudson</b> , Executive Director, Ag Container Recycling Council (ACRC)	
	<b>Panelists:</b>  <b>Darla Arians</b> , Director of Policy and Programs, Product Stewardship Institute, Inc. (PSI) <b>Jan Bauer</b> , Managing Director, RIGK GmbH <b>Wesley Porter</b> , Business Development Director I Sustainability & Innovation, Berry Global, Inc.	
12:00 pm - 1:00 pm	Lunch (Provided)	Mission Bay Ballroom Terrace
1:00 pm - 2:30 pm	<b>Session II:</b> <b>Closing the Loop: Circular Strategies for Ag Plastics and Packaging</b>	Mission Bay Ballroom - Sunset
	Moderator: <b>Marty Metro</b> , CEO, UCB Environmental	
	<b><i>Recycled Content Packaging - A Success Story for IBCs</i></b> Don McKenzie, Owner and Sales Manager, McKenzie Begin and Associates	
	<b><i>Plastic Pipe – Improving Agriculture and Improving Recycling</i></b> Kristen Rinehart, Vice President / General Manager - Recycling, Advanced Drainage Systems (ADS)	
	<b><i>Circular Economy of Agricultural Films – Practical Solutions and Economic Advantages</i></b> Daniel Szymanek, Area Sales Manager, HydroDyn Recycling GmbH	
2:30 pm - 3:00 pm	Break: Exhibit Hall	Mission Bay Ballroom - Marina/Pacific

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## Thursday, August 14, 2025 (Continued)

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3:00 pm - 4:30 pm

**Session III:** Mission Bay Ballroom - Sunset  
**Breaking New Ground: Pyrolysis and Advanced Recycling for Ag Films**

Moderator: **Ron Sherga**, Sustainability Advisor, CheckSammy

***Feedstock Preparation for Advanced and Mechanical Recycling***  
Hartmut Bendfeldt, President, eFACTOR3, LLC

***Agricultural Films and Flexible Plastics – Opportunities and Challenges***

Kevin DeWhitt, Founder and Chief Executive Officer,  
PDO Technologies, Inc.

***Ag Films and Advanced Recycling***

Jeff McMahon, Managing Director, Freepoint Eco-Systems LLC

5:00 pm - 6:30 pm

Networking Reception: Exhibit Hall

Mission Bay Ballroom  
- Marina/Pacific

## Friday, August 15, 2025

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7:45 am - 11:30 am

Registration Open

Mission Bay Ballroom Foyer

7:45 am - 8:30 am

Continental Breakfast

Mission Bay Ballroom - Marina/Pacific

8:30 am - 10:00 am

**Session IV:** Mission Bay Ballroom - Sunset  
**Ag Plastics Recycling in Action: From Strategy to Operational Success**

Moderator: **James duBois**, Senior Environmental Manager, Driscolls

***The Advancements of Mechanical Removal of Agricultural Plastics***  
Ben Andros, President, Andros Engineering Corporation

***Advancing Ag Film Recycling: Innovations and Strategies for a Circular Future***

Theron Smith, President, Flipping Iron, Inc.

***Recycling Agricultural Mulch Film: An Overview of an Operational Facility***

Ismael Rodriguez, CEO, 2nd Recycling, LLC

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## Friday, August 15, 2025

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10:00 am - 10:30 am	Break: Exhibit Hall	Mission Bay Ballroom - Marina/Pacific
10:30 am - 11:30 am	<b>Session V:</b> <b>Closing the Loop on Mulch: Engineering Recovery and Biodegradable Advances</b>	Mission Bay Ballroom - Sunset
	Moderator: <b>Jazmine Mejia-Muñoz, M.S.</b> , Research, Education and Outreach Associate, California Marine Sanctuary Foundation	
	<b><i>Row Mulch System Designed for Post Season Retrieval</i></b> Chris Wagner, Vice President of Engineering, Viaflex	
	<b><i>Soil-Biodegradable Mulches: An Outlook of its Use in California</i></b> Alena Anousinh, Water Quality Program Associate. California Marine Sanctuary Foundation, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary	
11:30 am	Adjourn	





## **Moderator and Speaker Profiles**

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## EUGENE (GENE) JONES

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### Eugene (Gene) Jones

Eugene (Gene) Jones, Executive Director, Southern Waste Information eXchange, Inc. (SWIX)

#### Bio:

Gene Jones serves as Executive Director of the Southern Waste Information Exchange (SWIX), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization which has been operating since 1981 assisting businesses and municipalities with their waste management and remediation issues.

With over 40 years of experience, Gene specializes in building strategic relationships with waste and remediation firms. He brings a vast knowledge of various environmental sectors from organizing and managing conferences such as;

- the PFAS Forum,
- the Agricultural Plastics Recycling Conference & Trade Show,
- the Waste Conversion Technology Conference & Trade Show,
- the Southeast Recycling Conference & Trade Show,
- the New Life for Closed Gas Stations Conference and Exhibition,
- the International Symposium on the Redevelopment of Manufactured Gas Plant Sites,
- the National Conference on Waste Exchange and Resource Reuse, and
- Florida Remediation Conference.

as well as in managing associations such as:

- Florida Agricultural Plastics Recycling Cooperative
- Florida BioFuels & BioEnergy Association, Inc.,
- Recycle Florida Today, Inc.,
- International Society of Technical & Environmental Professionals, Inc.,
- Florida Brownfields Association, Inc., and
- Keep Florida Beautiful, Inc.

