



PIDA

AUSTRALASIAN
PACKAGING
INNOVATION & DESIGN
AWARDS 2026

SAVE FOOD PACKAGING

SAVE FOOD PACKAGING DESIGN CRITERIA



APPLICATIONS CLOSE 27 FEBRUARY 2026

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**EXCLUSIVE ENTRY POINT FOR
AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND:
WORLDSTAR PACKAGING AWARDS**

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ANZ EXCLUSIVE ENTRY TO



**WORLDSTAR
GLOBAL
PACKAGING
AWARDS**

2026 SAVE FOOD PACKAGING DESIGN SPECIAL AWARD CRITERIA



The Australasian Institute of Packaging (AIP) in conjunction with the World Packaging Organisation (WPO), have established the Save Food Packaging Design Special Award for Australia and New Zealand, that recognises companies who are developing innovative and sustainable packaging that minimises food losses and food waste, extends shelf life and improves the supply of food.

Please consider nominating for other relevant categories at the same time for the same innovation within the 2026 PIDA Award Categories. eg: Food, Sustainable Packaging Design Special Award and Accessible & Inclusive Packaging Design. Each award category is judged independently, by different expert judges and based on specific criteria.

ARE YOU UP FOR THE CHALLENGE?

With Australia producing 7.6 million tonnes, or 312 kg per capita, of food waste every year and a Federal Government National Food Waste Strategy to halve food waste that goes to landfill by 2030 now is the time for packaging technologists to review pack designs that could minimise food waste and losses.

The consumption stage of the food supply chain is responsible for the greatest mass of food waste, and households (2.46m tonnes) alone account for more food waste than any other sector - almost one-third of the total. Restated, 71% of food that entered the market was directed towards households, and households wasted approximately 18% of the food they purchased. With this information, we all need to recognise we have an important task ahead of us to achieve the Federal Government National Food Waste Strategy of halving food waste that goes to landfill by 2030. Producers, manufacturers, retailers, food service and consumers all have a role to ensure we minimise food waste and losses.

So what role does packaging play in preventing and or minimising food waste? Whilst the primary function of packaging is to protect the content, the function of packaging to reduce food waste is rarely discussed. The connection between packaging design and food waste needs to be discussed more openly in the industry. From field to fork there are a number of possibilities for food loss and waste to occur. It has been approximated that up to one-third of the edible food produced, does not reach the fork. Without adequate intuitive packaging design features and fit-for-purpose packaging food can potentially be wasted all the way through the supply chain to the consumer. By modifying packaging designs and ensuring that Save Food Packaging Guidelines are followed food waste and loss can be minimised and/or prevented.

Save Food Packaging is designed to minimise or prevent food waste from paddock to plate using innovative and intuitive design features that can contain & protect, preserve, extend shelf life; all the while meeting global sustainable packaging targets.

DESIGN INNOVATION

1. Opportunities for packaging design to reduce or eliminate food waste can include:
 - Better facilitation or communication around portioning;
 - Expiry date/best before extension or better clarification; and
 - Left over storage solutions and recipe ideas.
2. The application may highlight a wide range of design factors that have helped to prevent food waste including*:
 - Mechanical protection.
 - Physical-chemical protection.
 - Resealability.
 - Easy to open, grip, dose and empty.
 - Contains the correct quantity and serving size.
 - Food safety/freshness information.
 - Expiry Date and Best before information.
 - Information on storage options.
 - Improved communication on packs including open, reseal, close and dispense.
 - Sustainability of the packaging design (aligning with SPG principles, ISO Certifications and company credentials, Best Practice Standards).
 - The packaging should facilitate sorting of household waste – easy to clean, separate and fold.

* Wikstrom, F., Williams, H., Verghese, K., Clune, S. (2014). *The influence of packaging attributes on consumer behaviour in food-packaging*

ENTRY CRITERIA INFORMATION

In assessing entries, the judges would like to see information provided for each of the following Save Food Packaging Design criteria where applicable. To assist judging, the information provided should highlight where possible the design aspects of the new packaging design compared with your previous pack format or a competitive pack.

