

# Farmers... Our Reef is in Your Hands!



Photographer: J. Jones



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- Plasticulture in Australia uses an estimated 90,800 tonnes of plastics in agriculture each year but only 7% is recycled.
- Plastic breaks up and gets into the soil, air, waterways and the ocean.
- Plastic in soil lowers farmland fertility, accumulates pesticides and other toxins, and releases carcinogens into soil that are taken up by vegetation and eaten.
- The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority lists plastic marine debris as one of the main threats to the reef. Innovative farmers who want to promote their sustainable farming practices can join the Reef Guardian Farmers and Graziers Program.
- There are at least 250000 tonnes of plastic out at sea. It has been estimated there may even be a few million metric tonnes
- Large plastic items pose a threat to marine animals from entanglement, smothering, and ingestion as well as accumulation of toxins attached to the plastic.
- Microplastics in the marine ecosystem present serious threats to the health of marine animals.
- We need to address plastic use across all sectors if we are to make a difference to contamination of our soil, water, food and air.

## Farmers can do this by:

- Responsible disposal
- Keep plastics out of soil and waterways
- Use compostable alternatives
- Practice alternative irrigation techniques
- Use cover crops instead of plastic,

## Did you know?

- on beaches 80% of plastic marine debris is from land-based sources.
- in the Great Pacific Garbage Patch 52% of plastics is from marine-based sources.

For more information, resources and references go to: <https://www.tangaroablue.org/reefclean-news/farmers-our-reefs-future-is-in-your-hands/>

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# ReefClean

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