

The Wrap Up

PROMOTING THE SOFT PLASTICS CIRCULAR ECONOMY
RECYCLING.KIWI.NZ

SOFT PLASTIC RECYCLING TURNS 8

The first soft plastic recycling bins were installed at 70 stores in Auckland in November 2015, with a formal launch by then Minister for the Environment, Nick Smith, at New World Mt Roskill. There was huge interest with the launch going out live on TV1 and TV3 breakfast shows and TV3 host Paul Henry running a live poll which found 78% of New Zealanders would use the service.

Eight years on, and now mayor of Nelson, Nick Smith said at the recent Nelson launch of the Scheme in the region that soft plastic recycling is “a practical Kiwi solution to a difficult environmental problem”. And that’s what The Packaging Forum is all about – implementing practical end of life solutions for necessary packaging.

In 2015 the objectives for the “soft plastics project” which received \$700,000 from the Government’s Waste Minimisation Fund were to:

1. Introduce 250+ drop off recycling bins for soft plastics.
2. Enable access to soft plastics recycling within a 20km drive for over 70% of households.

3. Measure tonnes of soft plastics collected through the project for processing.
4. Utilise recovered materials to manufacture new plastic products.
5. Increase industry funding, to ensure that project becomes self-funding after three years.
6. Promote this new form of “drop off” recycling to New Zealanders .

We achieved these objectives and then reset the Scheme when the tailwind from the China Sword policy on plastic packaging hit us.

The Scheme is also receiving positive recognition internationally. Rob Langford, CEO, The Packaging Forum, presented at the Plastics & Circular Economy Conference in Melbourne where the Scheme was called out as a shining light of an “integrated solution”.

Ngā mihi nui
Lyn

2018

350 stores
74% access to recycling
511 tonnes collected annually
 Shipped to Australia
 to be made into plastic
 timber benches etc
56 members
 scheme received
accreditation
55% recognition by
 New Zealanders

2023

290 stores
84% access to recycling
660 tonnes collected annually
 Recycled in New Zealand
 Approximately 67,000
 Future Posts
194 members
56% recognition by
 New Zealanders



WE ARE BACK IN CENTRAL OTAGO

Soft plastic returns to Dunedin

ODT reporter Laine Priestley reports that: "The much-missed soft plastic recycling scheme has returned to Dunedin and Mosgiel. Soft recycling bins were put back into stores around the city earlier this month and have proved to be as popular as ever. New World Centre City operations manager Braeden Trompeter told Laine that the bin at that New World location would probably be emptied four to five times a week, which was "quite a lot of soft plastic". "It's a really cool initiative."

Queenstown Lakes District Council

Promotes the return of soft plastic recycling on its website.

Central Otago District Council

Waste minimisation officer Abi Hawkins is encouraged by the Scheme's return.

"This type of plastic packaging is quite hard to avoid on some products and we know residents struggle with this, so it's great to see the packaging producers within The Packaging

Forum taking responsibility to collect the packaging they produce. "People want to do the right thing and reduce waste going to the landfill, and it has been a bit frustrating to see more and more packaging marked with a "Return to Store" recycling logo and not have anywhere to drop it off to locally."

According to Lyn Mayes, Soft Plastic Recycling Scheme manager, historically, Queenstown, Central Otago and Wānaka residents have championed soft plastic recycling, and prior to collections stopping in 2018, they were dropping off around 1,000kg of soft plastics every month for recycling.

"There is a huge difference between the scheme back in 2018 and how we operate now. Back then we collected, baled, and exported soft plastic overseas. Now all the soft plastic is recycled in New Zealand and it's 100% funded by our scheme members, including paying our processing partners to take the soft plastics which we collect, which creates more demand for these materials."

NAU MAI TO
OUR NEWEST
MEMBERS



KIWI PROPERTY GROUP
LIVING GREEN NZ
SANFORD
GENIUS PET FOOD

Hauraki District Council

The Council's Let's Talk news tells residents where they can drop off their soft plastics (and liquid paperboard) at their council service centres and transfer stations.

[Read more](#)



FINDING A SOLUTION FOR AMBERLEY, HURUNUI DISTRICT

Amberley residents have their soft plastic recycling service restored after a hiatus of four years. The Countdown Amberley team will bale the soft plastic and the Scheme has organised for bales to be collected by Combined Freightlines (CFL) and transported to Goodman Fielder in Christchurch where they will be consolidated with collections from around Canterbury for onward shipment to Future Post in Blenheim.

PLASTIC PACKAGING PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP

CO-DESIGN OF PLASTIC PACKAGING PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP SCHEME (PPPS)

Two reports have been released summarising known data on New Zealand's plastic packaging flows and Kantar research into consumer attitudes to plastic packaging which you will find at ppps.org.nz/research.

