

The Wrap Up

PROMOTING THE SOFT PLASTICS CIRCULAR ECONOMY recycling.kiwi.nz

Building our knowledge of EPR

Over the past two years, I have been privileged to support the development of a proposed mandatory Plastic Packaging Product Stewardship (PPPS) Scheme for New Zealand. The Packaging Forum and the NZ Food & Grocery Council in partnership led the co-design process and have now submitted the Scheme Design Report to the Ministry for the Environment (MfE), completing the project in accordance with the Deed of Funding signed with the Ministry back in 2022.

As part of this work, I have met with producer responsibility organisations around the world either virtually or in person, where my personal family trips to Europe have permitted. This experience, including visiting recyclers and reprocessors that are innovating change in collection, sortation and reprocessing systems also supports the development of our voluntary soft plastic stewardship, and helps prepare us for a transition into a priority product scheme.

There is much going on in the EPR space. MfE is currently consulting on proposed regulations to deal with farm plastics. The “Green Farms” mandatory product stewardship scheme proposal includes within its scope plastic bags which are also included within the current Soft Plastic Recycling Scheme, and within the proposed PPPS Scheme.

Specifically:

- Small plastic bags (40kgs or less when full) containing products such as seed, feed, fertiliser, soil and crop inputs, farm and animal supplements. This would include products in bags which are also sold to households and consumers not just for use on farms such as dog food bags, garden compost or soil.

The scope for the scheme also includes:

- Agrichemicals sold in containers and drums of 1,000 litres or less (including household pest and weed control products). This would include household sprays sold via supermarkets or DIY and garden centres.

- It seeks feedback on other plastic materials to be included within the scope of the regulations including shrink/pallet wrap, potted plant pots and other agricultural plastic products.

It is our view that products which are primarily sold to households should not be included within the scope of a farm plastics scheme which is being set up to handle agricultural waste. We have started our own consultation with members to inform our submission.

Across the ditch, the newly formed Soft Plastic Stewardship Australia has applied to the ACCC for authorisation of the proposed soft plastics recycling scheme. If you haven't already signed up to the scheme and are selling into the Australian market, membership will support the development of on shore reprocessing facilities.

Ngā mihi nui
Lyn Mayes, KSM

As many of you will know, there was a devastating fire at the Abilities site in Auckland on 24 April. Abilities collects and bales some of our soft plastic from our Auckland and Hamilton collection points, and we have worked with Peter and his team for more than 10 years. We'd like to thank our members for all their offers of help and ongoing support during this time.

SINGLE USE PLASTIC PHASE OUTS

The Ministry for the Environment (MfE) is preparing guidance for the Minister on the phase out of PVC and rigid PS packaging (otherwise known as Tranche 3 of the single use plastic phase out). This ban was due to come into effect mid-2025, but this deadline was removed by the Government at the end of last year to allow for further work to be conducted.

[More here](#)

If your company still manufactures food and beverage products in PVC or rigid Polystyrene in New Zealand and has a timeframe for their removal, we would like to collate this information to help inform the Ministry's advice on Tranche 3 and, importantly, any impact on our members.

Our thresholds for soft plastics do not permit PVC/PVDC as a secondary material however we know that members are working hard to eliminate these materials, where they exist. Again, if you can provide us with time frames for their removal, and/ or advise where this may be difficult to achieve for your company.

We will only provide the information to MfE relating to packaging formats and not refer to individual brands. If you wish to discuss directly with the Ministry team, please let us know.

We would also draw your attention to the phase out of integrated straws which will be banned from 1 January 2026.

As part of the phase out of certain hard to recycle and single use plastics, plastic straws were banned in 2023. A transition period applied for straws that formed part of a product (commonly attached to single use drink cartons) to 1 January 2026. This is a reminder for members that this deadline is fast approaching, and straws of this type will no longer be legal to sell.

Please note the applicable regulations are Waste Minimisation (Plastic and Related Products) Regulations 2022, clause 3, schedule 1. [Link here](#): Waste Minimisation (Plastic and Related Products) Regulations 2022 (SL 2022/69) (as at 01 July 2023) – New Zealand Legislation



CONGRATULATIONS TO FUTURE POST SUPREME WINNER OF THE 2025 PORT MARLBOROUGH ENVIRONMENT AWARDS

Congratulations to Future Post which won the Wine Industry Category Award at the recent 2025 Port Marlborough – Marlborough Environment Awards, and was also named the Supreme Award Winner for the organisation's "groundbreaking work in recycling plastic waste into durable agricultural and infrastructure products".

It's been an exciting time for Future Post which has partnered with Mitre 10 to introduce its product range initially into the Nelson Mitre 10, with a national roll out planned.

