

GUIDELINES FOR THE AGRICULTURAL GREENHOUSE PLASTIC WASTE COLLECTION SCHEME



BACKGROUND OF THE SCHEME

Agricultural greenhouse operations play an important role in supporting local food production and the sustainability of Malta's agricultural sector. However, these activities generate significant quantities of plastic waste, including greenhouse plastic sheeting, mulch films, irrigation tubing and other plastic materials that require appropriate management and disposal.

To support farmers in managing this waste responsibly, Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta (RAM) has established the Agricultural Greenhouse Plastic Waste Collection Scheme. The Scheme provides an organised mechanism for the collection of eligible agricultural plastic waste generated through greenhouse farming activities, helping to reduce environmental impacts, promote good agricultural practices and encourage proper waste management within the sector.

These Guidelines set out the eligibility requirements, application procedures, waste preparation requirements and collection arrangements applicable under the Scheme. They are intended to assist farmers in understanding the conditions for participation and their responsibilities throughout the collection process.

Participation in the Scheme is subject to compliance with the eligibility criteria and operational requirements established by Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta. Through this initiative, RAM aims to facilitate the responsible management of agricultural plastic waste while contributing to a cleaner, more sustainable agricultural environment.

Through this initiative, Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta seeks to support the agricultural community in adopting good environmental practices while contributing to the sustainable management of agricultural plastic waste generated within Malta's greenhouse farming sector.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- The applicant must be a registered farmer with the Agriculture Directorate.
- The applicant must operate and actively use an agricultural greenhouse for agricultural activities.
- The greenhouse must be located on agricultural land that is duly registered by the competent authorities and indicated in this application.
- The applicant must provide a valid Farmer Registration Number.
- The applicant must provide a valid Farmer Categorisation Certificate.
- The plastic waste must have been generated from the applicant's agricultural greenhouse activities.
- The waste must consist of eligible agricultural plastic waste, such as greenhouse plastic sheeting, plastic covering materials, mulch films, irrigation tubing and other plastic materials approved under the Scheme.
- The plastic waste must be reasonably accessible for collection by the designated service provider.
- The applicant must ensure that the plastic waste does not contain general household waste, hazardous materials, soil, excessive organic matter or other non-eligible materials.
- The applicant must provide accurate and complete information in the application form and submit all required supporting documentation as requested.
- The applicant must agree to comply with the collection arrangements and instructions communicated by Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta (RAM).
- The applicant must provide a valid contact number and remain available for communication regarding the scheduled collection date.
- Collection will be organised by RAM through its designated service provider, and the applicant must make the eligible plastic waste available at the location and on the date communicated by the Agency.

Eligibility for the Scheme is subject to the applicant satisfying all applicable eligibility criteria and providing the required supporting documentation. Applications meeting the eligibility requirements will be approved for collection, following which Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta will contact the applicant to communicate the scheduled collection date and the applicable collection arrangements.

SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION AND COLLECTION ARRANGEMENTS

Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta (RAM) has established the Agricultural Greenhouse Plastic Waste Collection Scheme to support farmers in the responsible management of plastic waste generated through agricultural greenhouse activities.

The Scheme facilitates the organised collection, handling and appropriate management of eligible agricultural plastic waste arising from greenhouse cultivation. It aims to assist farmers in managing such waste in an environmentally responsible manner, reducing the potential impact of agricultural plastic waste on the environment and promoting good agricultural and waste-management practices.

The Scheme is intended exclusively for farmers who operate and actively use agricultural greenhouses for agricultural purposes and who satisfy all applicable eligibility requirements.

Agricultural greenhouse plastic waste may include, but is not limited to:

- Greenhouse plastic sheeting;
- Plastic covering materials;
- Agricultural mulch films;
- Irrigation tubing; and
- Other agricultural plastic materials approved under the Scheme.

Participation in the Scheme is subject to the applicant meeting the applicable eligibility requirements and complying with the collection arrangements and instructions issued by RAM.

ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATIONS

Applications will be assessed by RAM against the applicable eligibility requirements of the Scheme.

Eligibility is subject to but not limited:

- The applicant satisfying all applicable eligibility criteria;
- The agricultural greenhouse and agricultural land meeting the relevant requirements;
- The applicant providing a valid Farmer Registration Number;
- The applicant providing a valid Farmer Categorisation Certificate;
- The plastic waste being generated from eligible agricultural greenhouse activities;
- The waste being of an eligible type;
- The waste being appropriately separated from non-eligible materials; and
- The applicant providing all required information and supporting documentation.

RAM may request additional information or documentation where this is necessary to assess an application.

Submission of an application does not, in itself, guarantee approval or collection. Only applications that satisfy the applicable requirements will proceed to the collection stage.

What Happens After Approval?

Once an application has been assessed and approved for collection, Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta will contact the applicant. RAM will communicate the relevant collection arrangements, which may include:

- The scheduled collection date;
- The collection location;
- Instructions concerning the preparation and presentation of the waste; and
- Any other information necessary to facilitate the collection.

COLLECTION ARRANGEMENTS

Collection under the Scheme will be organised by Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta through its designated service provider.

The applicant must:

- Prepare and separate the eligible agricultural plastic waste before the scheduled collection;
- Ensure that the waste is free from non-eligible materials;
- Place or make the waste available at the location communicated or agreed with RAM;
- Ensure that the collection point is reasonably accessible to the designated service provider;
- Ensure that the waste is available on the scheduled collection date; and
- Follow any specific instructions issued by RAM or its designated service provider.

The applicant should not move the waste to a different location or make alternative collection arrangements without first communicating with RAM where such a change may affect the scheduled collection.

Preparing the Waste for Collection

To facilitate an efficient collection, farmers should ensure that agricultural greenhouse plastic waste is properly separated before the scheduled collection.

Farmers should:

- Separate eligible agricultural plastic waste from other waste streams;
- Remove household waste and other non-eligible materials;
- Remove hazardous materials;
- Avoid mixing the plastic waste with excessive quantities of soil or organic matter;
- Keep different waste types appropriately separated where instructed by RAM; and
- Follow any additional preparation requirements communicated by RAM or its designated service provider.

Proper preparation of the waste helps ensure that the collection can be carried out safely and efficiently.

Collection Date and Communication

Following approval of an application, RAM will contact the applicant to communicate the scheduled collection date and applicable arrangements. Applicants are therefore required to provide a valid contact number and remain available for communication. If an applicant is unable to make the waste available on the scheduled date, the applicant should contact RAM as soon as possible. Applicants should not assume that a collection will take place unless the collection has been confirmed by RAM.

Waste that is not eligible

Plastic waste presented for collection must be free from materials that may prevent its acceptance or proper handling.

The following must not be included with the agricultural plastic waste:

- General household waste;
- Hazardous materials or hazardous waste;
- Excessive quantities of soil;
- Excessive organic matter;
- Other non-agricultural waste;
- Other materials that are not eligible under the Scheme; or
- Any other material that RAM or its designated service provider determines cannot be accepted under the Scheme.

Farmers are responsible for ensuring that the waste is appropriately separated and prepared before collection.