

For fresh fruit and vegetable marketing and distribution in Asia



By Liam O'Callaghan

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Fresh produce goes 'nude'

A South African-based retailer has turned to laser printing vegetables as part of a wider initiative to reduce plastic in its stores



Pick n Pay (PnP) has announced a number of changes to reduce the amount of plastic packaging in its stores, including using laser printing and installing dedicated packaging free zones.

Pick n Pay removed stickers from some of its existing loose range – sweet potatoes, gem squash and butternut – and replaced them with laser printing.

The laser removes the top layer of skin on hardy vegetables and etches the PnP logo, supplier code and sell-by date directly onto the individual product.

It has also announced a new 'nude' fruit and vegetable produce wall which is a dedicated plastic and packaging-free zone. The wall will attempt to get consumers to switch from pre-packaged food to loose products.

The wall will include 12 new seasonal loose fruit and vegetables and will be launched in 13 stores across South Africa. These join the other 35 loose fruit and vegetables that were already available to consumers.

Paper bags will be available to consumers at

the wall to complete their plastic-free shop consumers can also purchase a reusable netted fresh produce bag or bring their own.

Paula Disberry, commercial retail executive at Pick n Pay, said the company aims to extend the loose range even further. Currently, the sale of loose products accounts for only 10 per cent of all fruit and vegetables sold in Pick and Pay stores.

"There is scope to grow our 'nude' wall offering, but it needs to be sustainable and without unintended consequences. Reducing plastic waste has obvious benefits, but we need to be careful not to increase food waste levels during the process," Disberry said.

"Previously our loose produce range wasn't as popular as our pre-packed products. We believe this is shifting as consumers become increasingly more conscious about the environment. The impact of plastic is now front of mind for customers. We will closely monitor shopping behaviour and if this trial is successful, we can expand the initiative to more stores."

Disberry said the retailer also hoped to roll out laser printing to more products soon.



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