

# Media Release

colesgroup

Wednesday 10 May 2023

## **COLES TO STOP SELLING SOFT-PLASTIC SHOPPING BAGS NATIONWIDE BY END OF JUNE** *Initiative will remove 230 million plastic bags from circulation in 1 year*

Coles has committed to phase out soft-plastic shopping bags in-store and online by the end of next month as the supermarket strengthens its commitment to reduce unnecessary plastic packaging at the checkout.

The remaining supply of soft-plastic bags will be run down in the coming weeks before Coles ceases the sale of all soft-plastic bags by the end of June, a move that will remove 230 million plastic bags from circulation in 1 year<sup>1</sup>.

Coles Group Chief Operations and Sustainability Officer Matt Swindells says the decision to end the sale of soft-plastic bags nationwide, both in-store and online, was an important step in meeting the supermarket's sustainability ambitions.

"Today's decision to no longer offer soft-plastic bags at the checkout is proof of our commitment to reduce the amount of plastic used in our stores and online. This positive change will remove 230 million plastic bags from circulation in 1 year," said Matt.

"The most sustainable option is to bring your own reusable bag to the supermarket, but for those who forget, we will continue to sell 100% recycled paper bags that can be recycled kerbside, as well as other reusable options," he said.

"The 100% recycled paper bags have been tested for use and we're confident they can hold up to 6 kilos of goods. That includes everything you need to make spaghetti Bolognese or a family roast," Matt added.

The announcement follows Coles' decision to remove single-use plastic carry bags at checkouts in 2018, which saved approximately 14,000 tonnes of plastic from being produced each year.

The 100% recycled paper bags are available to purchase in-store for 25-cents and can be recycled kerbside. Customers can also select from a range of reusable tote bags that retail for \$1.00 and \$2.50 for the large size, and the chiller bags for \$2.50 each. From next week, paper bags will be used for home delivery and Click&Collect orders where customers also have a bag-free option.

Reusable fresh produce bags made from 90% recycled material are also available across Coles supermarkets nationally. Plastic bags made with 50% recycled plastic remain available in the fresh produce department, excluding in the ACT where they have been replaced with compostable bags made from plant-based corn starch.

To further reduce the use of bags across the business, Coles is currently trialling a new initiative called Swap-a-box in selected states that allows customers to use a reusable box when making Click&Collect orders.

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**For media enquiries, please contact**

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<sup>1</sup> Based on unit sales over 52 week period until 30/04/2023