



**WAITROSE**  
& PARTNERS

# TAKING ACTION ON PLASTICS

At Waitrose & Partners we are committed to reducing our impact on the environment. Removing unnecessary plastics is a priority for us in 2019 and beyond – and something we know is equally important to our customers.

Figures show that the plastic in our oceans will outweigh fish by 2050\*. This means we need to take action now. It's why we've set deadlines to tackle problem plastics. We're making progress and have been able to bring forward our target, but we still have a lot to do. We will get there – thanks to the steps we've already taken, and with the continued support of our customers and suppliers.

\*If current trends continue. Figures from the World Economic Forum

## QUICK LINKS

1. Eliminating unnecessary plastics
2. Taking plastic out of products
3. Improving packaging
4. Reducing single-use bags
5. Waitrose & Partners' pledges





# WE'RE ELIMINATING UNNECESSARY PLASTICS

When it comes to the products we sell, and our packaging, we're looking to find alternatives to plastic

## What exactly are unnecessary plastics?

Plastics have long been used by product and packaging manufacturers as they're relatively strong yet cheap and lightweight. But their properties mean that **plastics don't completely decompose**, and the large quantities of plastic waste now being generated are polluting our environment. That's why, if a product or packaging doesn't need to include plastic, we want to find ways to remove it and use an alternative material. If plastic is needed, we'll make sure we're using a widely recyclable type.

**Black plastic, polystyrene and laminated card** are among the 'problem plastics' we'll be eliminating from our own-brand packaging, as these are hard to recycle. Black plastic will be removed by the end of 2019, the others by 2023.

## When are plastics the best option?

Sometimes there's no better alternative. The main purpose of packaging is to protect goods from damage and preserve the shelf life of perishables. Using the right plastic can be best if we'd otherwise end up with **increased food waste** – another important environmental issue for us.

## How we're doing it

### REDUCE

We're removing and redesigning packaging to cut the amount of plastic we use.

### REUSE

We're removing single-use plastic items such as disposable cups in favour of encouraging reusable alternatives.

### RECYCLE

Our own-label packaging currently contains more than **85% reusable, home-compostable or easily recyclable plastic**. We'll increase this to **100% by 2023**.



# WE'RE TAKING PLASTIC OUT OF OUR PRODUCTS

Even eradicating the tiniest microbeads or glitter particles from our products will make a difference when it comes to protecting the environment

## Small changes that add up

We're looking at how we can remove plastic from the products we sell or provide in our shops. We no longer sell packs of **single-use plastic straws** or offer them in our cafés, and we've swapped **plastic-stemmed cotton buds** for paper-based ones.

We ask customers to bring their own reusable cups to our in-store coffee stations (we also have these available to buy). This year we'll stop selling packs of **disposable plastic cutlery**, and we're replacing the plastic cutlery in our cafés and Food To Go service with **sustainable wood versions certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)**.

Waitrose & Partners was the first supermarket to get rid of **products containing microbeads** and we're the first to stock a reusable tampon applicator. We're also working to **remove all glitter** from our own-brand cards, wrap, tags and crackers by 2020 (we're already 75% glitter-free).

Going...

# 13

million  
plastic cutlery  
items a year.

Going...

billions  
of glitter  
particles.

