

Film & Flexibles Coalition

IMPACT IN PROGRESS



From Pilot Project to Proven Concept: Creating Viable Processing for Mixing Agricultural and Residential Plastic Film

Santa Maria, California: Case Study



Agricultural and residential film arrives at Enevi where it is processed, shredded, and cleaned.

Of the many uses for plastic film, agriculture is a big industry market. You may have seen the white canopies of sheeting that stretch across crops, providing vital protection for food. Enevi, a plastic waste management startup in Santa Maria, California, was founded to handle this large and valuable waste stream. Founded in 2024, the company is already broadening to new horizons with the help of a grant from The Recycling Partnership.

Enevi's specialty is transforming plastic waste from farms into post-consumer resin pellets. Manufacturers then buy the pellets to make new products such as plastic benches. The system works, but the seasonal nature of farming left gaps in operations, and Enevi recognized there was room to take on more material.

To start, Enevi conducted a pilot project with local materials recovery facility Waste Connections to process film from the local Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians tribe, including the tribe's casino. Successfully testing that they would be able to combine agricultural and residential films, the facility is now undergoing an expansion that will allow it to accept film and flexible packaging from more sources, including homes.

Supported by the grant, Enevi will install a plastic washing line, including a pre-washer, friction washer, rinse tank, and de-watering system that will clean and remove contaminants from the film and flexible packaging stream. A plastic extrusion system, including a feeder, extrusion screw, and pelletizer, will support conversion of the cleaned films into pellets for sale. The new equipment is set to be up and running by summer 2025, allowing Enevi to boost its production of high-quality, post-consumer resins from films that otherwise would have gone to landfills.

With California's SB 54 legislation setting ambitious targets for the packaging market, it's an all-hands-on-deck moment and opportunity to explore potential pathways to compliance. This partnership highlights an innovative approach to capturing more film and flexible packaging, while also supporting scalable end markets for the material.



The final result is post-consumer resin pellets ready to be turned into new products.

GRANT IMPACTS

- Capture an additional **5,000 new tons** of residentially generated film and flexible packaging annually
- Exploring **new end markets** for its products in the farming and automotive industries
- Accept a wider array of packaging types, including monomaterial film made from HDPE and PP, as well as more complex multimaterial films



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