



WAITROSE
& PARTNERS

TAKING ACTION ON PLASTICS

At Waitrose & Partners we are committed to reducing our impact on the environment. Removing unnecessary plastics is a priority for us and something we know is equally important to our customers.

Figures show that the plastic in our oceans will outweigh fish by 2050*. This means we need to take action now. It's why we've set deadlines to tackle problem plastics. We're making progress and have been able to bring forward our target, but we still have a lot to do. We will get there – thanks to the steps we've already taken, and with the continued support of our customers and suppliers.

*If current trends continue. Figures from the World Economic Forum

QUICK LINKS

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WE'RE ELIMINATING UNNECESSARY PLASTICS

When it comes to the products we sell, and our packaging, we're looking to find alternatives to plastic

What exactly are unnecessary plastics?

Plastics have long been used by product and packaging manufacturers as they're relatively strong yet cheap and lightweight. But their properties mean that **plastics don't completely decompose**, and the large quantities of plastic waste now being generated are polluting our environment. That's why, if a product or packaging doesn't need to include plastic, we want to find ways to remove it and use an alternative material. If plastic is needed, we'll make sure we're using a widely recyclable type.

Black plastic, polystyrene and laminated card are among the 'problem plastics' we'll be eliminating from our own-brand packaging, as these are hard to recycle. Black plastic will be removed by the end of 2019, the others by 2023.

When are plastics the best option?

Sometimes there's no better alternative. The main purpose of packaging is to protect goods from damage and preserve the shelf life of perishables. Using the right plastic can be best if we'd otherwise end up with **increased food waste** – another important environmental issue for us.

How we're doing it

REDUCE

We're removing and redesigning packaging to cut the amount of plastic we use. By 2021 we will reduce the use of single-use plastic in our own-brand packaging by 20%.

REUSE

We're removing single-use plastic items such as disposable cups and testing dedicated refillable zones to encourage customers to switch to reusable alternatives.

RECYCLE

By 2021' plastic packaging on all own-brand and branded products will be widely recyclable and made from 30% recycled content.



WE'RE TAKING PLASTIC OUT OF OUR PRODUCTS

Even eradicating the tiniest microbeads or glitter particles from our products will make a difference when it comes to protecting the environment

Small changes that add up

We're looking at how we can remove plastic from the products we sell or provide in our shops. We no longer sell packs of **single-use plastic straws** or offer them in our cafés, and we've swapped **plastic-stemmed cotton buds** for paper-based ones.

We ask customers to bring their own reusable cups to our in-store coffee stations. We've stopped selling packs of **disposable plastic cutlery** and we've replaced the plastic cutlery in our cafés and Food To Go service with **sustainable wood versions certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)**.

We were the first supermarket to get rid of **products containing microbeads** and the first to stock a reusable tampon applicator. We will remove all glitter from our own-brand Christmas cards, wraps, tags and crackers by 2020. Our Christmas crackers will also no longer contain plastic toys from 2020.

Waitrose Unpacked

In 2019 we introduced a refillable zone into a small number of shops to test how customers might shop differently in the future with the aim of saving plastic. 'Waitrose Unpacked' includes dispensers for dried products, frozen 'pick and mix', coffee, wine and beer refills, as well as detergent and washing up liquid refills.

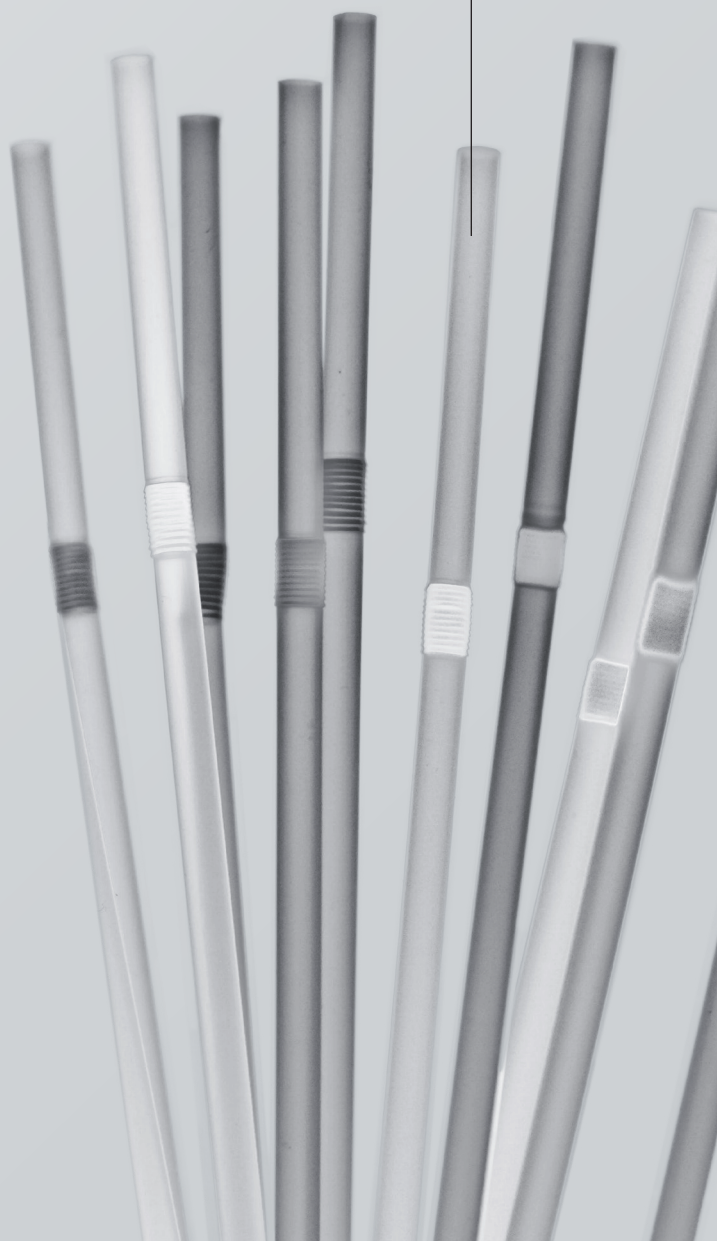
Going...
billions
of glitter
particles.