Gene is a Martial Arts practitioner and has his 8th degree black belt in Shaolin GoJu and a 5th degree black belt in Nisei GoJu. Gene is also the Author of [Instant Self-Esteem: Empowering Self-Confidence](#) and [The Mindful Sensei](#).

Gene is also the inventor of the [Soap Bag Saver](#), which he designed for the reuse of leftover soap bars.



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## SAM SUGERMAN

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### Sam Sugerman

Sam Sugerman, Sustainability Manager, Toro Ag

#### Bio:

Sam Sugerman is the first Sustainability Manager for Toro Ag (a division of the Toro Company) and leads Toro Ag's extended producer responsibility around agricultural plastics, specifically drip tape. Prior to joining Toro Ag, Sam completed his undergraduate and graduate degrees at the University of Michigan and concurrent to his role at Toro, he is completing courses at Auburn University in pursuit of a graduate Agricultural degree. Leveraging expertise in corporate/environmental sustainability and agriculture, Sam hopes to help agricultural adapt to resource demands and changes in climate while maintaining economic viability.

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## TED KAISER

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### Presentation Title:

#### *Markets for Ag Plastics*

Ted Kaiser, President, Dock 7 Materials Group, LLC

### Abstract:

The recycling of agricultural plastics remains a pressing challenge and a promising opportunity within the broader context of sustainable materials management. This presentation provides an up-to-date overview of current export markets and emerging domestic outlets for recycled agricultural plastics, highlighting key shifts in market demand and quality requirements. Additionally, it will offer insights into ongoing discussions with government entities aimed at fostering supportive policies and funding mechanisms to enable more robust collection infrastructure. By aligning public sector involvement with private market opportunities, the presentation will explore scalable solutions to improve the economic viability of agricultural plastic recovery and recycling, with a focus on actionable strategies for stakeholders across the supply chain.

### Bio:

Ted Kaiser is the President and founder of Dock 7 Materials Group, LLC, a global plastics recycling business with over \$70 million in gross sales since 2008. Dock 7 supplies feedstock materials such as plastic scrap, regrinds, and resins to mechanical and advanced/chemical recycling facilities. Ted is particularly known for his expertise in agricultural plastics which are recycled less frequently and garner less attention from sustainability initiatives.

Ted and his team at Dock 7 have a wealth of experience in bringing these plastic waste materials to market through solving complex logistical and collection challenges. Dock 7 was named The New Jersey District Export Council's Exporter of the Year for 2024 for its efforts in establishing prolific international recycling markets. Ted has personally worked with customers and vendors from at least 51 countries and the company moves between 100 and 300 containers or truck loads monthly.

In 2013, Ted was named a "Rising Star" under the age of 40 by Plastics News and has been published in multiple publications including Resource Recycling's Plastics Recycling Update. He has spoken at conferences such as the Agricultural Plastics Recycling Conference, AMI's Agricultural Film Conference, NPE: The Plastic Show, ISRI (now REMA annual conference), and The Pesticide Stewardship Alliance Annual Conference. Ted remains involved with his alma mater, the University of Southern California where he holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration. Ted is a member of the Cardinal and Gold Athletic Support Group and is Outreach Co-Chair for the Class of 2005 20-year Reunion.

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## NEIL WEISENSEL

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### Presentation Title:

#### *Beyond the Field – Rethinking Ag Films for a Circular Future*

Neil Weisensel, Director of Marketing - C&I, Charter Next Generation

### Abstract:

Agricultural plastics have long posed sustainability challenges — but real change is possible when circularity is designed into the process from the start. Over the past five years, Charter Next Generation (CNG) has led the way by developing ag films for soil contact mulches, fertilizer bags, field-pack solutions with end-of-life solutions in mind. To close the loop, CNG also supports the infrastructure, partnerships, and product innovations to enable full-circle recovery.

This presentation shares our journey from early pilots to scaled product applications using post-consumer resin — including slip sheets, floor protection, and retail-ready can liners. We'll explore what we've learned from field collections, the limits and opportunities in flexible film recycling, and the power of leveraging a broader market network.

Circularity in agriculture is no longer just a concept — it's starting to take shape. The path is clear and scaling it will take continued collaboration across the value chain.

### Bio:

**Neil Weisensel** is the Marketing and Strategy Leader for the AgTech division at Charter Next Generation (CNG), a specialty films manufacturer committed to sustainability and innovation. With over 20 years of experience spanning market development, corporate strategy, and lean operations, Neil has consistently focused on driving growth through purposeful product innovation.

At CNG, Neil leads initiatives that rethink the lifecycle of agricultural plastics — designing with end use and recyclability in mind to help shape more sustainable outcomes. Prior to joining CNG, he held product innovation leadership roles at Enovis Corporation and Illinois Tool Works, where he launched platforms that delivered both environmental and commercial impact.

Neil holds a bachelor's degree in Economics and Marketing from the University of Wisconsin–Oshkosh and an MBA from Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management.