SOFT PLASTIC AUDIT 2023

Waste Not Consulting's 2023 audit report is [here](#)

The most recycled categories by weight are:

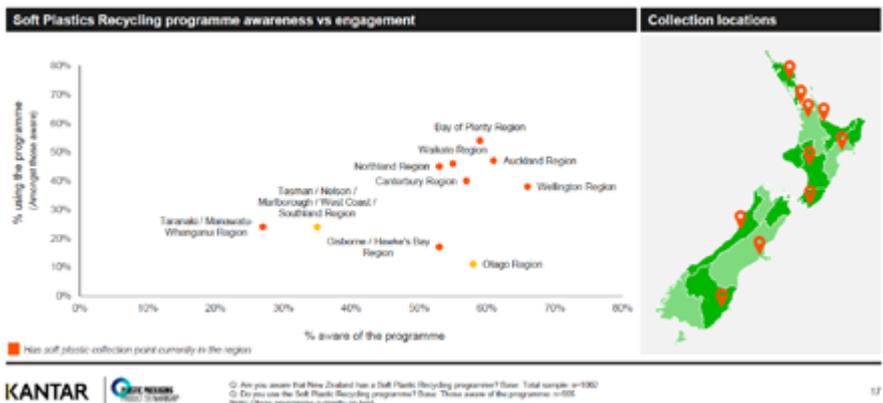
PANTRY ITEMS

COURIER BAGS

FRESH PRODUCE/BAKERY & BREAD BAGS

CHIPS, MUESLI BARS & NUTS

This year's audit also checked nearly 5,000 soft plastic items for their use of labels. 17.2% of these items use the ARL label and 8.6% use the NZ Soft Plastic Recycling logo. Paper hygiene packaging, bread, pet food, and coffee and tea were found to be applying the ARL or SPRS logo the most.



Usage of the scheme is correlated with awareness - outliers include Otago (where programme was on hold), while the East Coast has awareness and accessibility to the programme but low usage.

Consumer Research

The Kantar research finds that the key barrier to recycling plastics is that people are confused by the different types of plastic packaging and what to do about food residue, and that plastics are believed to have the greatest negative impact on the environment. The research supports the Horizon Research finding that 55% people are aware of soft plastic recycling with higher awareness (61% in Auckland and 66% in Wellington) in areas where the Scheme is well established.

Plastic packaging flows

Valpak's research into plastic data flows finds that:

Consumption

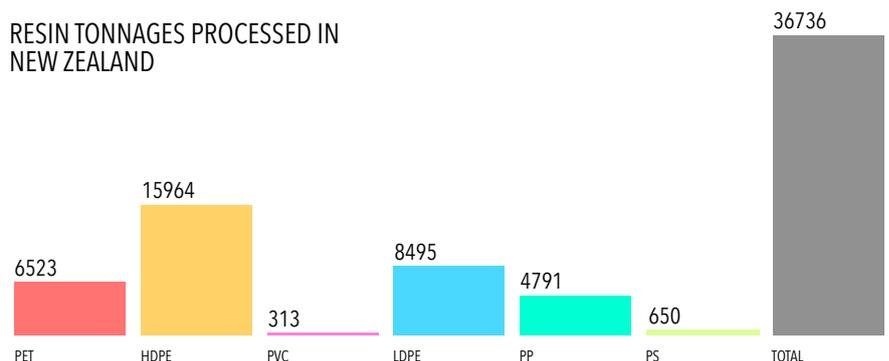
- 260,000 tonnes of plastic packaging is consumed in New Zealand annually – and only 17% is collected for recycling across all resin types.
- consumer goods represent just over 50% of total plastic packaging (140,000 tonnes).
- and 26% of the plastic packaging used for consumer goods is soft plastics i.e., LDPE/PE and multi layer polymers.

Processing capacity

- 37,000 tonnes of processing capacity for plastic packaging across all resin types.
- around 23% of this is for LDPE or soft plastic much of which is pre-consumer

More here ppps.org.nz

RESIN TONNAGES PROCESSED IN NEW ZEALAND



FROM OUR PROCESSING PARTNERS

LEADING THE WAY TO A CIRCULAR ECONOMY FOR PLASTIC

Future Post



GET READY FOR SUMMER WITH FUTURE POST GARDEN BOX KITSETS

The kids at St Francis School in Thames have been busy planting their new Future Post garden box kitsets with a range of seedlings. Plant yours now too! Available both North & South Island. Get in touch futurepost.co.nz

FROM THE SEA TO THE LAND

Future Post announced a new recycling partnership with the Marine Farming Association, providing a local, sustainable pathway for used mussel floats.

