

The Wrap Up

PROMOTING THE SOFT PLASTICS CIRCULAR ECONOMY recycling.kiwi.nz

10 years!

On 1 September, we welcomed Craig Miller as the new CEO of The Packaging Forum.

In a prior role at Goodman Fielder, Craig was involved in the early days of the Soft Plastic Recycling Scheme. He joins The Packaging Forum at a pivotal time as we celebrate 10 years of soft plastic recycling in New Zealand. Craig brings his experience in participating in EPR systems in Asia which will be invaluable to the continued development of our scheme.

In other appointments, we are delighted to welcome Kasun Ranga as Scheme Manager for the Glass Packaging Forum, and Greer Larsen-Compton as Scheme Manager for both the Caps and Lids, and Food and Beverage Carton Recycling Schemes.

Collaborating for success

In July, I participated in the Environmental Packaging Live conference at the Oval in London, and the [AIP NZ Packaging Forum](#) which took place this month at the Foodtech Packtech expo at the Auckland Showgrounds. Although these events were hosted in venues located on opposite sides of the globe, they shared a common focus: Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR).



Speakers in the United Kingdom discussed the significant challenges and stresses associated with packaging reform, as the implementation of EPR introduces producer fees in addition to the existing Packaging Recovery Note (PRN) system and the plastic tax.

In New Zealand, discussions focused on the need for EPR reform, aligning with Australia, and meeting global standards.

There was overall consensus that the circular economy for flexible packaging / soft plastics is challenging, and we must collaborate to get to where we need to be. Key concerns include recycled content, feedstock quality, end markets, and increasing circularity. Labelling is critical to make decision making as simple as possible for consumers.

Clear and consistent labelling through systems like the [OPRL](#) in the UK, or the [ARL](#) in Australia

and New Zealand is essential to help consumers make informed decisions.

To drive alignment with Australia, we are working with Soft Plastics Stewardship Australia (SPSA) on a Heads of Agreement for both schemes. We continue our partnership with the Flexcollect alliance in the UK, which has recently published its approach for kerbside flexible plastic collection. This document outlines a comprehensive framework for integrating flexible plastics into existing household kerbside collections, in anticipation of the UK's mandated rollout of flexible plastic collections commencing in 2027.

Ngā mihi nui

Lyn Mayes, KSM

NEW PACKAGING FORUM TEAM MEMBERS



CRAIG MILLER
CEO The Packaging Forum

Craig takes over the leadership of The Packaging Forum from his previous role as senior R&D manager at Friesland Campina for the Asia Region based in Singapore. Craig brings extensive experience across the food and beverage, FMCG, dairy, health and wellness, and packaging sectors. Craig's strong background in developing and leading sustainability strategies will help expand our voluntary product stewardship schemes, as well as our other programmes. His experience in new product and packaging development will also provide valuable insights for members regarding innovative packaging design that considers sustainable end of life solutions.

KASUN RANGA

Scheme Manager Glass
Packaging Forum

Kasun has a wealth of experience in the environmental sector, having spent over 10 years in various roles across both local and central government. His previous positions include work with Auckland Council (in the Infrastructure and Environmental Services team), Auckland Transport, and most recently with the Ministry for the Environment.

GREER LARSEN- COMPTON

Scheme Manager Caps &
Lids Recycling Scheme and
Food & Beverage Carton
Recycling Scheme

Greer has considerable experience in the recycling and the resource recovery sector - bringing a strong understanding of systems and infrastructure, stakeholders, regulatory settings, project management, behaviour change, education and engagement. Greer has a background in advertising, marketing and communications, and is a member of the Executive Board of Plastics NZ, as well as the Plastics NZ Environmental Committee.

Two Nations, One Purpose



Advancing Soft Plastic Stewardship Across The Tasman
31 July 2025

JOINT WEBINAR WITH SOFT PLASTIC STEWARDSHIP AUSTRALIA

In July, we held a joint webinar with SPSA co-CEO Barry Cosier and executive leader Oscar Nicholson to share updates, compare our schemes, and discuss recent EPR developments. The webinar is available to members on the Packaging Forum's membership portal.

The ACCC has now issued a draft determination proposing to grant authorisation to the SPSA to establish a voluntary industry led scheme to collect and recycle soft plastic packaging. A huge amount of effort has gone into achieving this milestone and we congratulate the SPSA team.

