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By Luisa Cheshire

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Lidl expands 'REset Plastic' initiative



Lidl builds on plastic reduction with new compostable fruit and veg bags and recycling scheme trial

UK retailer Lidl GB has today (15 September) announced a series of new initiatives, as part of its REset Plastic strategy, to eliminate plastic waste and support the continued reduction and recyclability of plastics in its stores.

The discounter has confirmed plans to replace all single use fruit and vegetable plastic bags with compostable bags, giving Lidl customers the chance to make even more sustainable choices when shopping. This in-store change will result in the removal of 275 tonnes of conventional single use plastic. The new compostable bags are designed to be re-used as caddy liners for domestic food waste collections and are also suitable for home-composting, providing them with a longer life-cycle.

As well as the new compostable bags, Lidl is also launching a trial plastic bag and wrapping recycling scheme across 12 stores in the West Midlands, with a plan

to expand the scheme nationwide if successful. The trial, which is due to be rolled out next month, will enable customers to return 'soft plastic' packaging easily that is not collected from homes by more than 80 per cent of UK local authorities in the UK. These items, from any brand or retailer, include carrier bags, biscuit wrappers, crisp packets, bread bags, pet food pouches, plus much more. Compostable bags should be used for food waste and not placed in these collection points.

Customers will be able to return their soft plastic packaging at easily accessible drop-off points at the front of store. Lidl will then ensure that all eligible soft plastics will be recycled into products, such as refuse sacks and rigid construction products.

Christian Härtnagel, CEO at Lidl GB, said: "At Lidl GB we are committed to tackling excessive plastic waste and our compostable fruit and vegetable bags

are the latest innovation to help limit the amount of plastic in our environment.

"As a bricks and mortar retailer, how we operate in our stores, and the packaging we use, plays such a vital role in helping customers to tackle their plastic consumption. By offering convenient solutions such as compostable bags and making it easier for customers to recycle more plastic through our in-store drop off points, we are hoping to give customers the opportunity to take small steps to reduce and recycling their plastic packaging."

Helen Bird, Strategic Technical Manager, WRAP, said: "While we need to reduce single use packaging where possible, where it's not, packaging must be recyclable and that's what members of The UK Plastics Pact have pledged to do by 2025. It's great news that Lidl is taking its responsibility seriously in this area and introducing collection points

for bags and wrapping under The Pact. Our research showed that many citizens were willing to bring this material back to stores and we're encouraged by the success of these collections to date."

These initiatives build on Lidl's plastic commitments to make 100 per cent of own brand packaging widely recyclable, reusable or refillable by 2025. This year, Lidl hit its target of ensuring 50 per cent of packaging is made from recycled materials, four years ahead of plan, whilst it also reduced plastic

by 18.5 per cent, on track to reach its original target to reduce by 20 per cent by 2022. Lidl also met its target of eliminating problematic plastic packaging (including black plastic, PVC and EPS) from its own label core food range and ensuring that 100 per cent of pulp and fibre-based own label packaging in core food range are either responsibly sourced from FSC, PEFC, or equivalent, or made using recycled content. Last month, Lidl announced that it had removed a milestone one billion pieces of plastic from

stores across Great Britain, including 24 million plastic trays and punnets.

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