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By Ed Leahy

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Tesco could delist suppliers for excessive packaging



The retailer has told suppliers packaging standards are now part of its category reviews and ranging decision

Tesco has told its suppliers that it may delist companies if they do not meet sustainable packaging standards.

Britain's largest supermarket said it will include packaging suitability as part of category reviews and ranging decisions as it looks to further cut plastic and unnecessary packaging use.

The retailer said it was part of the second phase of its Remove, Reduce, Reuse and Recycle plan.

At four meetings with over 1,500 suppliers, Tesco set out its vision for the next stage of its packaging agenda, with removing all hard-to-recycle packaging from its stores by the end of 2019, a top priority.

Tesco boss, Dave Lewis, said: "In the first quarter of 2018 we audited all packaging materials in our business and set

ourselves a challenge to remove all hard to recycle material by 2019; we're on track for Tesco own brand and we're working with branded suppliers to deliver the same.

"Now we're taking the next step and tackling excess packaging. From next year, we will assess packaging as part of our ranging decisions, and if it's excessive or inappropriate, we reserve the right not to list it. Through the lens of Remove, Reduce, Reuse & Recycle we can transform our approach to packaging."

Tesco cited a crisp manufacturer that reduced the size on multi-buy crisps by 23 per cent, delivering a reduction of 5,000 tonnes in packaging weight, and 50,000 less road miles as pallets were packed more efficiently, reducing the number of lorry journeys.

The supermarket also reiterated the need for the government to introduce a

national collection and recycling infrastructure to deliver a closed loop for packaging.

"Without a national infrastructure, industry efforts to improve the recyclability of materials used in packaging will be a drop in the ocean.

"In January 2018, we called on the Government to introduce this infrastructure and offered to help, including giving space in our car parks for recycling and testing the collection of materials not currently recycled by local councils. That invitation stands and the need for action has never been more pressing."