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By Michael Barker

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Aldi extends plastic-free trial

Initiative on five fresh vegetable lines, which has been trialled in Scotland, will now move into England



Aldi is extending a trial removing plastic from fresh vegetables as part of its campaign to cut packaging.

The supermarket began selling five loose fresh produce lines without plastic wrapping in Scotland earlier this year. Savoy cabbage, red cabbage, white cabbage, pointed cabbage and cauliflower are included within the initiative, which Aldi says has already saved more than three tonnes of plastic.

Aldi is now planning to extend the trial into England and will begin selling plastic-free cabbages and cauliflower in parts of the north east and south east from early next month. If successful, it plans to roll out the plastic-free produce lines to all stores before the end of the year.

If it rolls out across all 830 UK stores, the

use of more than 100 tonnes of plastic a year would be avoided, without increasing food waste.

In related news, the discounter announced it has also completed the removal of all non-recyclable black plastic from its core range of fresh fruit and vegetables.

The move, which began last August, will cut or replace more than 300 tonnes of black plastic a year with clear, recyclable alternatives and is part of Aldi's target to remove all difficult-to-recycle packaging from its food range by the end of next year. Black plastic is not recyclable in the UK because it cannot be detected by the sorting systems used for recycling plastic.

Fritz Walleczek, managing director of corporate responsibility at Aldi UK and Ireland, said: "The trial of so-called

'naked' vegetables has had a very positive reception in Scotland and, as a result, we're now looking to extend this trial into two of our regions in England.

"Cutting waste is at the heart of what we do. Where we can, our aim is to remove unnecessary plastic entirely without leading to unnecessary food waste. Where we can't do that, we are committed to ensuring that packaging doesn't end up as waste by ensuring that all ours is recyclable, reusable or compostable.

"It is initiatives like this that will help us achieve this goal and is a measure of our determination to be as sustainable and environmentally responsible a business as possible."