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By Ed Leahy

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Sainsbury's launch "reverse" vending machines



Plastic bottle return scheme picks up steam as Sainsbury's become latest retailer to provide cash for plastic

Sainsbury's has joined the plastic bottle return scheme movement in a bid to reduce plastic waste.

The retailer installed its first "reverse" vending machine at its Braehead store in Scotland, the first of its kind in the country, and only the third in the UK.

Customers can deposit plastic bottles of any size up to 3 litres and aluminium drinks cans in a machine at the store entrance, in exchange for a coupon worth 5p towards their shopping.

Up to 500 items can be deposited per visit, meaning customers can save up to £25 on their shop.

Judith Batchelar, director of Sainsbury's Brand said, "We're delighted to offer a new way to help our customers recycle while saving on their shop."

Reverse vending machines could become a regular fixture at UK supermarkets after Tesco boss Dave Lewis called for a "closed loop" of packaging materials at last year's City Food Lecture.

Tesco installed its first plastic bottle deposit machine at various stores in April. Iceland were the first to trial the scheme at the end of last year, reporting in January that it had proven popular with shoppers who had already claimed £30,000 worth of coupons.