

# Media Release

colesgroup

Tuesday, 23 February 2021

## Coles shelves single-use plastic tableware

Coles Group has today committed to reducing plastic waste by no longer selling single-use plastic tableware products including cups, plates, bowls, straws and cutlery from 1 July 2021\*.

The move will divert 1.5 million kilograms worth of single-use plastic from landfill each year.

As an alternative to single-use plastic, customers will instead be offered a range of FSC certified<sup>1</sup> tableware and reusable options.

The commitment applies to plastic single-use tableware products sold at Coles Supermarkets, Coles Express outlets, and Coles Liquor stores – more than 2,500 sites.

The change is overwhelmingly supported among customers, with a recent Coles survey showing 65 per cent of customers are concerned about the environmental impacts of single use plastic tableware and prefer sustainable alternatives.

Coles CEO Steven Cain said Coles is committed to environmental leadership.

“Ensuring the sustainability of our business is essential to our future success and removing all single-use plastic tableware from our stores is central to our ambition to be Australia’s most sustainable supermarket,” Mr Cain said.

“This important initiative will not only divert more than 1.5 million kilograms of plastic from landfill each year, it will also help our customers who are telling us they want to make more sustainable choices.

“As a company, we already divert 79 per cent<sup>2</sup> of our waste from landfill and have recycled more than 1 billion pieces of flexible plastic with the support of REDcycle and our customers, since 2011.”

Clean Up Australia Chairman Pip Kiernan said single-use plastic tableware is a big problem for the environment.

“During 2020, Clean Up Australia volunteers told us that 18.5 per cent of the plastic items removed through their efforts were single-use cups, plates, bowls, straws, stirrers and cutlery,” she said.

“Too many of these items end up in our parks, waterways, beaches and roadsides and if left there damage our precious environment for hundreds of years, outliving all of us.”

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<sup>1</sup> FSC is a global forest certification system to provide a guarantee that forest products come from responsibly managed sources.

<sup>2</sup> As at 30 June 2020

“We applaud Coles for listening to their customers and taking the lead in replacing these single use plastic items.”

Assistant Minister for Waste Reduction and Environmental Management Trevor Evans MP said: “The Morrison Government is on a mission to reduce waste going to landfill in Australia, and we applaud Coles’ initiative to stop selling single-use plastic tableware products.

“Every company that takes action to reduce problematic or unnecessary plastics, takes us one step closer towards a more sustainable Australia and is a win for our environment”.

\*The phase-out across Coles Group outlets will be complete by 1 July 2021, with stores in South Australia phasing out the [legislated](#) single-use plastic tableware by 1 March 2021, in line with South Australian law.

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