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## DR. YUEFENG ZHU

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### Presentation Title:

#### ***Utilizing Recycled Agricultural Plastic Mulch in Asphalt Pavements***

Dr. Yuefeng Zhu, Postdoctoral Researcher, Department of Civil Engineering, California State University, Chico

### Abstract:

The increasing use of polyethylene (PE) mulch in specialty crop production has led to significant plastic waste accumulation, with the majority of used mulch disposed of in landfills. To address this issue, this presentation explores the recycling of PE mulch waste into asphalt pavements as a sustainable and performance-enhancing solution. As part of the USDA SCRI project, this presentation evaluates the effects of PE mulch contamination levels on the engineering properties of modified asphalt binders and mixtures. Key performance indicators such as cracking resistance, rutting resistance, fatigue performance, and moisture susceptibility were examined through laboratory testing. Additionally, this presentation will discuss best practices for incorporating recycled PE mulch in asphalt pavements, including dosage considerations and a comparative analysis of wet and dry mixing methods.

### Bio:

Dr. Yuefeng Zhu is currently a postdoctoral researcher in the Department of Civil Engineering at California State University, Chico. Before joining CSU Chico, he served as an Associate Professor at Shijiazhuang Tiedao University, China. His research primarily focuses on asphalt material performance evaluation, with an emphasis on sustainable and innovative bituminous materials. His recent work explores the application of recycled materials in asphalt pavements, including the use of post-consumer polyethylene (PE) mulch as a binder modifier, waste-derived additives to enhance asphalt durability, and bio-based solutions for pavement sustainability. His studies aim to improve pavement performance while promoting circular economy principles in infrastructure development. He has published over 30 journal and conference papers on pavement design, construction, and maintenance.

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## SESSION I

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### Session I: The Role of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) in Agricultural Plastics

#### Session I:

#### The Role of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) in Agricultural Plastics

Moderator: **Mark Hudson**, Executive Director, Ag Container Recycling Council (ACRC)

#### Panelists:

**Darla Arians**, Director of Policy and Programs, Product Stewardship Institute, Inc. (PSI)

**Jan Bauer**, Managing Director, RIGK GmbH

**Wesley Porter**, Business Development Director | Sustainability & Innovation, Berry Global, Inc.

#### Abstract:

As agricultural plastic use continues to grow, so does the urgency to develop sustainable end-of-life solutions. This session explores how Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) frameworks can play a transformative role in managing agricultural plastics, from containers and mulch film to silage wraps and irrigation tubing. Moderator Mark Hudson of the Ag Container Recycling Council will lead a panel of international experts who bring diverse perspectives from policy, implementation, and industry innovation. Darla Arians, Director of Policy and Programs of the Product Stewardship Institute, will provide a policy and regulatory overview of EPR in the U.S.; Jan Bauer of RIGK GmbH will share insights from European EPR systems in agriculture; and Wesley Porter of Berry Global will discuss how manufacturers are responding through product design, recycling partnerships, and innovation. Attendees will gain a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities in aligning stakeholders under EPR to create scalable, circular solutions for agricultural plastics.

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## MARK HUDSON

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### Mark Hudson

Mark Hudson, Executive Director, Ag Container Recycling Council (ACRC)

#### Bio:

Mark Hudson has been the Executive Director for the Ag Container Recycling Council (ACRC) since March of 2018. Prior to his current role, Mark had been in various leadership positions in the Ag industry for 11 years. He spent 8 years with two multi-national crop protection companies working as VP of Operations for Adama North America and as VP of Supply Chain for Cheminova which was later acquired by FMC. Following this, Mark was the General Manager for ag manufacturing service provider, Tri-Rinse. During his tenure with Adama and Cheminova, Mark also served for 5 years on the executive board of the Ag Container Recycling Council where he works full time today. Prior to the Ag industry, Mark spent 16 years in operations leadership roles in the industrial polyester fibers and fabrics industry. He has an education in chemical engineering (Clemson Univ) and business management (Duke Univ). Mark has been married to his wife, Amy, for 29 years and they have three children.

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## DARLA ARIANS

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**Darla Arians**

**Darla Arians**, Director of Policy and Programs, Product Stewardship Institute, Inc. (PSI)

**Bio:**

As the Policy & Program Director at PSI, Darla helps to identify, design and implement key initiatives to establish and implement EPR laws, and to evaluate and improve EPR programs across all product areas. In her recent capacity as EPR Lead for the State of Colorado, Darla served as the technical expert for the implementation and oversight of Colorado's packaging EPR program. As the former Division Manager of Boulder County's Resource Conservation Division, Darla co-founded the Colorado Product Stewardship Council in 2012 and helped lead the statewide initiative which led to the passage of the Architectural Paint Stewardship Act in 2014. She has first-hand experience implementing EPR at the local and state level, as well as 20 years of operational and managerial experience in the waste industry.

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## JAN BAUER

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**Jan Bauer**

**Jan Bauer**, Managing Director, RIGK GmbH

**Bio:**

Mr. Jan Bauer is the Managing Director of RIGK GmbH. The company was founded by the plastics industry in 1992. RIGK GmbH is located in Wiesbaden, Germany. For more than 25 years RIGK is developing and operating EPR-systems for plastics packing and plastic products. Jan Bauer is part of the management of the German company. Furthermore he is the head of the agricultural plastics working group in EPRO and a member of the EPRO Board. Moreover he is board member of the circular economy startup plastship. During his career he has developed several EPR-systems for plastic products and packaging. Jan has a degree in International Business Studies from the University of Paderborn.

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## WESLEY PORTER

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**Wesley Porter**

**Wesley Porter**, Business Development Director | Sustainability & Innovation, Berry Global, Inc.

**Bio:**

Wesley Porter is the Business Development Director for Sustainability and Innovation at Berry Global. He meets Berry's customers where they are at on their sustainability journey to identify sustainability opportunities and implement solutions, whether that be through education to broaden their understanding, inspiration to show them how they can take action and make a positive impact, or to align our capabilities with their sustainability goals. He has worked across the breadth of film and flexible product lines and markets to bring forward solutions ranging from improved recyclability, source reduction, renewable energy, bio-sourced materials, recycled content and advanced recycling.



