

Media Release

colesgroup

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COLES NOW OFFERING COMPOSTABLE BAGS IN FRUIT & VEG SECTION IN ALL SOUTH AUSTRALIAN STORES

Initiative will prevent 28 million plastic produce bags from being produced in one year

Aligned with its ambition to create a more sustainable future, today Coles announced it will be replacing single-use plastic bags with certified compostable bags in the fresh produce section of all South Australian stores.

The new compostable bags made from renewable resources including corn starch can be placed in the council's green bin or used in home composting and will remove 28 million plastic produce bags from circulation in one year.

The change comes into effect 12 months ahead of new state-wide regulation banning plastic produce bags, which forms part of South Australia's push to eliminate the use of environmentally harmful single-use plastics.

Coles Group Chief Operations and Sustainability Officer Matt Swindells said the decision to offer compostable bags in all 54 South Australian stores will help to reduce the amount of plastic going to landfill and help families to recycle more food waste.

"South Australia's gold standard waste and recycling collection system has allowed us to take this positive step to offer our customers a compostable solution in fresh produce in all stores across the state," said Matt.

"The advantage of these new compostable bags is that they can be disposed of in your green bin, or on your home compost heap, and will remove a total of 28 million plastic produce bags from circulation in just one year," he added.

"Our new compostable bag can also be reused in your kitchen food waste caddy, reducing the need to buy your own bags," Matt said.

Acting Premier of South Australia and Environment Minister, Susan Close said: "We commend Coles for providing South Australian customers with an alternative fresh produce bag that will help divert waste from landfill and reduce the risk of plastic litter.

"We've led the country when it comes to recycling and we're proud to support organisations like Coles to implement positive changes like a move to compostable bags in all its South Australian stores."

Coles' compostable bags are made from renewable resources including corn starch and carry the 'Seedling logo' which certifies that the compostability of the bags has been verified to the Australian standard.

In addition to the free compostable bags, customers also have the option to purchase a 3-pack of reusable mesh produce bags that have recently been reduced in price from \$3 to \$1.50 nationally as part of the new 'Great Value, Hands Down' campaign which launched in August.

Today's announcement follows Coles' decision to remove soft plastic bags in-store and online from July which will remove 230 million plastic bags from circulation in 1 year. 100% recycled paper bags that can be recycled kerbside are now available for purchase in-store for 25 cents, as well as a range of reusable tote and chiller bags.

To further reduce unnecessary and problematic plastic packaging, Coles has now expanded its Bring Your Own Container (BYOC) initiative to all stores in South Australia following a successful trial. This gives customers the option to have selected products from the Deli department packed into their own container, reducing the amount of plastic they dispose of at home.

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