

Wednesday, 19 June 2019

1.7 BILLION SINGLE-USE PLASTIC BAGS DIVERTED FROM LANDFILL *Customers make sustainable choices and support Australian charities*

- 1.7 billion lightweight single-use plastic bags diverted from landfill
- Community Bags raise \$2.5 million for community organisations such as SecondBite, Guide Dogs Australia, Little Athletics, Clean Up Australia and Aspect schools
- 70% of Coles customers now bring their own reusable bags every time they shop
- Coles announces plan to become Australia's most sustainable supermarket

Coles has diverted 1.7 billion lightweight single-use plastic bags from landfill since removing them from checkouts a year ago, with customers choosing reusable Community Bags and raising \$2.5 million for charities.

New data reveals Coles customers have changed their shopping habits significantly in the past 12 months, with seven in 10 now remembering to bring their own reusable bags every time they shop and a further two in 10 bringing them on more occasions than not.

Chief Operating Officer Greg Davis said the removal of single-use plastic carry bags is one of the ways that Coles is working towards becoming Australia's most sustainable supermarket.

"When we announced in 2017 that we would remove lightweight single-use plastic bags from our stores, we knew we would have to support customers to help them form new shopping habits," he said.

"Our Community Bags are one way we have helped customers who forget to bring their bags from home.

"We partner with a range of community groups who benefit from the sale of our Community Bags and it is fantastic to see the positive outcomes achieved through the sale of these bags in just 12 months."

Coles' range of Community Bags have now raised more than \$2.5 million for community organisations such as SecondBite, Guide Dogs, Little Athletics, Clean Up Australia and Aspect schools.

With 10 per cent of sales proceeds from selected Community Bags directed to these causes, we've enabled:

- More than **two million meals** for Australians in need through SecondBite;
- Grants for new sports equipment for nearly **220 Little Athletics centres**;
- Support to raise **12 puppies** to become guide dogs; and
- Disaster relief packs for households in Townsville during the February 2019 floods, **100,000 pairs of kids' gloves** for schools and **6000 first aid kits** for community and youth groups through Clean Up Australia.

Guide Dogs Australia National Corporate Partnerships Manager Caroline Lee said the charity was extremely grateful to Coles for the ongoing support provided through the Community Bag program.

“Over the past 12 months Coles have contributed over \$580,000 to Guide Dogs Australia through the sales of the Community Bags,” she said.

“With these funds we are thrilled to announce that an additional 12 puppies can be trained to help provide independence, freedom and mobility to people in the community living with low vision or blindness.”

Coles Group this week announced a refreshed [corporate strategy](#) to help customers lead healthier, happier lives. This includes embedding sustainability processes across the business to improve outcomes in areas like energy use and waste that will set Coles up to be recognised as Australia's most sustainable supermarket.

MEDIA OPPORTUNITY

WHERE: New Coles Prahran supermarket
303 Chapel Street, Prahran

WHEN: Wednesday 19 June 2019

TIME: 10.30am

WHAT: Coles spokesperson Martine Alpins and Guide Dogs Australia National Corporate Partnerships Manager Caroline Lee (with Guide Dog Mac) will talk to media about the benefits of removing single-use plastic bags from Coles supermarkets.

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For further information, please contact

Coles Media Line (03) 9829 5250 or media.relations@coles.com.au