

# Woolworths announces plan to phase out nonrecyclable plastic packaging

Woolworths has used World Environment Day to announce its vision of zero packaging waste to landfill, committing to phase out nonrecyclable plastic packaging for its own-brand products by 2022. Key to realising this vision is the phasing out of unnecessary single-use plastics



This means that the retailer aims to have none of its packaging end up in landfills, which requires 100% recyclable material and a supportive recycling infrastructure.

The business is working towards removing all packaging that is currently not recyclable, focussing on removing unnecessary single-use plastics from stores (such as plastic straws, earbuds and plastic shopping bags) and ensuring ongoing customer education on the role of packaging in the elimination of food waste.

## Partnership and collaboration

Commenting on the announcement, Zyda Rylands, Woolworths South Africa CEO, said, “Today’s announcement follows extensive customer research and engagement, both formally and through social media channels that shed light on both customer recycling habits and entrenched customer perceptions. We know that many of our customers fully support our zero packaging waste to landfill journey and they want to see it happen as fast as possible. But this is not a path that we can walk alone. To succeed, we need our customers, our suppliers and the South African recycling industry to work with us.”

Critical to the success of these ambitious goals is the continued commitment to partner with government and industry (recyclers, packaging converters, producer responsibility organisations) to develop technically and commercially viable solutions to recycling different plastics.



---

## In-store trials

Several in-store trials are currently underway at selected Woolworths stores in order to engage customers on the new plastic reduction efforts, including:

- Wooden cutlery and paper straws are being rolled out in NowNow and WCafes with a view to phase out plastic cutlery and straws completely.
- Plastic straws are no longer available for purchase in store.
- Paper-stemmed earbuds will be on the shelves by the end of October and plastic ear buds will no longer be sold in store.
- A pilot coffee cup recycling programme is currently underway in NowNow stores, with a view to rolling out nationally.
- The retailer is trialling reverse recycling vending machines, where customers can bring in their recyclables and put them into the vending machine so that they can be recycled.
- Woolworths is also trialling a new range of affordable reusable shopping bags

“Sustainability and our Good Business Journey are at the heart of everything that we do. That’s why these commitments are a natural next step on our journey to ensuring that we play our part in creating shared value within our communities and protecting our planet for future generations,” concludes Rylands.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>