

NZ Post joins forces to combat soft plastics waste problem

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Take used soft plastic, a green champion, an innovative idea and an iconic New Zealand company and you have all the ingredients to solve a challenging waste problem. For this pilot trial, NZ Post has teamed up with The Packaging Forum and Future Post to expand on the Soft Plastic Recycling Scheme by offering Kiwis a courier pick-up of their discarded soft plastics.

"Purchase one of NZ Post's latest pre-paid Soft Plastic Recycle Courier bags, fill it with your clean soft plastics, book a courier for pick-up and we will take care of the rest," NZ Post Group Sustainability Manager, Dawn Baggaley says.

Once collected by a NZ Post courier, the soft plastics are sent to Waiuku-based business Future Post who recycle it into fence posts.

"Supporting this project and making it easier for Kiwis to recycle their soft plastics aligns perfectly with NZ Post's own sustainable packaging goals," Baggaley said.

With a passion for the environment, Future Post Managing Director and farmer Jerome Wenzlick says the process of turning soft plastics into fence posts is like "cooking".

"There's definitely a bit of a recipe to it and we did a lot of homework to make sure we got the recipe right," Wenzlick said.

With processing machinery specifically designed and made in New Zealand, Wenzlick explained the soft plastic packaging is granulated into small chips and put through an extruder before being moulded into fence posts.

"It takes approximately 1500 bags to make one standard fence post."

He said the factory can turn out around 800 posts a day.

NZ Post will be working with key partners including The Warehouse Group, and Foodstuffs to make the pre-paid Soft Plastic Recycle Courier bags widely available.

The Warehouse Group Chief Sustainability Officer, David Benattar, says the new soft plastics recycling service is a step towards giving all Kiwis access to convenient recycling solutions.

"We're focussed on making it as easy as possible for our customers to recycle, and through this new initiative, anyone can pick up a pre-paid courier bag at any one of our The Warehouse and Warehouse Stationery stores nationwide or online, as well as on TheMarket.com, take them back home or to the office and fill with their soft plastics and NZ Post will do the rest," Benattar said.

Foodstuffs New Zealand Head of Sustainability Mike Sammons says this pilot is another way the business is looking to encourage customers to reduce their packaging waste.

"We want to do all we can to help our customers reduce their packaging waste and providing this recycling service to our customers based in more remote locations and our online shoppers is another important piece of the jigsaw," Sammons said.

Soft Plastic Recycling Scheme Manager Lyn Mayes says the partnership is a way to open the soft plastic recycling scheme to communities who do not have access to a soft plastic recycling bin, or those who are unable to get to their local store to drop off their soft plastics.

"People have been asking us (The Packaging Forum) about whether they can post their soft plastics, so we are delighted to launch this service," Mayes said.

"The soft plastics will be collected from NZ Post and baled by Abilities Group and then dropped off at Future Post for recycling."

The pre-paid recycle courier bags will be on sale from selected NZ Post stores and online and selected New World supermarkets, The Warehouse and The Warehouse Stationery stores as well as online from Friday 22 April and cost \$7 each.

Source: [NZ Post](#)