WEBINAR - NOVEMBER: FUTURE PROOFING SOFT PLASTICS RECYCLING SCHEME

In November, we will be conducting a webinar for members focused on strategies to future-proof the Scheme into the next decade. Further information will be provided soon.

SOFT PLASTIC RECYCLING SCHEME NEWS

We welcome **Jacky Nordsvan** Recycling Systems Lead, Nestle and **Sarah Baylis** Packaging Innovation Manager, Fonterra Cooperative Group to the Soft Plastic Recycling Scheme Steering Committee. Jacky and Sarah bring a huge amount of experience to the Steering Committee.

We also congratulate **Dylan Brown** ANZ Sustainability Lead, Pepsico who joins **Debra Goulding** Sustainable Packaging Program Manager, Foodstuffs NZ and **Jamie Galloway** Managing Director Foundation Coffee as Scheme representatives on the Packaging Forum Board.

GLOBAL INSIGHTS



Lyn Mayes, Gareth Morton, Ecosurety who leads the Flexcollect programme and Mark Penny, Commercial Manager JB Recycling.

J&B Recycling, Hartlepool UK

One of the highlights of my "work related" time in the UK has been visiting the team at JB Recycling in Hartlepool. Soft plastic is collected from households in the Newcastle region trial in blue "survival" bags which are picked out at the pre-sort area of the MRF. The post-consumer soft plastic is baled and sent to UK based plastic reprocessors. There are 13 local authorities that feed into the MRF in a fully commingled collection system.

The MRF has also introduced robots to pick out food and beverage cartons for recycling.

The kerbside recycling trials operate alongside store drop off recycling solutions with soft plastic recycling bins at all major UK supermarkets.

A 30%+ reuse future for the UK

The research by Go Unpackaged looked at developing a pathway to achieve a 30% reuse rate target in UK grocery retail (so packaging would be reused over 30 times to be deemed reusable).

The group included Amcor, Biffa, Chep, DEFRA, Ecosurety, Ocada Retail, Suez Recycling, Tesco and Wrap. The research modelled seven scenarios being: current single use, single use with deposit return scheme, citizen return to store, online – reusables with delivery and collection by existing

online retail delivery vehicles, 3PL kerbside collection, council kerbside collection, and refill in-store. 27 categories were modelled including products packaged in soft plastic such as biscuits and snack foods, coffee, rice and salads and vegetables. The modelling indicated that three reuse systems – online, 3PL kerbside and council kerbside, cost less to manage than single use systems.

[More here](#)

Wales shares the top global spot for recycling municipal waste

Dr Andy Reed, Head of Waste Strategy at the Welsh Government told delegates that Wales is ranked joint leader in recycling with an overall 59% recycling rate, the same as Austria. Wales published its first Collections Blueprint in 2011, and the recently released Collections Blueprint reflects the change in approach to collection and sortation. The new kerbside collection recommendations include soft plastic with the requirements under the packaging EPR to collect flexible plastic films from kerbside from 2027. Wales has championed a 6-bin household collection system with a kerbside sort into compartmentalised vehicles to produce reliable high-quality feedstock. This has resulted in investment into plastic recycling systems such as the Jayplas plant in Swansea.

gov.wales/collections-blueprint-2025

Key insights from the Environmental Packaging Live Conference in London

The seventh annual Environmental Packaging Summit took place on 24–25 June 2025 at The Kia Oval, London, uniting key figures from manufacturing, design, technology, sustainability, and supply chain innovation. A summary of the discussion topics and presenters is shown in the video clip [here](#).

NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

FPF FlexCollect Report 2025 – Flexible Plastic Fund

The Flexible Plastic Fund (FPF) has launched its FlexCollect report, which consolidates over three years of learnings from the trials, which took place across 10 pilot local authorities and 160,000 households. The project was the largest of its kind in the UK, collecting over 400 tonnes of post-consumer soft plastic - the equivalent of over 50 million bread bags. The report sets out a clear blueprint for adding flexible plastic to existing household recycling - showing that these materials can be effectively collected across all service types, sorted through existing facilities and achieve high recovery rates with end markets for the recycled material. The key learnings from the FlexCollect report are:

- **Collections are easy to implement:** FPP can be effectively collected across all service types with minimal to no disruption using dedicated bags or in some instances, loose combined with other recyclable materials.
- **There is strong public support and participation:** The scheme proved popular with residents, achieving an impressive 89% satisfaction rate amongst surveyed householders.
- **High-quality material was collected:** Nearly 90% of the collected material (including collection bags) was target material and it was very clean - demonstrating good sorting behaviour and low contamination.
- **Minimal disruption to sorting facilities:** All participating Materials Recovery Facilities

(MRFs) successfully accepted and processed the FPP, with little to no impact on their existing operations. Modifications, where necessary, were relatively straightforward to implement. Collection and sorting are low-cost for local authorities: Collection costs range between £1.96 to £3.14 per household, per year, whilst sorting costs are between £0.17 and £0.64 per household, per year.