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## MARTY METRO

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### Marty Metro

Marty Metro, CEO, UCB Environmental

#### Bio:

Marty Metro is an eco-entrepreneur and successful CEO with a “if at first you don’t succeed” attitude... and a track record to prove it! After earning an MBA and being known as an early-expert in SAP (mid 90s), Metro risked it all to be an eco-entrepreneur... and failed miserably. He then tried a bigger and better approach, which succeeded!

Metro educates and inspires audiences of all sizes that environmental initiatives don’t have to be expensive. Implemented properly, they can actually make money. Metro and his team call it “Sustainable Sustainability” and he shares his passion for both THINKING ABOUT and IMPLEMENTING, sustainable sustainability programs.

In 2002, well before the environmental movement took off as we know it, Metro launched Boomerang Boxes, a chain of eco-friendly retail stores that bought/sold USED moving boxes.. He had dreams of a national franchise and scaled the idea to four retail locations. But just 3 years in, it became clear his attempt was premature, undercapitalized and riddled with logistic flaws. In short, it was simply not “sustainable”. After 3 long years of massive losses, no profit and no income, Metro was forced to cease all operations, leaving himself (and his supportive wife) with not just an empty bank account, but \$300,000+ of personal debt!

Devastated but not discouraged, Metro took a “day job” as a technology consultant (leveraging his then-outdated knowledge of SAP) and spent nights and weekends rehashing his mistakes. His relentless entrepreneurial drive lead him to revise the business plan, raise capital and re-launch a scalable, tech-centric model to buy and sell MILLIONS of used boxes, just one year later.

That revised plan was renamed UsedCardboardBoxes.com and grew to a national reuse logistics firm now working with some of the largest, most well known companies in the country (**Califia Farms, Dole, Family Dollar/ Dollar Tree, General Mills, Kellogg, Keurig, McCain Foods, McCormick Spice, Menard’s, Rolex, Simplot, Taylor Farms, TJMaxx/Marshalls, Walgreens, Walmart and 100s more**). Metro’s rough journey to success has been covered by most major news outlets throughout the years.

Entrepreneur Magazine featured Metro and in an article entitled:

#### **“From Business Failure to Multimillion-Dollar ‘Green’ Niche”**

Metro’s knack for applying sophisticated technology to a traditionally low-tech industry was just the beginning. Seeing first hand all of the other “waste” that UsedCardboardBoxes’ clients were PAYING to process drove Metro and his team mad! They saw so many major US manufacturers mismanaging and undervaluing perfectly recyclable and/or reusable commodities by simply throwing them away! This meant unnecessarily high waste bills and missed revenue opportunities from recycling and reuse. So Metro and his team leveraged the knowledge, experience and technology they had created over the years, to tackle ALL solid waste, via UCBZeroWaste. This new asset-light company is a waste reduction firm that helps clients manage ALL commodities, ALL vendors, ALL logistics, ALL monthly invoicing and ALL reporting, using its own proprietary software called **WATER** (Waste Analytics & Tracking for Environmental Reporting). UCBZeroWaste’s program and software are now used by some of the largest, most recognizable brands in the country, including **McCormick Spice (#1 Must Sustainable Food Company)**, Dole, Kellogg and even Rolex!

Over the past few years Metro and his team have leveraged their experience, technology and stellar reputation in the industry to create an umbrella brand, for all of these operations units, and more! Metro launched UCBEnvironmental - a family of companies focused on “Sustainable Sustainability™”. Within this umbrella, there are multiple distinct operating units: UsedCardboardBoxes.com, UCBPalletSolutions, UCBOrganicWaste, UCBTrading and UCBZeroWaste.

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Metro is an inspirational example of how businesses CAN balance environmental responsibility with financial returns and is available to be booked for speaking engagements that inspire *"Sustainable Sustainability"*.

Metro graduated Cum Laude from the University of Maryland and earned an MBA in Information Systems & Management from the University of Arizona, before beginning his career as a SAP consultant with Andersen Consulting (now Accenture). After almost a decade of helping large companies increase profits by utilizing enterprise technology, Metro is now a nationally recognized eco-entrepreneur helping companies reduce waste (cost) and increase recycling & reuse (revenue).



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## DON MCKENZIE

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### Presentation Title:

#### ***Recycled Content Packaging - A Success Story for IBCs***

Don McKenzie, Owner and Sales Manager, McKenzie Begin and Associates

### Abstract:

The challenges and successes of bringing to market the Industry's 1st Recycled Content IBC with plastic from agricultural containers. A multi-year adventure working with Plastic Collection groups (CleanFarms/ACRC), compounders, additive R&D groups, manufacturers and end users.

### Bio:

Don is proud to continue an over 30+ year relationship being the Canadian representatives for Snyder Industries (one of North America's largest manufacturers of packaging). Don's focus over the last 5 years has been working with stakeholders in both Canada and the US on how to overcome challenges in consuming Agricultural end of life plastics and is very excited to share some of the biggest wins to date.

