

The Wrap Up

PROMOTING THE SOFT PLASTICS CIRCULAR ECONOMY
RECYCLING.KIWI.NZ



Well, it certainly is hard to believe we are now officially in Autumn...despite the warm and dry weather continuing. We hope everyone enjoyed a relaxing holiday season with friends and family.

2019 – Refocussing the scheme

It's good to reflect on what was, undoubtedly, a big year for the Soft Plastic Recycling Scheme – 2019 was a year of growth, and of refocussing the scheme.

From May, when we recommenced collections, until the end of 2019 we collected and processed more than 13 million single units of soft plastics – enough to fill one Olympic-sized swimming pool. It is incredibly satisfying knowing that much soft plastic was diverted from landfill but, importantly, then processed into commercially viable products such as fencing posts, cable covers and garden-edging.

100 percent of what we collect is now processed in New Zealand at two processors – **Future Post** in Waiuku, and **2nd Life Plastics** in Levin.

Also, up to 50 percent of the population now has access to soft plastic collections, with more than 60 participating stores across Auckland, Hamilton and the Wellington regions.

Our membership continues to grow and we now have more than 60 companies, representing 70% of the post-consumer soft plastics industry, funding the scheme.

2020 – steady growth based on partnerships with local processors

2020 is getting off to a great start, with the announcement that we will be starting collections in the Northland region on 16 March.

Where can you recycle?

You can check out which stores are currently providing the service on our website bit.ly/SP-store-locator otherwise Google 'soft plastic stores'.



REGIONAL SOLUTIONS

Supporting the environment and the community

In the Wellington region soft plastics are collected by **Earthlink**, a company that employs people with mental health and addiction issues that find it hard to get work – before the compressed plastic makes its way up to Levin to be turned into new products at 2nd Life Plastics.

bit.ly/tvnz-softplastic





Creating a Northland Circular Economy

One of our processing partners, **Future Post**, has been successful in selling a significant number of their posts to Northland farms and businesses; at the same time, we were continually being asked about soft plastic collections in the area.

Future Post's success in the region certainly warranted introducing collections in Northland, so we were happy to announce at the Northland Field Days (held from 5-7 March in Dargaville) that we are introducing soft plastic recycling bins at three Countdown stores in Whangarei, Tikipunga and Dargaville in March. Collected soft plastic will be supplied to scheme partner Future Post to process.

Northland Field Days is the largest event in Northland, and the second largest agricultural event of its type in New Zealand, so it provided an ideal platform to make the announcement on the latest expansion. We will continue to add more collection points and regions as demand for posts increase. Put simply the more fence posts sold, the more plastic we can collect and recycle; so we encourage local government agencies and other businesses, to support this circular economy in order to divert more soft plastic from landfill.

Team from Waste Not Consulting conducting a waste audit identifying what types and brands of soft plastic packaging have been dropped off for recycling. We will share the audit results with members very soon and report in our next newsletter. The auditors noted that contamination levels are lower than the previous audit in 2018.

What plastics can be recycled?

We often get asked what soft plastic can be recycled. Essentially, if you can scrunch it in a ball, it can be recycled – bread bags, frozen food bags, toilet paper packaging, confectionery and biscuit wrap, chip bags, pasta and rice bags, courier envelopes, sanitary hygiene packaging, squeeze pouches.

We mainly collect resin code 4, or Low Density Polyethylene (LDPE), which is used by many manufacturers as flexible plastic packaging to protect and preserve products such as bread, frozen foods, fresh poultry, paper products. It's lightweight and soft, and from a manufacturing perspective retains impact strength at very low temperatures. The Rethinking Plastics report finds that 31 percent of plastic packaging used in New Zealand is LDPE.

We also collect LDPE which is blended with Polypropylene (resin code 5) as well as nylon and foil (resin code 7).

Our members are actively seeking to select single resin codes, and to reduce multi layers, but it is essential to balance these choices with the need to protect and preserve the product within the packaging.



Jerome was delighted to welcome Scott Simpson MP for Coromandel, and National spokesperson for Environment and Climate change to talk about the organisation's operations, and opportunities for using the posts.



Jerome showing Mayor Phil Goff how posts are made.

News from Future Post

Soft Plastic Recycling Scheme Chair Malcolm Everts joined the team at Future Post to welcome Mayor Phil Goff to discuss the important role which councils can play in driving demand for recycled products. Pictured top right with one of Future Post's newest product innovations, square bollards.

Auckland Council operates regional parks, recreation and community venues across the region and, along with the Department of Conservation, is working hard to prevent the spread of kauri dieback across the region.

When councils buy posts and bollards for their region, we want them to think Future Post. Not only do the posts look nice and tidy, they are maintenance-free – so no leaching in reserves, parks and playgrounds, and no rotting!

Future Post has also welcomed Hill Laboratories as a new partner. Hill Laboratories is New Zealand's largest privately-owned analytical testing laboratory; and now all the organisation's plastic waste will be processed into Future Post's amazing posts.



