

APPROVED 5/22/2023

**Ag Container Recycling Council (ACRC)**  
*Evaluating Recyclability of Containers and Container Innovations*

**Introduction:** Ag Container Recycling Council’s (ACRC) program subsidizes the collection of clean, triple-rinsed, ag chemical containers and supports research to assist third parties to produce viable end-uses for the plastic collected through the ACRC program.

ACRC research activities are limited to:

- Evaluating human and environmental risk pathways associated with the use of the end-use products made from plastic from the ACRC program. Risk pathways evaluated are limited to environmental exposure, human dermal exposure, ingestion (hand-to-mouth) exposure, drinking water ingestion exposure, and fish consumption.
- Evaluating end-use manufacturing processes using ACRC program plastic, by assessing environmental risks and product traceability controls.
- Assisting third-parties research into viable end-uses of ACRC program plastic by facilitating access to the plastic and sharing third-party information regarding the plastic.

ACRC does not attest to whether the plastic collected through the ACRC program is “recyclable”. It does not perform tests to determine whether the plastic collected through the ACRC program is fit to be used in the manufacture of any product, or whether any proposed end-use product is fit for any particular purpose. ACRC does not attest to the viability of any end-use product. Those determinations are the sole responsibility of those who manufacture products containing plastic from the ACRC program.

**Suggestion:** ACRC has been asked on occasion for certification or approval of recyclability of containers or container technology. As stated above, decisions, assessments, and certifications of recyclability are not within the scope of the ACRC program.

ACRC suggests that those seeking certification or approval of recyclability of containers and container innovations consider using the Association of Plastic Recycler’s (APR) HDPE Critical Guidance Recognition process. APR describes its HDPE Critical Guidance Recognition program as a “*comprehensive laboratory scale evaluation, or protocol, which can be used to assess the compatibility of HDPE rigid container packaging innovations with reclamation systems sourcing*”

*post-consumer material* (The Association of Plastics Recyclers | HDPE Design Guidance).” ACRC is a member of APR and recognizes APR’s Design Guide as a comprehensive collection of recyclability criteria available to industry.

APR’s Design Guidance “Path 1” outlines the recyclability recognition process for a formed rigid container. APR states that *“This test can be used to evaluate the impact of HDPE rigid container packaging innovations and components, examples including, but not limited to: Additives, Barriers, Layers, Copolymers, Caps, Closures and Lids.”* The process can be found here (APR Design Guidance Path 1-A). APR Design Guide Path 1 is expressly intended for evaluation of HDPE rigid containers with innovations, which more precisely aligns with the containers collected through the ACRC program. Also available, however, is Path 2, which is intended for HDPE resin incorporating innovations. Those seeking certification or approval of recyclability of containers and container innovations should discuss with APR which Path is more appropriate for its use.

This document has been prepared by ACRC as a service to its members and others who desire to assess the recyclability of their HDPE plastic containers or HDPE rigid container packaging innovations and components. It is, however, not an endorsement of the APR Design Guide and ACRC accepts no responsibility for any harm or damages arising from the use of or reliance upon the APR Design Guide by any party.

**Please contact Mark Hudson at [Mhudson@agrecycling.org](mailto:Mhudson@agrecycling.org) or Leigh O’Neill at [Loneill@agrecycling.org](mailto:Loneill@agrecycling.org) with questions regarding this document.**