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## KRISTEN RINEHART

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### Presentation Title

#### *Plastic Pipe – Improving Agriculture and Improving Recycling*

Kristen Rinehart, Vice President / General Manager - Recycling, Advanced Drainage Systems (ADS)

### Abstract

The Drainage Division of the Plastics Pipe Institute (PPI) represents those with interest in advancing the opportunities for corrugated high-density polyethylene (HDPE) and polypropylene pipe in gravity drainage applications. A key application for corrugated plastic drainage pipe is within the agricultural market. Corrugated HDPE has been used to drain soils for agriculture to optimize moisture control and maximize the growing season to improve crop yields.

Advanced Drainage Systems, Inc. (ADS) is the largest producer of pipe within PPI's Drainage Division. They have been producing HDPE pipe for agricultural drainage pipe for over 60 years, beginning in the Midwest. Today, ADS has pipe production facilities located across North America.

Recycled resins have been used in the production of agricultural HDPE drainage pipe for decades. As the use of recycled resin expanded into public drainage applications in the past 10 years, ADS began establishing recycling facilities to supply valuable recycled plastics to their pipe manufacturing facilities. Today ADS operates 10 recycling facilities across the US and use approximately 500M pounds of recycled plastics per year. Recycled materials are acquired through a variety of post-consumer and post-industrial sources. ADS continually looks to expand sources of recycled material, improve their recycling facilities, and expand the usage of HDPE pipe made with recycled plastics.

This presentation will review the current state of the drainage pipe industry and ADS' effort to improve their efficiency at using recycled plastics in corrugated HDPE drainage pipe.

### Bio

Kristen Rinehart is the VP/GM of Recycling for Advanced Drainage Systems (ADS), a leading stormwater solutions manufacturer and one of the largest plastic recycling companies in North America.

An engineer by training and with expertise in plastic extrusion and process engineering for the automotive industry, Kristen today is focused on how to best source and expand the use of recycled plastic in ADS pipe and stormwater products that help protect our communities.

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## DANIEL SZYMANEK

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### Presentation Title:

#### ***Circular Economy of Agricultural Films – Practical Solutions and Economic Advantages***

Daniel Szymanek, Area Sales Manager, HydroDyn Recycling GmbH

### Abstract:

innovative pre-treatment, cleaning, and drying technologies address key recycling challenges like contamination, material degradation, and high operational costs. The presentation will give you insights into efficient preparation methods reducing wear and downtime. Single-step cleaning with HydroCleaner technology improving productivity and reducing operational complexity. Advanced water treatment solutions minimizing environmental impacts and operational expenses and quality measurement techniques ensuring consistent film recycling results.

### Bio:

Daniel currently serves as Area Sales Manager at HydroDyn Recycling GmbH in Hamburg, where he focuses on plastic recycling projects, particularly on plastic washing lines. Before his role at HydroDyn he spent 12 years as an Area Sales Manager at Next Generation Recycling Machines, working on plastic recycling equipment across Europe, India, the Middle East, and other regions.

## RON SHERGA



### Ron Sherga

Ron Sherga, Sustainability Advisor, CheckSammy

#### Bio:

Recently, Mr. Sherga served as the first ever Circular Economy programme director for INEOS/BP, between January 2019 and April, 2021. Key advisor on a sustainable strategy team for a large wealth fund with large chemical firms as part of their portfolio between June 2021 and December 2022. In this role, he was part of the leadership team developing a large chemical recycling project for PET polymers back to basic feedstocks. His primary task was developing large scale, sustainable, raw material sources for the plants. Ron convinced BP leaders to scale up from a small pilot project to a billion-dollar global rollout named Infinia. Ron was also tasked with exploring other areas within BP that were seeking guidance on Circular solutions; retail, Castrol Oil, Wind/Solar, and Carbon offset group. Most recently, Ron was VP of innovation and membership for Cyclyx from 10-2022 thru 5-2025.

Ron has played key roles in various end of life materials solutions:

1. Textile recycling industry
2. E scrap
3. Packaging scrap
4. Auto scrap recovery

He has also advised on other solutions/processes regarding polymer waste:

1. Plastics to oil
2. WTE
3. Plastics to monomers
4. Integration with virgin polymer usage

Key business activities since 2005:

- Director of one of the five largest plastics recyclers in North America – oversaw multiple facilities and operations- Infiltrator Water Systems/Champion Polymer Recycling
- Pivotal role in C-11 turnaround and successful exit acquisition
- Various Plastics industry associations committee member or founder
- Advisor to Cradle to Cradle on polymer value chain
- MIT CERTIFIED in Clean Energy Ventures
- CALRECYCLE CLIMATE CHANGE GHG OFFSET GRANT RECIPIENT
- Key strategy and commercial advisor to numerous large waste companies, recyclers, and polymer Mfrs.
- Due diligence advisor to Private Equity groups as subject matter expert in materials, equipment and procurement for M&A projects
- Advisor on alternative financing instruments-Green Bonds, Grants and Transition Bonds
- Recognized leader in alternative materials and procurement/feedstocks
- [ISRI.org](https://www.isri.org) Design for Recycling Award winner 2017
- Recycling Trailblazer Award by Recycling Today and GIE MEDIA
- Issued patents in Recycling related technologies- Founder Ecostrate SFS Inc.-acting chairman
- First ever Programme director of Circular Economy for BP (now INEOS)
- Led feedstock efforts and pre-process design for large-scale project for chemical Recycling of plastic in EU and NA
- Key creator of consortium to support chemical recycling of polymer waste
- Featured in Circular Economy for Dummies released in April 2021

Personal; Ron enjoys golf, running, trail biking, hiking, fly fishing and advocacy work for people with disabilities. Ron Sherga is married with three grown children and his 4 year old grandson the center of his universe and has been active on a national basis on issues regarding children with disabilities and chronic illnesses.

