



# Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Waste Program

Summary – September 2021

Australia's rural industries are rising to the challenge of sustainable waste management through a collection of initiatives to prevent, eliminate, reduce or reuse waste from primary production.

## THE ISSUE

The management of waste from Australia's primary industries is a significant concern which requires urgent attention.

Primary producers are keen to work towards minimising waste and ensuring greater resource use efficiency. However, a roadmap is currently lacking for how agriculture, fisheries and forestry can establish methods for reducing waste and implementing the principles of a circular economy.

## INTRODUCING THE PRE-FARM GATE WASTE PROGRAM

To help producers identify what is needed to improve their waste management, RMCG is working with AgriFutures Australia to support a Pre-Farm Gate Waste Program, which will align Australia's agriculture, fisheries and forestry sector with the [National Waste Policy \(2018\)](#).

The program encompasses five projects which will run until September 2022 and focus on pre-farm gate waste. Ultimately they will provide clear guidance to industry on innovative ways to reduce their waste footprint on-the-ground.

As part of the program, RMCG is working closely with relevant industries to coordinate three projects:

- National Waste Strategy
- Options Analysis
- Data Collection.

This work is being complemented by two additional projects, where RMCG is working collaboratively with the service providers (Figure 1):

- Innovative Waste Solutions – delivered by University of Technology Sydney (UTS)
- Workshop Waste Options – delivered by Murrang Earth Sciences.

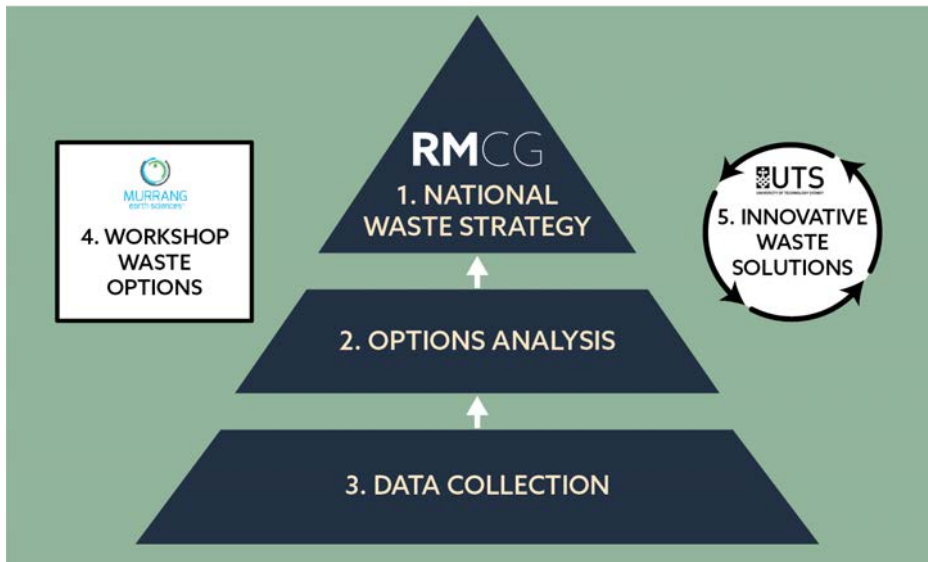
## WHAT PRE-FARM GATE WASTE IS INCLUDED IN THIS PROGRAM?

The program covers waste that occurs through the production and harvest process, prior to product (e.g. food, logs) leaving the farm, forest or beach. This includes:

- **Hard and soft plastics**
  - Piping, irrigation and drainage
  - Storage, trays and labels
  - Nets and mesh
  - Protective films
  - Bagging, twine and ropes.
- **Workshop waste**
  - Hazardous (e.g. pesticides)
  - Inert (e.g. scrap metal, rubber).
- **Animal and plant organic matter**
  - Animal waste
  - Sludges
  - Wood and timber
  - Green waste
  - Product loss
  - Other by-products (e.g. grape marc).

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Figure 1: AgriFutures Pre-Farm Gate Waste Program – project alignment.



## 1. NATIONAL WASTE STRATEGY

### Project Delivery: RMCG

This investment will develop a clear and consistent national waste management strategy and action plan for pre-farm gate waste in agriculture, fisheries and forestry.

It will also develop practical resources for industry to apply the waste hierarchy and circular economy frameworks through extension materials.

### How will it work?

The project will identify barriers to the management of waste including the diversity of waste types; inconsistency in waste and resource recovery policy and legislation; challenges associated with logistics and contamination; and a lack of awareness and communication of management options.

## 2. OPTIONS ANALYSIS

### Project Delivery: RMCG

Before any change is implemented, it is crucial for the agricultural, fisheries and forestry sector to understand the risks and benefits of reducing its waste generation.

This investment will identify gaps and practical solutions for the sector to achieve sustainable waste management and resource recovery.

### How will it work?

The project will analyse the economic, environmental and social risks and benefits of implementing possible solutions such as:

- Redesigning material use to avoid waste
- Increasing reuse and extending product life
- Improving management of end of use materials.

## 3. DATA COLLECTION

### Project Delivery: RMCG

This investment aims to increase the knowledge and understanding of cross-sectoral waste issues.

It will collect and collate existing data – including current source, scale, location and magnitude of pre-farm gate waste – and conduct a gap analysis.

### How will it work?

Baseline datasets will be established to measure the change and benefits of sustainable waste practices over time. It will also help to inform other waste initiatives, from which agriculture, fisheries and forestry are often excluded due to lack of data.

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## 4. WORKSHOP WASTE OPTIONS

### Project Delivery: Murrang Earth Sciences

This investment is investigating practical options for the agriculture, fishery and forestry sector to re-value and manage workshop wastes.

This project will consider workshop waste including metal, chemicals, oil, batteries and tyres, but not plastic or organic waste.

#### How will it work?

Key stakeholders such as those who run family-owned fishing, forestry or agricultural enterprises, as well as peak body representatives, will be engaged to understand the extent of their workshop waste problems. Potential solutions will be practical, feasible and aligned with stakeholder needs.

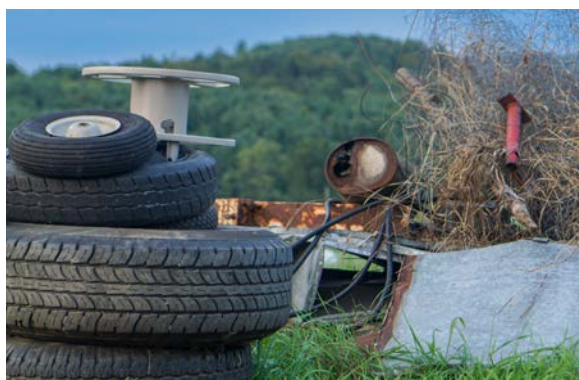
## 5. INNOVATIVE WASTE SOLUTIONS

### Project Delivery: UTS

This investment will explore innovative solutions to repurpose and recycle existing pre-farm gate hard waste including plastic, wood, metal and rubber. It will focus on material processing and technology, such as 3D printing.

#### How will it work?

The project will initially collate existing data to prioritise potential technologies. Potential solutions will take into account barriers including logistics and regulatory requirements, as well as environmental and economic impacts.



## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Industry consultation is kicking off and we are keen to hear from anyone who is invested in eliminating, reducing or repurposing waste in the agriculture, fisheries and forestry sector.

If you are interested in contributing to the Pre-Farm Gate Waste Program, simply fill out this [online expression of interest form](#) and we will contact you shortly.

## CONTACT US

Please contact the project team for further information.



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