After 20 to 40 years at sea, these floats are now being recycled into another long-term, highly durable post product that can be used back in marine use, local vineyards and waterway fencing where the same no rot, CCA free benefits really come to the fore.

[More here](#)



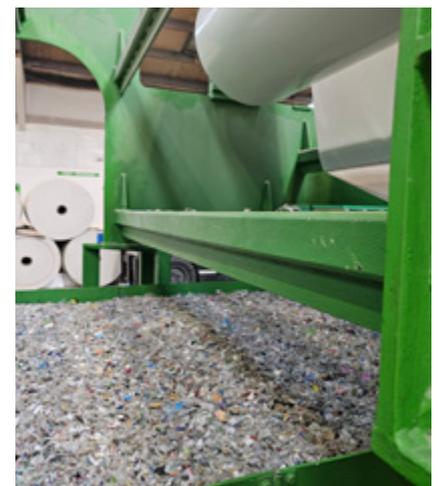
Future Posts looking sharp at a new subdivision on the Kapiti Coast

TUX AND PURINA PROMOTING SOFT PLASTIC RECYCLING

Tux is promoting our Soft Plastic Recycling Scheme, as well as being a RAd partner to Future Post, at the New Zealand Agriculture Show in Christchurch, later this month.

PURINA is committed to designing its packaging for recycling. 100% of TUX bags can be recycled in New Zealand through return to store. It's good to know the brand that has fuelled New Zealand working dogs for generations could end up back on the farm as a sturdy farm fence.

The TUX factory in Marton has also been partnering directly with Future Post since 2020, to recycle soft plastics packaging and work towards achieving the factory's zero waste to landfill target.



saveBOARD

Buy recycled – and create demand for waste soft plastic.

Check out the range of internal and external linings and ceiling products and where you can buy these from.

[Find out more](#)



Are you one of our 12k+ Facebook followers?

If not, head on over and like the Soft Plastics Recycling Facebook page and keep up to date with everything happening in the soft plastic space as well as promoting your support!

FACEBOOK COMMENTS (WE DO READ THEM!)

Are you ever coming back to Palmerston North?

We need to find a collection partner in Palmerston North and we are also looking for a solution for Whanganui working with Whanganui Council.

So many people still think all our soft plastics are sent overseas. Can you confirm this product is made in NZ please. I really want to prove these people wrong.

This particular product is 100% made in NZ by Future Post. All the soft plastic we collect through our scheme is processed and recycled here in NZ by Future Post or into building supplies by a company called saveBoard.

"Love NZ Soft Plastics Recycling" you are brilliant. Have you thought of spreading your ideas to overseas?

We are continually promoting what we do and have presented this year in the UK, Europe, Australia and USA.

facebook.com/softplasticrecycling

RECYCLING SOLUTIONS FROM AROUND THE WORLD



PRE ONE RECYCLING TECHNOLOGY

Tim Walsh CEO of Pre One presented the HydroDyn advanced mechanical recycling technology to the Steering Committee. HydroDyn purifies highly contaminated plastic from post-consumer and agricultural sectors by separating layers and removing contaminants to clean film at 90m² a second. Pre One already operates this technology in Europe and will be opening the first "purification" hub in Adelaide Australia which will take 12,000 tonnes of post-consumer plastic. The process will purify plastic and generate a resin that is close to virgin quality. This exciting technology could be a game changer for New Zealand.

[Read more](#)

CONSISTENT KERBSIDE COLLECTIONS

The UK government has confirmed the materials which will be collected at kerbside – and these are a much

broader range than those which will be collected in New Zealand. The UK government intends to include plastic film packaging and plastic bags made of mono-PE, mono-PP and mixed polyolefins PE and PP in the plastic recyclable waste stream, including those metallised through vacuum or vapour deposition.

According to the [Circular Economy for Flexible Packaging \(CEFLEX\)](#) initiative, 70% to 80% of consumer flexible packaging placed on the market in Europe is mono-material PE and PP. Mono-material plastic packaging is easier to recycle and more of the material can be recycled effectively, compared to multi-layer flexible packaging. As PE and PP are polyolefins, they are compatible so can be recycled together. While government encourages mono-polyolefin design to improve material quality and film-to-film recycling, mixed polyolefin packaging is within scope for collection.

As reported in previous newsletters, the Flexcollect project is trialling kerbside collection systems for soft plastic to support the introduction of these materials nationwide in 2027. The intent is that these will be funded through an EPR programme.

[Read more](#)

Soft plastic is collected in blue bags at kerbside along with rigid plastic and metal cans in this Somerset trial. The blue bags are picked out at the MRF and baled.

