

GREENFIELDS – Irritec S.p.A.

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INFORMATION ON THE ECO-INNOVATIVE SOLUTION PROVIDER

IRRITEC S.p.A. is a leading Italian manufacturer of plastic based advanced micro-irrigation products and systems, with 7 plants in 8 countries and a commercial presence in more than 140 countries. Nowadays global issues are food and water scarcity. Since 1974 IRRITEC S.p.A. has been investing in developing new and innovative solutions for irrigation in agriculture, contributing to increase the yield of the crops and to manage water in an efficient way. IRRITEC undertakes several cooperation projects worldwide, being really committed to reduce its environmental footprint and to contribute to the growth of the local communities.

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE ECO-INNOVATIVE SOLUTION

IRRITEC is fully aware that its production, made up of different types of plastic, has an impact on the environment and has launched in 2015 a project called "GreenFields". The scope of the project is to create a plastic scrap collection scheme in agriculture. Through GreenFields, Irritec offers farmers a clean alternative to dispose of their plastic wastes, but at the same time, it guarantees itself a steady incoming flow of recyclable plastic to be used for new production. GreenFields is a perfect example of a circular economy scheme, particularly beneficial to the company when the price of raw materials is high. Nevertheless, it is also a marketing tool, since it increases the fidelity of the farmer towards the company.

INDUSTRIAL SECTOR – MARKET SEGMENT AND ACTUAL APPLICATIONS IN INDUSTRY

Plastic Manufacturing – Irrigation Systems for agriculture and gardening

INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION - NACE CODE

2221 – Manufacture of plastic plates, sheets, tubes and profiles

1. DESCRIPTION OF ECO-INNOVATIVE SOLUTION

Technical aspects of the eco-innovative solution

The scheme includes four entities: IRRITEC, distributors of agricultural inputs, plastic collectors and farmers.

The Project follows different steps: 1) the farmer visits our website or calls to the dedicated number; 2) he fills out the registration form indicating all the required data; 3) Irritec Marketing department receives the form and puts into contact the collector with the farm. At this point the project partners come into play: 4) the collector proceeds to the collection, 5) he releases the certificate of disposal to the farmer and 6) sends a copy to Irritec. 7) The farmer gets a voucher from Irritec - € 15.00 for each ton, (for Irritec branded "wastes", the bonus doubles). The bonus will be useful to purchase new Irritec driplines at the nearest authorized retailer. Depending on the national legislation, distributors could act as collector, by gathering a series of registration forms of farms and setting up a collection point at their premises. IRRITEC signs an agreement with a collector that can either collect plastics directly at the farms (in the case of large farms) or act as a collection point. After that the material is checked in quantity and quality, the farmer receives a voucher whose amount will be increased if he returns an IRRITEC product.

Economic and environmental benefits of the eco-innovative solution

GreenFields represents a perfect example of circular economy, since it prevents the introduction of new virgin raw material into the market. IRRITEC's vision is of a 100% production from recycled raw material, by increasing not only the quantities collected but also the quality of the recycled raw material and of the final product. By closing the loop, IRRITEC favours also the farmers who will benefit from the financial incentive deriving from returning back the plastic at the end of life.

2. AVAILABILITY OF THE ECO-INNOVATIVE SOLUTION AND BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP

Market readiness, Trade mark, existing market coverage, commercialization strategy

"GreenFields" - a registered trademark since 24/11/2015 – was launched by Irritec first in Italy, later also in Mexico and is now being organised in Brazil and Spain.

Focused on sustainability, GreenFields strengthens customer loyalty by increasing, year after year, the target of dripline to be recycled. In Italy and Mexico, GreenFields program is having successful results and an increasing acceptance of the farmers. Irritec promotes the project through different communication channels, involves its sales network and authorized dealers by organizing workshops and seminars with local farmers. Irritec rewards the dealer by recognizing a bonus for each customer who buys Irritec driplines after having participated to GreenFields project.

The SwitchMed Programme is funded by the European Union and implemented by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in cooperation with UN Environment Mediterranean Action Plan (UN Environment/MAP), the Regional Activity Centre for Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP/RAC), and the UN Environment Economy Division.



Regional Activity Centre
for Sustainable Consumption
and Production

The problem of the disposal represents for Irritec a real Marketing opportunity: the collection service also includes the disposal of driplines belonging to other brands. In this way, the farmer is encouraged to discount the voucher and to purchase Irritec dripline for the following season.

Requirements to adapt the solution to the local market and potential applications/market size

GreenFields favors the reduction of environmental management costs and uncontrolled disposal of agricultural waste. The project involves reliable recycling companies that, in cooperation with Irritec, provide a solution able to relieve the disposal costs of farms, allowing them to get big advantages with a view to environmental sustainability.

On site-after-sales services support and the technical assistance requirements

To facilitate the collection times, Irritec provides a farmer-dedicated help desk support. Farms joining the project are supported by a team of sales representatives and, upon request, by Irritec agronomists who transfer know-how by promoting and spreading the water-saving culture.

Targeted local business partners

For a successful project, GreenFields forges partnerships with distributors, plastic collectors and recycling companies aiming at improving total customer experiences by adopting customer-centric business models. The bond between Irritec and its partners represents the focal point of this project. In this light, GreenFields intensifies the collaboration making them an integral part of the project.

Type of local business partnership sought

Partners who decide to sign a commercial agreement with Irritec need to have specific features.

One of the main goals is to find authorized dealers of irrigation systems that promote widespread the project by discounting the vouchers of farmers.

The role of collectors is rather significant: they must be enacted on an agreement in which they share the commitment to follow the environmental laws and guidelines, as well as Irritec internal procedures that enables to collect properly and preventing damages into the farmers field. They must be enrolled in the professional register and be equipped with storage and washing areas. The dripline washing system is an important step for a correct waste recycling. Thanks to agreements with recycling companies, Irritec purchases high quality recycled raw material (coming from its own products) for manufacturing purposes. Irritec, by involving its best dealers and the single farmer, combines customer loyalty and environmental sustainability.

SwitchMed Programme
is funded by the European Union