SAVE FOOD PACKAGING DESIGN CRITERIA 1:

Design to contain and protect the product from spoilage & damage through manufacture, warehouse and the various stages of distribution. Provide details of primary, secondary and tertiary packaging involved. Consider palletisation & stabilisation; transport packaging & load stabilisation and the positive impact in reducing waste & spoilage from damage as a result of shocks, vibrations, temperature, moisture, infestation and chemical contamination. In this criteria, please include pack design aspects such as tamper evidence and other forms of pack design that would restrict human contamination.

SAVE FOOD PACKAGING DESIGN CRITERIA 2:

Design to preserve, enhance product appeal and extend shelf life. Provide details of improved barrier packaging & processing, i.e. Skin (vacuum), MAP & EMAP packaging format that extends shelf life and retains nutritional values. In this criteria, active and intelligent packaging can be included.

SAVE FOOD PACKAGING DESIGN CRITERIA 3:

Design to provide convenience and to not waste food in handling. Include in this criteria details of 'portion control packaging', 'easy opening and effective resealable packaging' and 'controlled dispensing and enabling the removal of the entire product from the pack'.

SAVE FOOD PACKAGING DESIGN CRITERIA 4:

Design to promote and communicate to consumers how to handle, store, prepare and reuse food products. Provide details of 'usage & storage instructions', 'explanation of how the packaging is reducing food waste'. Also provide details specific 'on pack information covering preparation & left-over ideas and if improvement have been made to 'Best Before' and 'Use By' communication.

SAVE FOOD PACKAGING DESIGN CRITERIA 5:

Design to meet the 2025 National Packaging Targets & Global Sustainable Packaging Targets. Include in this section what aspects of the 2025 National Packaging Targets have been included in the new packaging design. Indicate if the Sustainable Packaging Guidelines (SPG's), or the Australasian Recycling Label (ARL) have been applied in the development and design of the product/packaging. Outline the positive and negative changes to the environmental impacts of the packaging design as a result of the new design aspects. Please highlight how many of the Sustainable Packaging Guideline principles that your design adheres to.

SAVE FOOD PACKAGING DESIGN CRITERIA 6:

Design to meet the 2030 National Waste Targets & Global Sustainable Packaging Targets. Outline how the new packaging design aspects have been contributing to reducing or preventing food waste. Provide specific information identifying the amount or percentage reduction in food waste associated with the new design relative to a replaced packaging design or a competitor's design.

PACKAGING EXAMPLES

It is important that the samples, images and detailed explanation are provided to explain the above criteria. It is important for the judging process that samples are provided and explanation of how a packaging system/format has been modified to minimise food waste and where possible extend shelf life (i.e., a before and after examples.)

2026 SAVE FOOD PACKAGING DESIGN SPECIAL AWARD CRITERIA

Entries in the ANZ Save Food Packaging Design Special Award will be considered in the following three categories:

1. Agriculture - Industrial.
2. Food Services.
3. Food E-Commerce.
4. Retail (primary packaging).

To assist award entrants to determine which category their packaging system/format would fit, please review the following definitions:

1. AGRICULTURE: Packaging systems/format that are used to contain and distribute fresh produce from farm to wholesale market and/or retail outlet. Entrants should demonstrate how their packaging protects the fresh produce and reduces/prevents damage during transit and/or display while also minimising food waste. This may be through reducing crushing, enhanced cushioning, enhanced ventilation, increased shelf life and avoiding double handling.

2. FOOD SERVICES: Packaging systems/format that are used to contain and distribute food into food service establishments. Entrants to demonstrate how their packaging contains, protects and distributes their food product from manufacturing location through to the food service establishment, while also extending shelf life and minimising food waste. This may be through bulk sizing, individual servings, opening and or dispensing features, resealable - re-closable features, barrier materials and improved communication on pack.

3. E-COMMERCE: Packaging systems/format for food ecommerce that will provide consumer experience, commercial sustainability, product protection and logistics and transport. Entrants to demonstrate how their packaging contains, protects and distributes their food product from manufacturing location through to the food ecommerce distribution chain, while also extending shelf life and minimising food waste. This may be through bulk sizing, individual servings, opening and or dispensing features, resealable - re-closable features, barrier materials and improved communication on pack.

4. RETAIL (PRIMARY PACKAGING): Packaging system/format that is used to contain, protect and distribute food from manufacture to retail shelf and then through to consumer use (e.g., in household, on the go). Entrants are to demonstrate how their packaging contains, protects and enables the consumer to store and use the food item, while also extending shelf life and minimising food waste. This may be through individual servings, bulk sizing, opening and or dispensing features, resealable/re-closeable features, barrier materials and improved communication on pack.



