

Top Ten Learnings on Recycled content



Barriers

1. There is not enough price advantage for PCR over virgin plastics
2. There is not enough PCR available that matches specifications;
 - Performance concerns for some polymers (color, odor, strength)
3. There needs to be more demand from brands and/or governments for PCR on the market
4. There is a lack of diversity of plastics reclaimers
 - Corresponds to lack of diversity of supply from MRFs
5. There is a lack of supply for some types of plastics that make use of PCR challenging
 - Need better, broader collection system to better meet market needs

Opportunities

- 6. Governments can help facilitate end market demand through policy support** such as PCR mandates, assisting with developing local resource partnerships, fee mechanisms, tax breaks/incentives e.g., for recycling equipment purchases.
- 7. Brands and retailers can create demand through diverse strategies** like committing to use PCR, work directly with resin material suppliers to obtain it; design for PCR from the beginning to meet performance and color standards.
- 8. Converters and material manufacturers can enable their customers to use PCR** by developing innovative solutions for using PCR , for example, by testing recycled content to see how it performs; conducting R&D projects to make recycled grades as high performing as virgin grades; working with customers to find ways to incorporate PCR into their products; investing in new technologies; collaborating with recyclers.
- 9. There are key ways in which everyone in the value chain can support end markets:** fund or support recycling market development programs and pilot projects (NEMO, MRFF); support selected policy mechanisms; buy recycled content products in your own supply chain.

Markets for PCR

10. There are many existing markets for PCR, which can be divided into 4 key buckets:

- **Durable products**
 - **Household:** automotive parts, air ducts, toys, playsets, gardening sets, picture frames, pots, pails, paint trays, vacuum cleaners, coffee machines, skateboards, sunglasses, pens, stationary products, razors, toothbrushes, electronics.
 - **WIP items:** crates, trays, pallets, trash bins, recycling bins, carts. These are a low-hanging fruit since these are less strict in terms of aesthetic/performance requirements.
 - **Construction:** High level of PCR content is common in lumber and fencing. Can also be used in plumbing products, piping, architectural molding, streetscape, landscape, construction bricks, asphalt.
- **Films:** garbage bags, grocery bags, agricultural film, overwraps; Isri says 20% PCR is easily achievable by all major plastic bag manufacturers at pricing comparable to 100% virgin.
- **Packaging:** rigid containers and bottles, flexible packaging, multipack holders, labels.
- **Textiles:** For PET - clothing/cloth bags, carpet, rope, fishing nets).