Nelson Mayor Nick Smith joined Alistair Kirk, Future Post Sales and Marketing Manager, Mitre 10 MEGA Nelson CEO Brandon Beveridge, Lyn Mayes and Debra Goulding from the Soft Plastic Recycling Scheme, and Mitre 10 MEGA Nelson Trade Manager Mike de Veer to celebrate this important step in making it easier for households to "buy recycled."

NAU MAI TO
OUR NEWEST
MEMBERS



Ecostore
Leaft Foods
Maxfoods

Not a member?
Come and join us!

Are you one of our 12k+ Facebook followers?

If not, head on over and like the Love NZ 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.com/
softplasticrecycling](https://facebook.com/softplasticrecycling)

Kerbside recycling trial in Nelson

Lyn Mayes, Scheme Manager and Debra Goulding, Scheme Chair presented the results from the six-month kerbside recycling trial to the Nelson Public Forum on the 3 April. You can watch the presentation and discussion [here](#).

7,841 “orange bags” were collected weighing a total of 4,327 kgs which is equivalent to around 660,000 bags or wrappers being recycled by the 1,000 participating households.

What was even more impressive is that the drop off at stores also increased. In six months, we also collected 17.56 tonnes from store drop off locations as well as the 4.3 tonnes collected from kerbside. This represents a 70% increase over the April-September 2024 period prior to the trial.

In March we asked the 1,000 household participants for their feedback on the trial with a 72% response rate. Some key findings include:

50% households had not recycled soft plastics before the trial

92% say it has reduced the waste in their rubbish bin

22% say they put a bag out every collection and 50% said most collection rounds indicating we could reduce the frequency of collections

We wanted to test people’s willingness to pay for replacement orange bags and were surprised that **69% say they would be willing to pay with 74% of those saying they would pay between \$5 and \$10 for a pack of 20 bags**

Next Steps

The MfE has indicated that councils and schemes will be able to apply for permission to conduct clearly defined trials at kerbside.

We proposed to Nelson Council that the trial should continue for a further six months with a transition to including the “orange bags” in the Council’s kerbside recycling system. We are discussing the feasibility of this with Council and pending a further decision have extended the current trial to mid-May.



2025 Foodstuffs Expo 5-6 March

MANCO COMPACTOR COLLECTION BIN

Visitors to the Packaging Forum’s stand at the Foodstuffs Expo got the opportunity to see Manco’s brilliantly engineered “soft plastic compactor” bins. Logan Black, Manco Project Manager joined the Packaging Forum team to promote the new look bin.

The compaction system increases the amount of soft plastic that can go into a 240-litre bin from the current average of 5.4kg to take over 30kgs of soft plastic. This will be a game changer for stores reducing the amount of time it takes to move bags around the store, and the storage area required. We are now working with Manco on the logistics for trialling the bins at a selection of high-volume stores in Auckland.



NEW & INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES

PLASTOIL

An exciting update from the team at Plastoil:

Australia

Plastoil has partnered with Preone in South Australia, who are the distributors of Hydodyn plastic cleaning technology. Together, the collaboration includes three five-tonne-per-day Plastoil plants, enabling scalable plastic-to-oil recycling in the region.

Additionally, Plastoil Projects Pty Ltd has purchased 42 acres in Ararat, Victoria, for the development of a 25-tonne-per-day plant. This flagship facility is expected to be operational within 12 months.

New Zealand

Bank funding has been secured for a 5-tonne-per-day Plastoil plant at a site in Pokeno, which is already certified for ISCC+ feedstock and scalable up to 20 tonnes per day. At full capacity, the plant will produce approximately 20,000 litres of oil per day. There is now a strategic investment opportunity available for brands seeking to support genuine circular solutions in New Zealand.

Circular Supply Chain

The Pryoil produced from both Australian and New Zealand plants will be shipped to ExxonMobil in Singapore for the remanufacture of new plastics, completing a truly circular recycling loop.

All Plastoil technology is manufactured by Enespa GmbH in Germany

plastoil.com

VIVA ENERGY AND CLEANAWAY PROGRESS PLASTIC RECYCLING PLANS

Plans for Australia's first large-scale advanced soft plastics recycling facility are a step closer after Cleanaway and Viva Energy announced the successful completion of their pre-feasibility study for the project. The collaboration would see the conversion of soft plastics into food-grade recycled plastics using Cleanaway's collection infrastructure and Viva Energy's refining and polymerisation capabilities. The partners will be undertaking a 12-month feasibility and engineering study for both the sorting of the plastic and its transformation into pyrolysis oil. This will involve engaging with technology providers and engineering support to develop an integrated concept design and provide greater clarity around the capital and delivery costs. The Front-End Engineering and Design (FEED) phase is expected to start in 2026 once details of the Australian Government's packaging reform, the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), have been finalised.

MECHANICAL RECYCLING OF FLEXIBLE FILMS

Nextek and Coveris announced a partnership to transform the mechanical recycling of flexible films with a breakthrough innovation – the COtooCLEAN process. Together, they aim to convert post-consumer polyolefin (PE & PP) packaging waste into high-quality food-grade recycled resins and films, and a demonstration plant is now being developed in the UK.