Gone...
13
million
plastic cutlery
items a year.

Gone...
millions
of microbeads.

Gone...
52
million
disposable
coffee cups.

We've replaced
600,000
plastic straws in
our cafés with
FSC-certified
paper versions.



WE'RE IMPROVING PACKAGING

Our own-brand packaging included more than 17,500 tonnes of plastic in 2018. Here's how we're working to reduce this figure

Clearly better choices

Removing black plastic from our packaging is a priority.

Because the sensors at recycling plants can't currently identify the dark pigment, black plastic often doesn't get sorted and ends up in landfill or causing more pollution. In 2018, we stopped using black plastic for Waitrose & Partners meat, fish, poultry, fruit and veg, as well as for our confectionery range and many of our Christmas puddings, mince pies and biscuits. Switching the lids on our own-label drinks bottles from black plastic to clear saved 17 tonnes of plastic from landfill alone.

One of our most exciting developments is the world's first home compostable and recyclable ready meal packaging which has initially replaced the trays on our Italian ready meal, saving 158 tonnes of black plastic. The fibre based packaging is Forest Stewardship Council certified, creates a 50% saving in Co2 emissions.

We have also joined forces with Scottish biotec company CuanTec to work on a new film for food packaging made out of waste langoustine shells rather than plastic.

We've replaced black plastic trays on our ready meals with multi-coloured ones made from recycled plastic. This has saved 500 tonnes of black plastic going to landfill.

We are trialling the removal of plastic wrap used on multi-packs of canned vegetables with the aim of saving 18 tonnes of plastic a year.

Our sandwich packs now have more easily removable plastic film for simpler recycling.

We've swapped black plant pots in our horticulture and fresh herb ranges for more easily recyclable versions.

2,291
tonnes of black
plastic will be removed
by the end of 2019.



WE'RE REDUCING SINGLE-USE PLASTIC BAGS

Reusable containers and bags are among the solutions we're championing to get rid of disposable bags from our shops

Your bag is better than our bag

Since the government introduced the 5p charge for carrier bags in England in 2015, the number of bags used across the UK's supermarkets has fallen by more than 80% – that's 9 billion fewer*. We'd rather customers brought their own bag when shopping with us, so we're no longer offering 5p single-use carrier bags in our shops. Instead, we have reusable options made from cotton, jute and recycled bottles.

We continue to encourage shoppers to bring their own reusable containers – if every customer did this, it would help save 30 million bags.

134 million

5p single-use carrier bags and polythene bags for loose fruit and veg were given out each year. Both types of bags were removed from our shops in 2019.

We introduced Emma Bridgewater reusable bags made entirely from recycled plastic bottles to help raise money for the Marine Conservation Society.

30%

fewer
disposable plastic
bags for loose fruit
and veg are already
being used.

We offer a bagless option with our online shopping service.



* UK government figures

WE'RE TAKING ACTION

As part of our overall commitment to make our own-brand packaging reusable, widely recyclable or home compostable by 2023, we pledge to...

...reduce the amount of own-brand packaging, including plastics, by a third by 2023.

...remove 20% of plastic from our own-brand ranges by the end of 2021.

...ensure branded and own-brand packaging contain at least 30% recycled content by 2021.

...ban non-recyclable plastic from all branded and own-brand packaging by 2021.

...remove plastic toys from our Christmas crackers by 2020.

...eliminate glitter from our own-brand cards, tags, wraps, crackers and flowers by Christmas 2020.

...commit

£1
million

to projects targeting plastic pollution (in addition to the £1.5m we've already donated).

In 2019 we launched Plan Plastic - the Million Pound Challenge with environmental charity Hubbub, which offers grants of £150,000-£300,000 to projects that rethink how we all use and dispose of plastic. Five winners, from marine scientists to pioneering charities, have now been chosen and we will now measure the impact of those grants.

Follow our progress

We'll be publishing our plastic packaging data annually at [waitrose.com](https://www.waitrose.com)

Who we're working with

- WRAP, the **British Retail Consortium** and other leading retailers on recycling labels on packaging. We're signatories of the UK Plastics Pact which brings together businesses, NGOs and the UK government to tackle plastic waste.
- **Recycle Now** and **Recycle More** on educating consumers on recycling.
- **Global Ghost Gear Initiative** to protect marine life.
- We've also donated £1m to the **Marine Conservation Society** and £500,000 to the **Commonwealth Marine Plastics Research & Innovation Challenge Fund** to support projects targeting plastic pollution.
- And we are helping to fund ten **Blue Charter Fellowships**, which are run by the **Association of Commonwealth Universities** (ACU), to lead world-class research and innovation in marine plastics.