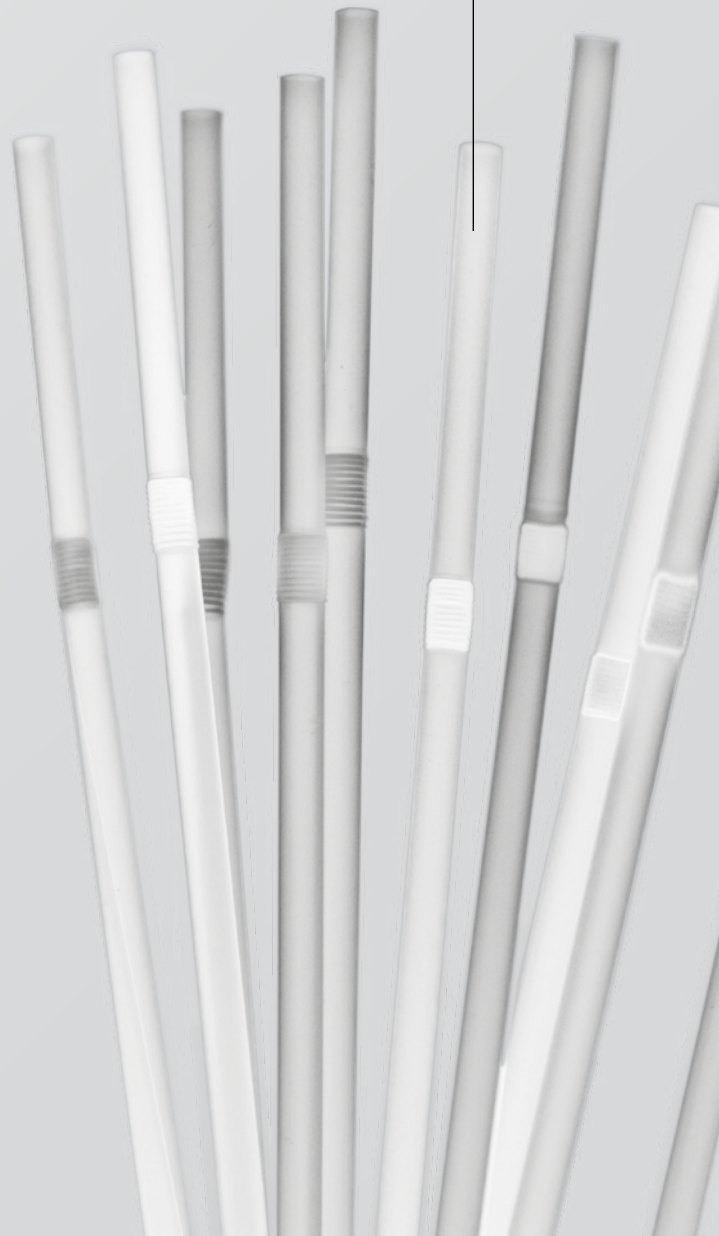
Gone  
millions  
of microbeads

&

# 52

million  
disposable  
coffee cups.

We're replacing  
**600,000**  
plastic straws in  
our cafés with  
FSC-certified  
paper versions.





# WE'RE IMPROVING PACKAGING

Our own-brand packaging included 18,400 tonnes of plastic in 2017. Here's how we're working to reduce this figure

## Clearly better choices

### Removing black plastic from our packaging is a priority.

Because the sensors at recycling plants can't currently identify the dark pigment, black plastic often doesn't get sorted and ends up in landfill or causing more pollution. Last year, we stopped using black plastic for Waitrose & Partners meat, fish, poultry, fruit and veg, as well as for our confectionery range and many of our Christmas puddings, mince pies and biscuits. Switching the lids on our own-label drinks bottles from black plastic to clear last year saved 17 tonnes of plastic from landfill alone.

One of our most exciting developments is the fibre-based trays that are replacing black plastic ones on some ready meals – **a supermarket first**. We'll be introducing more of these this year.

We're introducing more loose fruit and veg and removing trays from pre-packed where possible. And we're starting to use card instead of plastic where trays are needed to protect food.

Waitrose Duchy Organic melons will debut the UK's first home-compostable fruit labels later this year.

Our sandwich packs now have more easily removable plastic film for simpler recycling.

We're swapping black plant pots in our horticulture and fresh herb ranges for more easily recyclable versions.

**1,300**  
tonnes of black plastic were removed from our own-brand packaging last year.



# WE'RE REDUCING SINGLE-USE PLASTIC BAGS

Bags For Life and reusable service-counter containers are among the solutions we're championing to get rid of disposable carriers from our stores

## Your bag is better than our bag

Since the government introduced the 5p charge for carrier bags in England in 2015, the number of bags used across the UK's supermarkets has fallen by more than 80% – that's 9 billion fewer\*. We'd rather customers brought their own bag when shopping with us, so we're no longer offering 5p single-use carrier bags in our shops. Instead, we have reusable options (made from cotton, jute and recycled plastic bottles), as well as our reusable, recycled 10p Bags For Life.

Since 2017 we've reduced the number of bags provided on our counters by 5 million. We continue to encourage shoppers to bring their own reusable containers – if every customer did this, it would help save another 30 million bags.

We offer a bagless option with our online shopping service.

# 134 million

5p single-use carrier bags and polythene bags for loose fruit and veg were given out in 2017. Both types of bag will be removed from our shops this spring.

We'll be trialling recyclable bread bags on our bakery counters in 2019.

# 30%

fewer disposable plastic bags for loose fruit and veg are already being used. We are introducing more loose produce and replacing single-use bags for these ranges with home-compostable alternatives.



\* UK government figures

# AT WAITROSE & PARTNERS WE PLEDGE TO...

...make all our own-brand packaging reusable or out of widely recyclable or home-compostable material by 2023.

...replace loose fruit and veg bags with home-compostable ones by the end of May 2019.

...trial refillable schemes and more loose product ranges by summer 2019.

...eliminate glitter from our own-brand cards and tags, wrap, crackers and flowers by 2020.

...remove black plastic from our own-brand products by the end of 2019.

...commit

# £1

## million

to projects targeting plastic pollution (in addition to the £1.5m we've already donated).

In January 2019 we launched Plan Plastic – the Million Pound Challenge, which offers grants of £150,000-£300,000 to projects that rethink how we all use and dispose of plastic now or in the future. We're partnering with environmental charity Hubbub to support the chosen projects and measure the impact of the grants. Find out more at [planplasticfund.com](http://planplasticfund.com).

### Follow our progress

We'll be publishing our plastic packaging data annually at [waitrose.com](http://waitrose.com)

### Who we're working with

- **WRAP**, the **British Retail Consortium** and other leading retailers on recycling labels on packaging. We're signatories of the UK Plastics Pact which brings together businesses, NGOs and the UK government to tackle plastic waste.
- **Recycle Now** and **Recycle More** on educating consumers on recycling.
- **Global Ghost Gear Initiative** to protect marine life.
- And, we've donated £1m to the **Marine Conservation Society** and £500,000 to the **Commonwealth Marine Plastics Research & Innovation Challenge Fund** to support projects targeting plastic pollution.

