

Second EPR in Produce Forum Draws Large Crowd Ahead of California's Jan. 1 Registration Deadline

The nation's largest produce companies and industry associations met for provocative conversation on SB 54 fees, compliance and solutions to mitigate EPR costs

MONTEREY, CA, UNITED STATES, October 21, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The who's who of the produce industry gathered in Monterey on Friday, Oct. 9, for [Recirculated](#)'s second EPR in Produce Forum. More than 40 industry professionals, including representatives of some of the nation's largest produce companies, came to hold frank discussions on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and what California's SB 54 packaging law means for their packaging, their fees, and their compliance deadlines. Members of [Western Growers](#), the Grower-Shipper Association of Central California (GSA), and the California Fresh Fruit Association (CFFA) were in the room, along with Measure to Improve.

Patrick Owens, Chief Principal Consultant, Sustainable Supply Chain Transition at Recirculated, moderated the panel. He was joined by Abby Taylor-Silva, Managing Director of Regulatory Affairs at Kahn, Soares & Conway, LLP, and Todd Somers, Director of Sales at Emerald Packaging.

Attendees came with direct questions. They want clarity on how EPR will work and what it will cost, and they want practical ways to lower their EPR fees. Those two themes carried through the panel, the open Q&A and the reception that followed.



Entrance to the Second EPR in Produce event, hosted by Recirculated October 9th, 2026.

Key takeaways from the forum

Registration comes first. Starting Jan. 1, 2027, producers who are not registered may not sell, offer for sale or distribute covered materials in California.

Participation is below projections. According to panelists, about 3,400 producers have registered so far, compared with the roughly 5,700 expected when the regulation was finalized. That means program costs are spread across fewer producers.

Source reduction is the biggest gap. The first target is a 10% reduction in plastic from the 2023 baseline. Panelists said the plans filed so far show little reduction.

Document your intent to comply. Panelists advised producers to keep clear records, especially on field-pack questions, and to submit any categorical exclusion notification before the end of the year.

Local funding is available. The Circular Action Alliance (CAA) budget includes education and reuse funding that flows through counties and local jurisdictions.

Litigation and legislation continue. Panelists said no pending litigation has paused SB 54 and that the law is likely to be revisited. Their advice to growers: follow the law as written today and stay engaged with the state.

The Solutions Reception

After the panel, attendees joined a Solutions Reception, an informal hour to meet one-on-one with providers whose products and services help producers cut the packaging material that drives EPR fees. Four providers took part: Green Spider Reusable Pallet Wraps, PLA Solutions, WP Innova and forum sponsor [Marrad](#). Their offerings include reusable pallet wrap that replaces single-use stretch film, coreless pre-stretched film that uses less plastic, pallet lifecycle and reverse logistics services, and sustainable materials management for large distribution centers.

What's next

Recirculated will continue the conversation with a monthly Ask the Experts series featuring the forum's panelists, a working group launching in 2027 and a third forum.

Recirculated will also attend the Western Growers 100th Annual Meeting, Nov. 8 to 11, 2026, at the Grand Wailea in Maui. Attendees are welcome to connect with the team there.

About Recirculated

Recirculated is a vendor-neutral partner for circular supply chain transformation. Its mission is to help supply chains leave nothing behind by delivering reusable packaging solutions and compliance strategies that work in the real world.

Media contact: Contact@Recirculated.com

This release summarizes general discussion at the EPR in Produce Forum held Oct. 9, 2026, and is provided for informational purposes only. It is not legal advice and should not be relied upon as such. Statements attributed to panelists reflect their individual perspectives and do not constitute legal, regulatory, or compliance guidance. Statistics and projections cited during the forum have not been independently verified. SB 54 regulations, registration requirements, fee structures, and compliance deadlines are subject to change. Producers are encouraged to consult qualified legal counsel regarding their specific compliance obligations under California law.

Sabrina Bosch

Recirculated

Visit us on social media:

[LinkedIn](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/951035075>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.