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## HARTMUT BENDFELDT

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### Presentation Title:

#### *Feedstock Preparation for Advanced and Mechanical Recycling*

Hartmut Bendfeldt, President, eFACTOR3, LLC

### Abstract:

This presentation explores the transformative journey of Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) towards fuels and energy recovery, emphasizing the importance of cutting-edge equipment to enhance efficiency in the process. The overarching goal is to systematically segregate MSW into specific materials or ingredients, creating a streamlined and sustainable approach to waste-to-energy conversion.

### Bio:

Hartmut is the esteemed founder and president of eFACTOR3, a thriving organization that he launched on August 08, 2008, specializing in recycling equipment and systems. With a remarkable track record spanning over 30 years and a background in mechanical engineering, he has led eFACTOR3's growth from being a small company to a robust organization with eight trusted partners and countless successful recycling solutions installed across North America.



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## KEVIN DEWHITT

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### Presentation Title:

#### ***Agricultural Films and Flexible Plastics – Opportunities and Challenges***

Kevin DeWhitt, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, PDO Technologies, Inc.

### Abstract:

There is a slowly growing opportunity to reclaim “hard-to-recycle” plastics directly from growers around the US. Most of a grower’s plastic waste is considered to be too contaminated for classical recycling methods, but companies like PDO Technologies have developed strategies to reclaim this plastic waste and convert it into chemicals that can be used in commerce. Film plastics (like polyethylene mulch films) are very difficult to remove from the field and process, but effective strategies can be employed to leverage the grower’s local resources to perform this process in a cost-effective manner. Flexible plastics are more straightforward unless they are coupled with the PE films, but in all cases the plastic material can be effectively removed from the farm, thus eliminating a potential environmental challenge from the grower and allowing them to focus on their core competency – feeding a growing population.

### Bio:

Kevin DeWhitt is the founder of PDO Technologies Inc., a company dedicated to keeping plastic waste out of the natural environment. For the past 7 years, PDO Technologies has advanced its plastic waste conversion technology, making it economically efficient, carbon neutral and operable in the most remote corners of the world. Partnering with mechanical recyclers and local communities, PDO creates micro-circular economies, processing the hard-to-recycle plastic waste. Prior to PDO, Mr. DeWhitt founded Agilyx Corporation, (originally, Plas2Fuel), a first of its kind, plastic-to-crude oil technology company. Agilyx raised more than \$150 million from green-tech angel investors, venture capitalists and strategic partners, becoming the leader in chemical recycling. Mr. DeWhitt led the development efforts as Chief Technology Officer, resulting in commercialization in 2012 at three project locations in the USA. Mr. DeWhitt has been granted one international and eight national (US) patents related to PTF technology.

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## JEFF MCMAHON

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### Presentation Title:

#### *Ag Films and Advanced Recycling*

Jeff McMahon, Managing Director, Freepoint Eco-Systems LLC

### Abstract:

As new advanced recycling facilities begin commercial operations, there is an emerging demand for Ag Films by these new technology recyclers. Freepoint will discuss the feasibility of processing Ag Films via its pyrolysis technology and the challenges in preparing Ag Films for recycling.

### Bio:

Jeff McMahon currently holds the position of Managing Director of Freepoint Eco-Systems, LLC. Mr. McMahon has spent his entire professional career in various segments of the commodity business.

After college, Mr. McMahon joined a public accounting firm where he specialized in audit and consulting for energy commodity trading firms during his 8 year stay. Since then, Mr. McMahon has held several senior management positions in the energy commodity industry including CEO, CFO, and CIO. Immediately prior to joining Freepoint, Mr. McMahon held the position of Portfolio Manager for an ultra-high net worth family office where he managed a \$1 billion direct investment portfolio.

Mr. McMahon joined Freepoint in 2016 and currently manages Freepoint's advanced recycling business where Freepoint diverts waste plastic from landfills and converts it to recycled feedstock used in the production of new plastic resins. Mr. McMahon received a Bachelor of Science degree from the Robins School of Business at the University of Richmond and is a Certified Public Accountant in the State of Texas.

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## JAMES DUBOIS

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**Lisa Wasko DeVetter**

James duBois, Senior Manager, Global Environmental Impact, Driscoll's

**Bio:**

James is the Senior Manager of Environmental Sustainability at Driscoll's of the Americas. James has worked within the Driscoll's enterprise for 20 years in both the U.S. and Mexico. His main focus areas have included Water Stewardship and Environmental Risk management including efforts to reduce the impacts of field plastics in the production of fresh berries. James works with Driscoll's network of independent growers to measure and improve water and input use management including field plastics. James has also led several community and industry environmental engagement efforts in Mexico and the U.S.

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## BEN ANDROS

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### Presentation Title:

#### *The Advancements of Mechanical Removal of Agricultural Plastics*

Ben Andros, President, Andros Engineering Corporation

### Abstract:

Leveraging over 30 years of farm process mechanization experience, Andros Engineering Corporation has successfully developed and marketed a system for collecting agricultural plastics. The presentation will focus on the impact of machinery selection when installing, removing, and retrieving agricultural plastics for recycling. Mechanizing plastic involved processes end-to-end improves the recyclability of the plastic, reduces labor costs, and densifies the material for transport. While Andros machinery will be featured, the principles will be applicable to a wide range of farming practices. Additionally, time permitting, AEC can present on their ongoing development of a mobile strawberry mulch plastic pre-processing plant.