[More here](#)

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT EPR

The Packaging Forum is a member of the Extended Producer Responsibility Alliance (EXPRA) and has worked closely with CEO Joachim Quoden and EXPRA members in the development of the PPPS Scheme.

EXPRA has produced a comprehensive study highlighting the core principles and best practices of EPR. The study offers a detailed exploration of the key elements that have contributed to successful EPR implementation, including governance models, stakeholder involvement, fee determination, transparency, and the crucial role of government support. It also emphasises the need to expand waste collection beyond households and engage with the informal sector to achieve broader sustainability goals.

Key takeaways include:

Stakeholder involvement in policy development and the critical role of Producer Responsibility Organisations (PROs).

Best practices in governance, ensuring transparency, and achieving compliance.

How the informal sector can be better integrated into the EPR system.

Ambitious policy targets that drive innovation and increase system efficiency.

30 Years of EPR - How to make the best out of it

AROUND THE WORLD GLOBAL PACKAGING POLICIES

Soft Plastic Stewardship Australia (SPSA)

Australia is taking a crucial step toward solving its soft plastic crisis. As of 4 April 2025, the application by Soft Plastics Stewardship Australia (SPSA) for interim authorisation from the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) is officially live and open for public consultation.

This interim authorisation is a vital step forward. It would enable SPSA to legally operate as an industry-led soft plastics stewardship scheme, coordinating action across the supply chain and keeping soft plastic out of Australia's landfills.



WRAP calling for a consultation for a potential ban on packaging for 21 products in the fresh produce aisles

The 21 items in the proposal are: apples, aubergines, avocados, bananas, broccoli, cabbages, carrots, garlic, ginger, lemons, limes, mangos, onions, oranges, parsnips, pears, peppers, potatoes, squash, swede and salad tomatoes. The NGO argues that packaging restricts shoppers from purchasing only the amount they need, contributing to 2.5 million tonnes of fresh fruit and vegetable waste annually in the UK, costing £4bn

WRAP have also recommended eight problem plastics for elimination in the UK by end of 2025 including

- Non-NIR detectable plastics e.g. non detectable black plastic
- Silicone components
- Flexible non-compatible multi-material plastic packaging should be moved to mono-material polyolefins for: crisp packets, pet food, chocolate, sweets, snack bars, cakes and biscuit wrappers, pouches for cereals, nuts and seeds, liquid dishwasher and laundry tabs, grated cheese, dry pasta, rice and grain
- Natural and clear PET trays with PE liners

[Read more](#)

Crisis in EU plastic recycling

Wave of recycling plant closures accelerates across Europe

The European Union's plastic recycling industry is at a breaking point. A sharp decline in domestic production, increased imports, and rising economic pressures are forcing company closures.

"Now more than ever, decisive action is essential," said Ton Emans, President at Plastics Recyclers Europe. "We urge EU policymakers to take a fast and strong political stance, introducing effective import controls and enforcing existing legislation, including the restriction of importing materials which do not meet equivalent EU sustainability and safety standards. These measures are crucial for the plastic recycling industry's survival, which has already invested five billion euros between 2020 and 2023 just to meet mandatory targets."

Plastic waste exports from the EU surged by a staggering 36% in 2024 compared to 2022, highlighting an alarming shift away from in-region recycling efforts. These trends have resulted in the slowest plastic recycling capacity growth recorded in years, paired with the increasing closure of recycling facilities. The total capacity of facilities that shut down in 2024 doubled compared to 2023, and the situation is intensifying in 2025, impacting both small and large companies alike.

[Read more](#)

FROM OUR PROCESSING PARTNERS

LEADING THE WAY TO A CIRCULAR ECONOMY FOR PLASTIC

saveBOARD

The Packaging Forum incorporated a specially created panel from saveBOARD to form our stand at Foodstuffs Food Expo.

Lyn also visited saveBOARD to check out the huge range of products being manufactured from our waste. Did you know their board can be made into kitchen cabinets?



saveBOARD transformed Meridian's office space

Ever wonder what happens to all those old corporate reports? saveBOARD turned Meridian Energy's storage burden into a stunning reception feature! Working with Unispace and Meridian Energy, saveBOARD transformed hundreds of stored annual reports into high-performance composite panels by combining them with food and beverage cartons and soft plastic material. The result? A breathtaking entrance feature that tells a powerful sustainability story.



FUTURE POST

From schools to caravan parks to farms to rifle ranges, Future Post is putting our waste plastic to good use. Where can you install a Future Post rail, bollard, post or garden bed?



TOP St Francis School, Thames.
CENTRE NZ Motor Caravan Park,
Koromiko. BOTTOM Christchurch
Pistol Club