

# SUSTAINABLE FRESH PRODUCE PACKAGING



**2023 SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING DESIGN OF THE YEAR - RENEWABLE MATERIALS BRONZE WINNER**



## Detpak & Woolworths Supermarkets

Sustainable Fresh Produce Packaging

### Key Outcomes and Measurement

- Replaces traditional plastic packaging
- Eliminates single use plastic
- Approved on-pack Australasian Recycling Label (ARL) for correct disposal
- Adaptable technology such as Detpak's RecycleMe™ technology as a moisture barrier for cucumbers
- Meets the 2025 National Packaging Targets
- Mono renewable and kerbside recyclable material
- 14 paper and board packaging items for fresh produce
- Suitable for use with over 30 different fruits and vegetables

### Sustainable Packaging Guidelines



Design for Recovery



Optimise Material Efficiency



Use of Renewable Materials



Provide Consumer Information on Sustainability

# Detpak

**Product:** Sustainable Fresh Produce Packaging  
**Company:** Detpak & Woolworths Supermarkets  
**Country:** Australia

Detpak is committed to reducing and removing, where possible, plastic packaging for fresh produce. Their aim is to make a positive impact on the community by allowing them to make sustainable packaging choices. By working with industry and collaborating with their customers, Detpak can offer a range of packaging options to meet needs and specifications, ensuring they are responsible, by design.

Detpak strive to keep their customers ahead of the sustainability curve. As a specialist across the food service, FMCG and grocery industries, they work with some of the largest and most iconic brands to provide innovative packaging solutions across their global network. Well-established relationships across the Australian grocery and convenience landscape are testament to Detpak's capabilities in this space, with innovation and a push towards sustainability driving new packaging solutions.

COORDINATED BY



ANZ REGIONAL AWARDS PROGRAM



INTERNATIONALLY ENDORSED BY



EXCLUSIVE ENTRY TO



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- ✓ **Designed for recovery:** The range utilises paperboard as the primary material, paired with an innovative lining where required to enable recyclability.
- ✓ **Designed to reduce product waste:** Packaging items were tested for shelf life against the previous plastic versions to ensure the foods longevity was preserved. Further, all items are readily recyclable and can be disposed of via kerbside collection to live again as part of the circular economy.
- ✓ **Use renewable materials:** The Range utilises paperboard as its primary material, a renewable material.
- ✓ **Designed to minimise litter:** Given items are primarily fibre based, most of the packaging will break down over time. Additionally, to minimise packaging ending up in the litter stream, all items within the range feature the Australasian Recycling Label (ARL) on pack to educate consumers how to responsibly dispose of their packaging after use.
- ✓ **Designed for accessibility:** Accessibility is top of mind when it comes to the design of all Detpak packaging items. The Sustainable Fresh Produce Packaging range developed for Woolworths Supermarkets is no different. Food safety, product visibility, quality and labelling were all key considerations in the design of each item.

## In the context of your packaging innovation, what do you see as Sustainable Packaging?

Angelique Pierce, Marketing Executive, Detpak says, "Detpak's market-leading Sustainable Fresh Produce Packaging range offers a number of environmental benefits, including eliminating up to 87% of plastic content used in traditional fresh produce packaging. Items within the range are readily recyclable and can be placed in local kerbside recycling bins after use, making it easy for consumers to understand how to responsibly dispose of their packaging."

The RecycleMe™ lining is exclusive to Detpak in Australia and New Zealand and provides a highly mineralised resin alternative to traditional coatings. This technology is supported by extensive testing, international pulping certification and has been tested and endorsed by paper recycling mills. The formulation not only provides an equal barrier when compared to traditional plastic linings, but reduces plastic use by 40%. Detpak's Sustainability Philosophy is holistic - from their product design, to the materials they use, to how they manufacture. They source raw materials from reputable and ethical suppliers and implement environmentally sound practices across all sites. They maximise the reuse and recycling of materials, undertake safe disposal of waste and encourage waste minimisation throughout all processes.

## What would you say were the decision-making drivers (Internal and External) influencing your packaging design?

In a limited store trial, Detpak partnered with Australian supermarket Woolworths to significantly reduce traditional plastic packaging used for fresh produce, and replace these items with sustainable paper and board-based alternatives.

Woolworths' commitment to reduce and remove, where possible, any form of plastic packaging for their fresh produce, was a key consideration in the development of Detpak's Sustainable Fresh Produce Packaging range.

In response to this brief, Detpak developed a range of 14 paper and board packaging items, suitable for use with over 30 different fruits and vegetables to replace traditional plastic packaging. Alongside Woolworths, Detpak also worked with a number of fresh produce vendors in the development of the range, with numerous considerations taken into account to ensure the solutions were suitable. "This desired outcome aligned well with Detpak's commitment to reducing and removing, where possible, plastic packaging for fresh produce," said Ken Lu, National Sales Manager – Grocery & Convenience at Detpak.



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## What benefits does this new design offer your business and your consumers? Why is the pack more sustainable?

While the range includes ten standard packaging items, some are suitable for a variety of produce types. These products also come in multiple variations, such as different sizes and window shapes, and can be customised. The range options are almost endless.

Innovative solutions were implemented to ensure the range was adaptable to the requirements of a range of fresh produce. For example, the cucumber packaging utilises Detpak's RecycleMe™ technology as a moisture barrier. This was necessary to ensure the product shelf-life requirements were met whilst still allowing the packaging to achieve the Australasian Recycling Label (ARL) for kerbside recyclability.

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This range offers consumers another innovative, sustainable solution to incorporate into their product line, allowing them to increase their sustainability offering to their customers.