### Bio:

Ben Andros is the President of Andros Engineering Corporation. While at AEC he has worked in various technical and leadership roles. Ben was appointed President of AEC in January 2023. He has a BS in Mechanical Engineering from the California Maritime Academy and an MBA from the University of Southern California.

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## Theron Smith

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### Presentation Title:

***Advancing Ag Film Recycling: Innovations and Strategies for a Circular Future***

Theron Smith, President, Flipping Iron, Inc.

### Abstract:

The recycling of agricultural films on the West Coast is evolving rapidly, driven by new technologies, market opportunities, and innovative processing methods. This presentation will provide an overview of current trends in ag film recycling, with a focus on the expanding variety of ag films being recovered and processed. We will explore strategies for identifying new market outlets for recycled material and highlight the latest processing techniques aimed at improving material purity and consistency. Additionally, the presentation will cover new equipment investments enhancing processing efficiency and examine creative approaches to reintroduce recycled ag plastics into domestic manufacturing. By closing the loop and strengthening the circular economy, these advancements hold promise for more sustainable agricultural practices and increased economic viability for ag film recyclers.

### Bio:

High school graduate, Recycler of material for 25 years, Recycling business owner for 19 years.  
Owner/ President - Flipping Iron Inc.



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## ISMAEL RODRIGUEZ

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### Presentation Title:

#### *Recycling Agricultural Mulch Film: An Overview of an Operational Facility*

Ismael Rodriguez, CEO, 2nd Recycling, LLC

### Abstract:

This presentation provides an overview of an operational facility dedicated to the recycling of agricultural mulch film. It will highlight the key steps in the collection, cleaning, and processing of used plastic film, discuss the challenges of contamination and seasonal variability, and showcase the technologies and strategies used to produce marketable recycled materials. Attendees will gain practical insights into how agricultural film recycling can be successfully implemented and scaled to support circular economy goals in agriculture.

### Bio:

Ismael Rodriguez is a business-oriented mechanical engineer with 19 years of experience in the recycling industry and with a strong focus on sustainability. Holding a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering and an MBA in Total Quality Management, Ismael Rodriguez has developed expertise in plant operations, thermos processes, heat transfer applications, mechanical and machine design.

In leadership roles, Ismael Rodriguez has driven advancements in process automation and machine design, integrating custom-built machinery and automation technologies to streamline operations and reduce waste. In plant management, Ismael Rodriguez has overseen end-to-end production processes, ensuring quality control, resource optimization, and sustainable practices.

Passionate about environmental responsibility, Ismael Rodriguez focuses on applying advanced mechanical and fabrication techniques to develop efficient and sustainable solutions for complex engineering challenges.

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## JAZMINE MEJIA-MUÑOZ

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### Jazmine Mejia-Muñoz

Jazmine Mejia-Muñoz, M.S., Water Quality Program Manager, California Marine Sanctuary Foundation

#### Bio:

Jazmine Mejia-Muñoz is a Water Quality Program Manager at the California Marine Sanctuary Foundation on detail for the Water Quality Protection Program at the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (MBNMS). There she implements innovative solutions to critical issues affecting the interface of land and marine resources, through stakeholder engagement and education. As part of her interdisciplinary approach, she participates in rangeland restoration efforts, through the Healthy Soils Program. Here she works to demonstrate that land-based practices can improve ocean health by reducing atmospheric carbon and diminishing the rate of ocean acidification and warming.

In an effort to reduce land to sea marine debris sources, Jazmine leads collaborative efforts to find end-of-life solutions for agricultural field plastics. She works with agricultural stakeholders, including growers, the University of California Cooperative Extension, Washington State University, and California Polytechnic State University to conduct trials of Soil-Biodegradable-Mulch (BDM). Together, the team is researching BDMs as an alternative to non-degradable mulch used vastly in agriculture fields within the MBNMS watersheds. Additionally, with support from The Nature Conservancy and key stakeholders, Jazmine is also working on identifying and communicating ways to increase the recycling rate of drip irrigation tape used in agricultural fields across California's Central Coast.



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## CHRIS WAGNER

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### Presentation Title:

#### *Row Mulch System Designed for Post Season Retrieval*

Chris Wagner, Vice President of Engineering, Viaflex

### Abstract:

Retrieving row mulch film from fields is often cumbersome due to frequent splitting and breaking, leading to increased labor and time. To address this issue, Andros Engineering and Viaflex collaborated on field trials to find a solution.

### Bio:

Chris Wagner is the Vice President of Engineering at Viaflex, a leading plastic sheeting manufacturer. He holds dual bachelor's degrees in Metallurgical and Materials Engineering and Interdisciplinary Sciences from the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology. With 25 years of experience across various industries, Chris has spent the last 13 years in leadership roles at Raven/Viaflex, driving innovation and excellence in engineering.

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## ALENA ANOUSINH

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### Presentation Title:

#### ***Soil-Biodegradable Mulches: An Outlook of its Use in California***

Alena Anousinh, Water Quality Program Associate. California Marine Sanctuary Foundation, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary

### Abstract:

Soil-biodegradable plastic mulches (BDMs) are a commercial alternative to non-biodegradable polyethylene (PE) plastic mulch films. Plastic mulch films derived from PE are a staple tool in agriculture, with 7.9 million pounds of plastic mulch and fumigation film estimated to be used annually in Monterey County, CA alone.

