

# CropLife India hosts symposium on pesticide container recycling



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Agrochemical industry association CropLife India has recently organised an international symposium on the management of empty pesticide containers in the country and published a paper seeking “robust policy framework” in this regard. The event saw participation from various stakeholders, including the government, with the group calling for the legalisation of the recycling of rinsed and inspected empty pesticide containers.

Urging stakeholders to undertake “collective efforts” to minimise the impact of pesticide containers on the environment, plant protection adviser to the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers’ Welfare, Dr Ravi Prakash, proposed the establishment of collection points at the retailer level. The adviser added that farmers could be incentivised for bringing back empty, rinsed pesticide containers. He proposed that states be given the responsibility for district-wise collection of these containers. Furthermore, he revealed that inter-ministerial meetings were being undertaken to develop standard operating procedures (SOPs) involving the disposal of hazardous wastes including pesticide plastic containers in a sustainable manner.

The sentiments were echoed by other participants, who noted that used pesticide containers should be rinsed thrice to make them safe for disposal and subsequent recycling. They observed that only 60,000 tonnes of pesticide containers are sent for recycling per year despite the government setting up 200 waste management facilities with the capacity to process 1 million tonnes of pesticide containers annually. Regular collection and channelling remain a problem, they said, adding that the focus should shift from “end-of-treatment to end-of-use”, as the agrochemical industry moves towards a circular economy.

CropLife India’s chief executive officer, Asitava Sen, has called for “strong support” from the government to implement an effective recycling regime for empty pesticide containers, adding that every stakeholder in the agrochemical value chain has an “imminent role” to play in the matter.

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