

Monday, 22 November 2021

## **Coles wins two awards in Annual Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation awards** *Coles commended as leading large retailer*

Coles has taken out two awards in the Annual Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation (APCO) awards.

The Annual APCO awards recognise organisations from a range of industry sectors and their ongoing dedication to sustainable packaging. The awards also highlight their continued efforts toward achieving the 2025 National Packaging Targets.

Coles was awarded the Large Retailer award in the Industry Sector category, based on its scores in the most recent round of APCO's Annual Reporting Process, performance against the Packaging Sustainability Framework criteria and its R3 Packaging Strategy ('Redesign, Recycle and Reimagine'), which is aligned with the National 2025 Targets.

Coles was also commended for its REDcycle soft plastics recycling program, support of container deposit schemes, and for introducing the Simply Cups recycling program at its Store Support Centres, which helps team members recycle coffee cups.

Coles also took home the Packaging Sustainability Education (Industry) Our Packaging Future award for the Coles Packaging Data Project. This project included an education and development webinar series to help Coles Own Brand suppliers improve their understanding of packaging sustainability.

The award also commended Coles' work with suppliers to gather detailed packaging information to help assess their recyclability for Coles Own Brand products, as well as the creation of the Preferred Materials Guide for suppliers.

Coles Chief Sustainability, Property and Export Officer Thinus Keevé said he was delighted Coles' commitment to sustainability had been recognised as we continue to work towards our ambition to become Australia's most sustainable supermarket.

"Coles' Together to Zero and Better Together ambitions, as outlined in our Sustainability Strategy, underpin the steps we are taking to drive generational sustainability," he said.

"We are on our sustainable packaging journey as we work towards our *Together to zero waste* ambition, with 87% Coles Own Brand and Coles Own Liquor Brand primary packaging now recyclable.

"Coles' target is that by 2025 or earlier, all Coles Own Brand and Coles Own Liquor Brand packaging in Australia will be 100% recyclable, reusable or compostable, include an average of 50% recycled content, and carry the Australasian Recycling Label (ARL), while phasing out problematic unnecessary single-use plastic.

We are also celebrating the 10-year anniversary of our partnership with soft plastics recycling organisation REDcycle this year.

“We recognise the role we have to play but know that we cannot do this alone, and that we need to work together with our many stakeholders to drive positive change. We know that we are Better Together when we work together with our team members, farmers, suppliers, customers and the communities we serve.

“While sustainability issues are dynamic and evolving, and there is still much to do, we are committed to maintaining momentum on our sustainability journey.”

Coles General Manager Own Brand, Quality and Responsible Sourcing Brad Cook said he was delighted Coles was once again recognised by APCO as a leading large retailer for our work on sustainable packaging initiatives.

“We are continuing to work collaboratively with our suppliers and team members to improve the recyclability of our Coles Own Brand product packaging, and to phase-out problematic and unnecessary single-use plastic packaging,” he said.

“We will continue to help customers understand how to dispose of their packaging by incorporating the ARL, which is now on over 3,500 products.

In addition to supporting the 2025 National Packaging Targets, this year we were pleased to be a founding member of the ANZPAC Plastics Pact (ANZPAC) which was launched in May 2021 and the Australian Dairy Sustainable Packaging Roadmap launched in October 2021.”

Last week, Coles was recognised as part of Keep Victoria Beautiful Sustainable Communities – Tidy Towns awards. In the Waste Awards category, the Horsham Tidy Towns Committee was highly commended for the Polyrok initiative which saw soft plastics collected by REDcycle recycled into building materials used to construct the carpark at Coles Horsham.

The Coles Horsham carpark was the first commercial construction project in Australia to make use of Polyrok – a sustainable alternative to aggregate minerals used in concrete, such as stone.

The latest awards come as the World Benchmarking Alliance recently ranked Coles number two out of 62 food retailers globally in the 2021 Food and Agriculture Benchmark.

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**For further information, please contact**

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