FPF FlexCollect Report 2025 – Flexible Plastic Fund

UK plastic tax revenue down 3% as recycled content in packaging rises

Receipts collected by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) in the financial year 2024 to 2025 totalled £259 million, decreasing by 3% compared to 2023 to 2024 which totalled £268 million. As of 6 August 2025, there were 4,927 businesses registered to the plastic packaging tax (PPT). Of the total tonnage of plastic packaging manufactured in and imported into the UK in the financial year 2024 to 2025, 38% was declared as taxable under the PPT. Industry groups, such as Recoup, have expressed concerns that the absence of a robust verification system and enforcement of recycled content claims undermines the competitiveness of the UK plastic packaging sector. The current tax framework lacks effective mechanisms to validate these claims, particularly with respect to imported plastic packaging manufactured abroad.

gov.uk/government/statistics

European Commission Single Use Plastics Directive - Public consultation on rules for calculating, verifying and reporting recycled content in single-use plastic beverage

EXPRA and EPRO jointly responded to the European Commission's draft rules on the Single-Use Plastics Directive, which govern how recycled content in single-use plastic bottles is calculated and reported. The associations stress that clear regulations are necessary to encourage investment in recycling technologies, especially since expanding chemical recycling will take significant time and resources. They call for swift adoption of these regulations to drive progress toward a circular plastics economy.

expira.eu/2025/

European plastic recycling industry facing 'imminent collapse', says Plastics Recyclers Europe

Plastics recycling plant closures are increasing rapidly in Europe. According to Plastics Recyclers Europe (PRE), between January and July 2025, capacity losses nearly matched those of all 2024 and were triple 2023's figures. The Netherlands, Germany, and the UK have been hit hardest, with recent planned closures including Viridor and Biffa in the UK, Veolia in Germany, and Cedo in the Netherlands.

FROM OUR PROCESSING PARTNERS

LEADING THE WAY TO A CIRCULAR ECONOMY FOR PLASTIC

Wales to become first to launch digital deposit return scheme using Polytag technology

Wales is set to implement a digital deposit return scheme (DDRS), becoming the first country to do so. The Welsh government has announced the inclusion of a digital solution alongside a 'return-to-retail' model that utilises reverse vending machines (RVMs). The DDRS rollout in Wales is planned for October 2027, in coordination with other UK nations. This system will employ Polytag technology, enabling consumers to reclaim deposits through existing kerbside recycling infrastructure. The digital option allows consumers to avoid storing and transporting empty packaging to return points.

UK government confirms local authority payments under Packaging EPR system

Defra has released a list of expected payment amounts for UK local authorities under extended producer responsibility for packaging (pEPR). The £1.1 billion generated by pEPR will fund recycling services, with most payments—ranging into the millions—set for distribution in November.

[gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)

If you are not buying recycled, you are not recycling!



FUTURE POST

Sustainable Landscaping

Future Post is proud to be featured in the July/August edition of the New Zealand Landscaper Magazine! The feature opens with: "In the world of landscaping, where durability meets design, Future Post is making waves by turning New Zealand's plastic waste into robust, eco-friendly fencing solutions" [Read more here](#)



SAVEBOARD

saveBOARD has launched a new product range with Milliken Flooring which uses 20% post-consumer soft plastics in a range of flooring products. If you're renovating offices, factories, or stores, check out these new products.

Renasci™ is a groundbreaking resilient flooring plank created through the collaboration of Milliken & saveBOARD, designed to address one of the flooring industry's biggest challenges: carpet waste. Made from approximately 80% reclaimed carpet materials and 20% consumer soft plastics, Renasci™ is built to perform in high-traffic commercial interiors while significantly reducing environmental impact. Using a closed-loop process, waste is shredded, layered, and pressed without chemical adhesives, resulting in a plank that can be recycled again at the end of its life. This innovation not only diverts waste from landfill but also sets a new benchmark in sustainable flooring design.