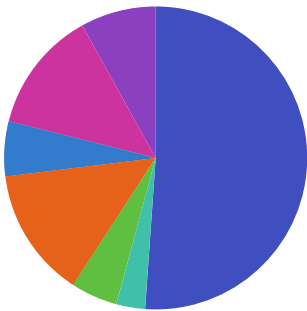
Future Post's new square bollards looking smart around berms in Waiuku



At the 118th Helensville A&P Show

We continue to increase our membership as more companies recognise the need to help fund recycling solutions for plastic packaging. Here is a great overview of the industries in which all our members operate. We'd like to take the opportunity to thank everyone for their support.

SOFT PLASTIC SCHEME MEMBER CATEGORIES



- FOOD BRAND **51%**
- DRINKS BRAND **3%**
- GROCERY BRAND **5%**
- MANUFACTURER/DISTRIBUTER **14%**
- FOOD RETAILER **6%**
- OTHER RETAILER **14%**
- SERVICE/TOURISM INDUSTRY **8%**

Welcome to our new members to the Soft Plastic Recycling Scheme

- WOOP** (World on our Plate)
- Life Health Foods**
- Loft Foods**
- The Baron**
- Illy Bites**
- Fruity Sacks**
- Oceania Healthcare**
- Tom & Luke**

Member stories

We are always keen to hear all the great stories coming in from our members, whether it's feedback from customers or some of the environmental projects that members are undertaking.

Increasing accessibility for our older generation

Retirement village and aged care provider, **Oceania Healthcare** has become a member of the Scheme and is now piloting a collection at its Meadowbank Retirement Village.

"Often older people are missed when it comes to targeting the community for sustainability initiatives. I recently had several conversations with village residents in their 80s who expressed the desire to be more sustainable and were driving us, the management, for convenient ways they can "do their bit". This would help drive the conversations with the residents and their families," says Bronwyn Webster, Customer Innovation and Sustainability Manager, Oceania Healthcare.

The organisation has produced a poster that will be promoted to its residents so they can "do their bit".

Meadowbank is going GREEN

Meadowbank is starting a soft plastic recycling trial to repurpose soft plastics into fence posts and buckets - rather than sending it to landfills. Simply collect your soft plastic recycling and place it in the special bin (as pictured) in the craft room.

What about my other recycling?
Continue to recycle paper, cardboard, hard plastics and cans as you normally would in the bins by your apartment block.

What soft plastics can be recycled?
See the back for guidelines about what items can and can't be put in the bin.

Important:
If items are contaminated e.g. contain food waste, please wash and dry these first.
If the bin contents is contaminated by over 5%, the entire bin-load can no longer be recycled.

Yes

- Food Packaging
- Plastic & Ziplock Bags (Non-compostable)
- Product Packaging
- Foil Lined Packets
- Biscuit Wrappers & Chocolate Bar Wrappers
- Plastic Courier Packaging

No

- Cans & Bottles
- Hard Plastics & Biscuit Trays
- Paper & Card
- Food or Liquid
- Polystyrene or Compostables
- Glad Wrap



Love NZ Soft Plastics Recycling
Community



Are you one of our 7741 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 plastics space as well as promoting your support!

facebook.com/softplasticrecycling



BRANDS SEEKING ALTERNATIVES TO PLASTIC

EarthSmart Toilet

Tissue is now available in recyclable paper packaging

Mondelēz International is trialling 100 percent recyclable paper packaging as part of an exclusive trial in New Zealand. Mondelēz says the wrapper is made from sustainably sourced paper, and this marks the first time the company has used a paper material that doesn't include laminates, foils or plastic for fully sealed flow-wrap packaging.

Transcontinental has introduced multi-use carrier bags made from pre consumer polyethylene waste. The bags are branded "I am a Keeper!".

Website upgrade

Almost 83,000 visits to our soft plastics pages

The soft plastics website provides up-to-date information about collection locations, and what can be recycled through the programme. The website provides an important interface with New Zealanders. Last year there were 82,947 visits to the soft plastics pages representing 90 percent of all traffic to The Packaging Forum's website recycling.kiwi.nz. 57 percent of traffic is from Aucklanders. The visitor by region is similar to the Facebook profile.

Countdown – reducing use of soft plastics and supporting recycling

Countdown has got rid of plastic produce bags, and more than a tonne of other plastics, from three of its stores starting 10 February 2020 as part of a 10-week trial to test if the supermarket can reduce plastic use long-term across its store network.

Countdown supermarkets in Orewa, Ponsonby and Manukau sell 'unwrapped' fruits and vegetables in specially-designed paper and cardboard packaging.

A total of 65 products have lost the usual plastic wraps, and plastic produce bags have been removed with customers encouraged to bring reusable bags instead. Paper bags also act as a replacement for plastic bags for bulk foods.

Countdown's general manager corporate affairs, safety and sustainability, Kiri Hannifin, said the organisation invested more than \$500,000 in shelving, packaging and production for the trial.

"As part of Unwrapped we want to test whether the changes we're making can be sustained over the long-term, and in a way that delivers better outcomes for our environment here in Aotearoa. We're mindful that packaging or process changes might cause bigger issues, so we need to understand this a lot better before we roll something out nationwide," says Hannifin.

Some produce such as lettuce and herbs will remain in plastic due to a lack of suitable alternatives. These will be made from PET or RPET where possible, which can be recycled and reused. Hannifin said that the supermarket is mindful that some products deteriorate faster than others if they are not packaged, and is conscious that they don't want to create unnecessary food waste.

Soft plastic can also be recycled at each of the Unwrapped stores.