

**Press Release**

**8th October 2018**

**Lidl Northern Ireland Scraps Unrecyclable Black Plastic Packaging**

**Single-Use Plastic Items Banned**

**Monday October 8th**- Lidl Northern Ireland confirmed today it is removing black plastic packaging from its entire fruit and vegetable range before Christmas. The packaging, which cannot be recycled, will be scrapped from fresh fish products by February 2019, followed by fresh meat, poultry and cured meat ranges before August.

Black plastic packaging is not recycled in Ireland because recycling sorting systems cannot detect the carbon black pigment. As a result of this move from Lidl, over 60 tonnes of black plastic waste will be avoided annually from fruit and vegetables across Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Lidl Ireland has today banned the sale of single-use plastic items including drinking straws, disposable plates, cups and cutlery, with plastic-stemmed cotton buds next on the list in the coming months. The single-use plastic items are being replaced with biodegradable alternatives. No other supermarket on the island of Ireland has committed to such firm and imminent commitments in relation to either type of plastic.

“These are significant steps,” Lidl Northern Ireland Managing Director, J.P. Scally said. “Sustainability is core to our business and we are proud to continue leading the retail sector in implementing ambitious measures which will deliver real and lasting benefits for everyone.”

Lidl Northern Ireland is also committing to several ambitious plastic reduction targets, including using 20% less plastic packaging by 2022 and having 100% recyclable own-brand packaging by 2025. The move is one of many steps that the retailer is taking as part of its plastic reduction strategy. Already this year the company confirmed it had achieved ‘zero waste to landfill’ and announced a ban on microbeads in all cosmetic and household ranges

The company will also continue to trial more unpackaged fruit and vegetable options - the recent addition of 17 new loose items means that more than 25% of its fresh produce range is now package-free.

“These announcements are a clear signal of our commitment to safeguarding the environment and to manage our operations in the most progressive and sustainable way possible. It’s important and right that we act decisively and proactively in this area and take meaningful and measurable steps that matter to us, our customers and our communities,” J.P. Scally said.

**Ends**

**Notes to Editor**

Commitments

Lidl’s plastic reduction strategy is centred on a progressive circular economy programme, which aims to drive demand for recycled materials and ensure that topics such as food waste remain a priority.

Lidl will deploy a combination of specification changes, material substitution and market development to achieve its circular economy commitments, which include:

• **By 2022** 20% reduction in plastic packaging volumes.

• **By 2025** 100% of own-brand packaging to be widely recyclable, reusable, refillable or renewable.

• **By 2025** 50% of material used in own-brand packaging to come from recycled materials.

2018 Achievements

In 2018, Lidl publish a Sustainability Progress Update report. **‘A Better Tomorrow’** setting out the retailer’s comprehensive sustainability strategy. This inaugural report, which will be produced annually, can be viewed at: https://www.abettertomorrow-lidl-ni.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/fliphtml5/1/book.html

Statistics   
Annually Lidl Northern Ireland sells 568,000 straws and 216,000 plastic plates and cups and 49,000 packets of cotton buds. All will now be diverted from potentially going to landfill.

Definitions

Microbeads are defined as water insoluble, solid plastic particles (5 mm or less in size) of polyethylene (PE), polypropylene (PP), polyethylene terephthalate (PET), polymethyl methacrylate (PMMA).

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