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By Ed Leahy

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Co-op urges govt to fast-track food collections

The UK retailer says it could stop 356,000 tonnes of leftover food from landfill with faster rollout of waste bin collections



The Co-op is urging councils to speed up the rollout of waste collections to save on thousands of tonnes of food going to landfill.

The retailer is writing to all local authorities that do not collect food waste at all, calling for the introduction of universal food waste collections to be sped up, to help stop 356,000 tonnes of English food waste going to landfill.

According to the Co-op 156 English councils, (48 per cent) do not have a kerbside food waste collection, with food leftovers in those areas going to landfill.

Of the 169 local authorities that do already collect food waste, 12 per cent do not accept compostable bags. The Co-op has also written those authorities calling for them to change their position to reduce plastic contamination.

The Co-op has committed to make compostable carriers widely available though its wholesale operation if local authorities and the government commit to accepting the technology in food waste collections, saving more than 5 million plastic bags a month from ending up in landfill.

Michael Fletcher, chief commercial officer at Co-op said: "How we do business really matters. The world is experiencing a climate crisis and we need to work together to avoid it. Accelerating action is the only way to mitigate and reduce impacts on our natural world, and to ensure stable food supply chains in the future.

"We are committed in helping our members and customers to make environmentally friendly choices and reducing the environmental impact of products is and always has been at the core of Co-op. That's why we are writing to local authorities to encourage

universal kerbside food waste collections and acceptance of compostable bags, sooner than 2023."

Current policy from the government will see all homes get weekly food waste collections by 2023, but twice as much of the total food wasted in the UK a year could be recycled into energy and fertiliser if this were introduced quicker, say the Co-op.

The Co-op estimates that it could stop producing 60 million plastic bags if local authorities began food waste collections from homes sooner, and permitted the use of compostable carrier bags as food waste bin liners.

<http://www.fruitnet.com/americafruit/article/1474/parts-of-san-diego-quarantined-as-psyllid-count-mounts>

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