## What volumes of materials, packaging and waste have you saved by designing this new packaging?

### Did you do this through changing materials, lightweighting, recycled content, making the packs recyclable or reusable?

- **100% reusable, recyclable or compostable packaging:** All packaging items within the range are made from paper and board, making them readily recyclable via kerbside collection.
- **70% of plastic packaging being recycled or composted:** Items within the range contain as little plastic as possible however, the plastic films used for windows to provide product visibility, are all readily recyclable as part of the carton or bag.
- **50% average recycled content included in packaging:** Recycled content materials were tested for use across the range, however, did not withstand functional requirements including the refrigeration process.
- **The phase out of problematic and unnecessary single-use plastic packaging:** The range from Detpak replaces unnecessary plastic packaging previously used in the fresh produce section at Woolworths Supermarkets. Where plastic has been used, it has been kept to a minimum and is solely for the purpose of providing product visibility – a key functionality requirement.

## How much on-pack and off-pack information do you provide your customers?

Made primarily of paperboard, all packaging items within the range have successfully achieved the ARL, making them kerbside recyclable. This is a significant factor for these particular items, as it provides a responsible method of disposal for consumers, which is widely available across Australia.

The ARL on pack educates consumers how to correctly dispose of their packaging after use, preventing the likelihood of packaging ending up in the litter stream.

Additionally, print can be utilised to enhance consumer education and encourage consumers to remove any plastic window film and dispose of this separately for best practice. Albeit products with windows can still be recycled in their entirety but the preferred process is to remove the window first.

## On your entry form you would have indicated the companies/individuals involved in the development of the sustainable packaging design.

### Can you explain each of their roles?

Detpak's in-house designers played a key role in the development of the Sustainable Fresh Produce Packaging. They take a holistic approach when it comes to designing new products including recyclability, manufacturing capabilities and functionality. Woolworths played a key role in the development of the Sustainable Fresh Produce Packaging with extensive knowledge of the existing fresh produce packaging, and the need to increase the sustainability across this line of packaging.

This project involved significant collaboration across the Detpak business, including industry leading teams of design and sustainability experts. This is a fantastic example of the strength of Detpak's capabilities.



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## What do you feel will be needed to further improve packaging design in the future? (e.g. education, investment, policy/legislation, tech, etc?)

Improving the way that packaging is designed needs to be done in several ways: Governments and councils need to push the education of sustainable packaging to consumers so that they are more aware of packaging and can make an informed choice in the stores.

An increase of quality courses in packaging design and material and coating sciences will produce more knowledgeable people in the industry resulting in more innovation in this area.

Packaging manufacturers need to work in closer collaboration with material suppliers, research labs, material scientists etc. to produce the packaging needs of the future.

Businesses involved in packaging need to continue to invest in the education of their workforce to ensure that skilled competent people are making the right decisions in driving the changes in this industry.

## What does your company have planned in the future? Any new innovations on the horizon?

With a focus on preserving natural resources, keeping waste out of nature, and reducing emissions, the Detmold Group has launched six new sustainability objectives. Our aim is to continue to be the sustainability leader and develop new products that are in line with these six objectives:

1. Preserve Natural Resources
2. Keep Waste out of Nature
3. Reduce Emissions
4. Percentage of Fibre that is Forestry Certified or contains Recycled Content
5. Stock Range that meets Towards 2025 Targets
6. Facilities using Renewable Energy.



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## As a winner of the PIDA awards, how valuable is the award to your organisation?

Angelique Pierce, Marketing Executive, Detpak says, "Winning industry awards such as the Australasian Packaging Innovation & Design (PIDA) Award, further cements to the wider Detmold team that our sustainability journey is evolving and on track to keeping our customers ahead of the sustainability curve. Innovative design and creation are a collaboration between industry and the wider Detmold team, this award is a testament to the commitment we all have to sustainability."



## You are now eligible to enter the WorldStar Packaging Awards with this design. What are your thoughts on now being able to represent Australia and New Zealand in the prestigious global awards program?



"For Detpak, being eligible to enter the WorldStar Packaging Awards is testament to the dedicated work of the entire business in creating innovative products that serve a purpose. As an industry leader when it comes to sustainability, showcasing this truly innovative solution that was developed with industry leaders in fruit and veg, would give this product a platform to further allow other markets to be educated on what solutions exist," says Angelique Pierce, Marketing Executive, Detpak.



The Australasian Packaging Innovation & Design (PIDA) Awards are an Australia and New Zealand program that is coordinated by the Australian Institute of Packaging (AIP). The awards recognise companies and individuals who are making a significant difference in their field across Australia and New Zealand. The PIDA Awards are the exclusive entry point for Australia and New Zealand for the prestigious WorldStar Packaging Awards.

The Design Innovation of the Year company awards recognise organisations that have designed innovative packaging within each of these six manufacturing categories:

- Food
- Beverage
- Health, Beauty & Wellness
- Domestic & Household
- Labelling & Decoration
- Outside of the Box

There are four special awards available:

- Sustainable Packaging Design
- Save Food Packaging Design
- Accessible & Inclusive Packaging Design
- Marketing Award

The **Sustainable Packaging Design Special Award** is designed to recognise companies that have developed innovative packaging solutions that incorporate sustainability considerations. All entries are judged on Sustainable Packaging Design considerations such as social impact, material, source reduction, energy and recovery and what packaging changes the company is undertaking to meet the 2025 National Packaging Targets. This is also a WorldStar Packaging Awards category.



The Australian Institute of Packaging (AIP) is the peak professional body for packaging education and training in Australasia. The AIP helps shape the careers of generations of packaging professionals – from packaging technologists to international packaging business leaders along with a host of people in associated disciplines – sales and marketing, purchasing, production and environment.

### Australian Institute of Packaging

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