To help combat plastic waste generation and pollution, BDMs have been introduced and are engineered to be tilled into soil after use and broken down over time by soil microorganisms. Internationally, BDMs have been utilized by growers for decades; within California, BDMs have not been widely adopted due to concerns regarding slow degradation, incompatibility with fumigation, food safety, and inability to be used in certified organic farms.

This presentation will evaluate the use of BDMs as an alternative to PE mulch in conventional strawberry operations, with a focus on their application in California's co-rotational agricultural system and trials nationwide (USDA Specialty Crop Research Initiative Award #2022-51181-38325). We will cover scenarios to help overcome the key challenges to increase adoption of BDMs and clarify situations where other alternatives should be considered such as PE mulch recycling. This presentation will also provide a perspective on the environmental impacts of BDMs, economic factors to consider, and beneficial field practices that are compatible with BDM application.

### Bio:

Alena joined CMSF in 2023 and serves as a Water Quality Program Associate in the Plasticulture Division. There she collaborates with agricultural industry members to implement practices that improve agricultural water quality. She helps conduct trials of soil-biodegradable mulch in place of traditional plastic mulch in strawberry fields, explores end-of-life solutions for plasticulture, and seeks to reduce land-to-sea marine debris.

Prior to joining CMSF, Alena was a Life Lab Farm Manager and worked as an organic agriculture research assistant at the University of California Santa Cruz. Alena holds a Bachelor of Art degree in Environmental Studies and Agroecology from UCSC, where she focused on sustainable organic agriculture/food systems and soil-borne diseases in strawberry production.

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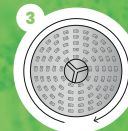
In combination with a highly turbulent water flow, the plastic waste is purified of all attached and adhering particles and contaminants with great effect.



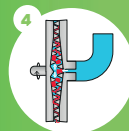
Water flows into the Hydro Flush Feeder. Flakes fall into the vortex and are rinsed downward.



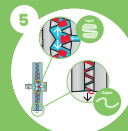
Flake water emulsion passes through an opening into the cleaning gap.



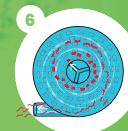
Emulsion hits the rotor cap of the rotating tool and is evenly distributed.



Flakes are aligned parallel to the teeth in the mixed zone. Gap (0-30 mm) becomes narrower and narrower and flakes are singulated.



Tools work on the entire flake surface and remove the dirt by friction and hydrodynamic water turbulences.



Flakes move outward in a spiral by passing the gap between the teeth of rotor and stator.

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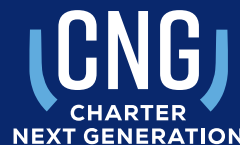
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# Agricultural Plastics Recycling Conference & Trade Show (APRC 2025)

## Program at a Glance

Wednesday, August 13, 2025		
2:00 pm - 6:00 pm	Registration Open	(Mission Bay Ballroom Foyer)
2:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Exhibitor Set up	(Mission Bay Ballroom - Marina/Pacific)
5:00 pm - 6:00 pm	Welcome Networking Reception	(Mission Bay Ballroom Terrace)

Thursday, August 14, 2025		
7:45 am - 6:30 pm	Registration Open	(Mission Bay Ballroom Foyer)
7:45 am - 8:30 am	Continental Breakfast - Exhibit Hall	(Mission Bay Ballroom - Marina/Pacific)
8:30 am - 10:00 am	<b>Opening Session</b>	(Mission Bay Ballroom - Sunset)
10:00 am - 10:30 am	Break - Exhibit Hall	(Mission Bay Ballroom - Marina/Pacific)
10:30 am - 12:00 pm	<b>Session I: The Role of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) in Agricultural Plastics</b>	(Mission Bay Ballroom - Sunset)
12:00 - 1:00 pm	Lunch - Provided	(Mission Bay Ballroom Terrace)
1:00 pm - 2:30 pm	<b>Session II: Closing the Loop: Circular Strategies for Ag Plastics and Packaging</b>	(Mission Bay Ballroom - Sunset)
2:30 pm - 3:00 pm	Refreshment Break - Exhibit Hall	(Mission Bay Ballroom - Marina/Pacific)
3:00 pm - 4:30 pm	<b>Session III: Breaking New Ground: Pyrolysis and Advanced Recycling for Ag Films</b>	(Mission Bay Ballroom - Sunset)
5:00 pm - 6:30 pm	Reception - Exhibit Hall	(Mission Bay Ballroom - Marina/Pacific)

Friday, August 15, 2025		
7:45 am - 11:30 am	Registration Open	(Mission Bay Ballroom Foyer)
7:45 am - 8:30 am	Continental Breakfast - Exhibit Hall	(Mission Bay Ballroom - Marina/Pacific)
8:30 am - 10:00 am	<b>Session IV: Ag Plastics Recycling in Action: From Strategy to Operational Success</b>	(Mission Bay Ballroom - Sunset)
10:00 am - 10:30 am	Refreshment Break - Exhibit Hall	(Mission Bay Ballroom - Marina/Pacific)
10:30 am - 11:30 am	<b>Session V: Closing the Loop on Mulch: Engineering Recovery and Biodegradable Advances</b>	(Mission Bay Ballroom - Sunset)
11:30 am	Closing Comments and Adjournment	
10:30 am - 12:00 pm	Exhibitor Breakdown	