

# Media Release

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## **TOGETHER TO ZERO: COLES OWN BRAND BREAD TO HAVE PLASTIC TAGS REMOVED** *New cardboard bread tags are recyclable and made from recycled materials*

As part of its ambition to be Australia's most sustainable supermarket, Coles Own Brand is trialling the replacement of plastic bread tags with new cardboard varieties that are made from 100% paper-based recycled content and are recyclable in kerbside recycle bins.

The trial, which commenced in June with a view to roll out in 2022, will apply to 254 varieties of Coles Own Brand bread including both instore baked bread and pre-packaged loaves. Once rolled out nationally, this will result in the diversion of approximately 223 million pieces of plastic or 79 tonnes from landfill each year.

Coles General Manager of Bakery, Deli and Seafood Andy Mossop said the initiative is aligned with Coles' ambition to Together to zero waste, one of the focus areas of its new sustainability strategy.

"At Coles, we are committed to reducing single-use plastic and we want to ensure wherever possible that we work with our suppliers to make our packaging recyclable and made with recycled content," Andy said.

"We're listening to our customers who have told us in a recent survey that reducing waste to landfill and plastic packaging was the number one concern when it comes to environmental issues in retail, with 69% of those surveyed saying it was of high importance to them<sup>1</sup>.

"We are proud that this move towards cardboard bread tags means all components of our Coles Own Brand soft-plastic bread packaging will become recyclable."

To ensure the cardboard tags are recycled in kerbside recycle bins, customers will need to place the tag securely inside other paper or cardboard products, such as a used envelope or paper bag. This will ensure the small tag doesn't get lost in the recycling process and end up in landfill

Coles is working together with its bakery partners, including Goodman Fielder on the plastic bread tag removal initiative.

Mick Anderson, Head of Sustainability for Goodman Fielder said he was proud to work with Coles to reduce plastic.

"Our new cardboard bread tags, which will be used on Coles Own Brand pre-packaged loaves, are durable and have undergone rigorous testing and development. We have used material which is high-quality, ensuring both strength and flexibility to keep bread bags tied, in line with customer expectations.

"We are proud to partner with Coles on reducing the impacts of both plastic and food waste as part of our shared sustainability vision."

## Coles is making progress on reducing unnecessary plastic and waste

In addition to trialling cardboard bread tags, Coles will also be closing the loop on the packaging of some of its most popular instore bakery items by committing to have them made with 100% recycled content in FY22, in addition to already being fully recyclable at kerbside.

The change will apply to 60 million pieces of packaging each year on instore bakery products like cookies, donuts, danishes and muffins. Instead, the packaging will be made from 100% Recycled PET which requires less energy to manufacture per kilogram than virgin PET, further contributing to a decrease in the environmental footprint.

As part of its pledge to make packaging more sustainable, during FY21 Coles has removed 36 million soaker pads from meat trays. This means 36 million soaker pads not being sent to landfill.

Coles Group no longer sells single-use plastic tableware products including cups, plates, bowls, straws and cutlery. Additionally, in March, Coles announced a joint feasibility study to determine the benefits of a local advanced recycling facility in Victoria. Advanced recycling offers new life to old soft plastic by turning it back into oil which can be used to produce new soft plastic food packaging.

Coles also reaffirmed its commitment to packaging sustainability by joining the Australia, New Zealand and Pacific Islands Plastics Pact (ANZPAC) as a founding member, committed to a shared vision of a circular economy for plastic by eliminating unnecessary and problematic plastic packaging, ensuring 100 per cent of plastic packaging is recyclable, reusable or compostable by 2025 and increasing the recycled content used in plastic packaging.

Coles is celebrating 10 years working with food rescue organisation SecondBite and soft plastics recycler REDcycle. Together Coles and SecondBite have helped provide the equivalent of more than 153 million meals to Australians in need and, with REDcycle, collected more than 1.7 billion pieces of soft plastics to be used in furniture, children's playground equipment, roads and even Coles carparks.

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**For further information, please contact**

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*[1] Coles Circle survey of 9,000 customers in June 2021*