

3 April 2018

COLES BEGINS REMOVING SINGLE-USE PLASTIC CARRY BAGS

First stores in NSW, Victoria, WA and Queensland to remove bags this month

Coles will no longer offer single-use plastic carry bags in Balgowlah (NSW), Williamstown (VIC), Inglewood (WA) and Hope Island (QLD) supermarkets from April 30, as part of our plan to remove single-use plastic carry bags from all our stores.

The phased roll-out will allow us to gather customer feedback, trial new bag frame designs at our checkouts and ensure we are ready for July 1, when single-use plastic carry bags will be removed from all stores in Victoria, NSW, WA and Queensland.

This will bring them into line with South Australia, Tasmania, the Northern Territory and ACT where Coles already complies with state and territory government bans on single-use plastic carry bags.

For customers who forget to bring their own bags, we already have a range of reusable Better Bags available for 15c each, which are made from 80 per cent recycled material and are 100 per cent recyclable through the RedCycle bins available in all Coles stores.

“Coles announced in July last year that we would be removing single-use plastic carry bags from all our stores within a 12-month period because it's the right thing to do for the environment,” Coles Managing Director John Durkan said.

“We know many customers enjoy the convenience of single-use bags, so we're trialling the phase out in a number of stores to ensure we make the transition as easy as possible.”

Coles is also introducing a new range of reusable bags, which have been designed by Australian school children and will help to raise funds for four community organisations – Clean Up Australia, Little Athletics Australia, SecondBite and Guide Dogs Australia – with a portion of sales being directed to the worthy causes.

The bags have been designed by 14 school children who were selected as winners of Coles' bag design competition.

The winning designs will be applied to four different types of durable, multi-use shopping bags including a shoulder bag, a chiller bag, a tote and a jute bag – with the first series going on sale from World Environment Day on June 5.

The removal of single-use bags is just one way Coles is improving environmental outcomes, with recent waste-reduction initiatives including:

- Since March, we have had RedCycle bins for the collection of soft plastic recycling in every one of our stores – the biggest retailer-led recycling initiative of its kind in Australia.
- Coles is also working with suppliers to remove expanded polystyrene from transport or in-bound packaging. Last year the business began phasing out EPS crates previously used by farmers to pack broccoli (with ice) for delivery to stores, and has reduced usage by 70 per cent to date.
- Coles has implemented a program in our fresh food supply chain to replace waxed cardboard boxes and polystyrene with reusable plastic crates. In FY 2017, this resulted in a reduction of 32,000 tonnes of cardboard and polystyrene for Coles supermarkets.
- From June, we will be rolling out metal shelving for our end of aisle displays, replacing cardboard bins and saving 3,500 tonnes of cardboard per year.

For further information, please contact:

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