Careful design consideration needs to be made to ensure that packaging identification is actually designed to Contain, Protect, Preserve, Transport, Dispense and Reseal.

- Food Waste needs to be included in packaging design and Life Cycle Assessments (LCA) of packaging systems provides helpful data in understanding the environmental impacts involved in food production and where food waste is occurring.
- The judges are not wanting to see competing elements in the design e.g., entrants moving away from a recyclable packaging format to a non-recyclable packaging format.
- It is important that the application provides samples, images and detailed explanation of how the packaging system/format has been modified to minimise food waste and where possible extend shelf life (i.e., a before and after examples.)
- The company needs to be able to identify particular aspects, functions, features of the packaging system/format/materials that enable food waste to be minimised. The judges should not have to be guessing where the change/innovation has happened.
- There also needs to be a balance of the food to packaging ratio - it has to be fit for purpose - but at the same time the packaging innovation should not be encouraging significant increases in packaging material use. It is important to achieve a balance of minimising packaging material with minimising food waste and also extending shelf life where possible.
- Each award category is established around 'packaging design that minimises food waste and extends shelf life' - in other words, the award is not focused solely a company redirecting their food waste from landfill to composting or animal feed. Whilst valorisation is an extremely positive change and one that will be considered during the judging, it is the whole-of-life product and packaging environmental impacts that will be the focus of the award.



2026 SAVE FOOD PACKAGING DESIGN SPECIAL AWARD CRITERIA



AUSTRALIAN AND/OR NEW ZEALAND PACKAGING DESIGN & INNOVATION

All entrants must confirm that the design submitted has been either developed either in, or for, Australia and/or New Zealand. (The innovation must be new on-shelf in the last 18 months) NB: Should you wish to enter the same product in multiple categories the first entry will cost \$550 + GST with additional category entries costing \$250 + GST per entry.

JUDGING

The PIDA Award judges are leading experts in the field and have long-standing expertise in this field. All entrants understand that the judges will hold the final decision on the winner and no correspondence will be entered into on the subject of their decision. Finalists will be announced before the 2026 PIDA Awards ceremony, which will be held on the Tuesday 28 July, Aviary, Crown Complex, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

SAMPLE PRODUCT-PACKAGING SYSTEM/FORMAT

It is a mandatory requirement that all entries submitted must include 3x physical samples of the packaging; including any Before and After samples. All entrants understand that once the sample has been submitted that they become the property of the Australasian Institute of Packaging Inc. The samples will not be returned to the entrant unless the entrant incurs all costs associated with the return delivery.

Samples to be delivered to: 2026 PIDA Awards, 19 Jumbuck Street, Jindalee, Queensland, 4074, Australia. If entries reflect design innovation change to an existing product/package it is essential to provide judges with samples of both formats. Images at minimum are required for Before and After re-designs.

Frozen, Chilled and Short shelf life samples – should be clearly identified to indicate this and forwarded in protective packaging and conditions. Arrangement to the AIP Australasian Office should be made for the best timing for these packs to be sent so judges will view the product in optimal conditions.

PROPRIETARY INFORMATION

Should your submission include any proprietary information on your packaging design systems please ensure that you mark that section with 'private and confidential' so that the judges understand that the information provided is for the sole purpose of evaluating the submission.

PROMOTIONS & MARKETING

The AIP and the WPO reserves the right to publish details of the winners of the PIDA Awards on websites, trade magazines, at tradeshow and on-line media outlets, nationally and internationally, to acknowledge the winners and raise the profile of the award program. The AIP will showcase the samples after the awards in multiple exhibitions.

WINNERS ANNOUNCEMENT

Winners will be announced at the 2026 Australasian Packaging Innovation & Design Awards ceremony on Tuesday 28 July, Aviary, Crown Complex, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

SUBMISSIONS *UPDATED

All nominations for awards must be submitted via the online platform <https://pida.awardsplatform.com> Once you have created a user account in the competition platform, simply fill in the submission form. There is a limit of words for each section. You can also link to external web pages with additional information or a video about your submission. Please upload up to five high resolution images to not only help the judges but to also be used in any marketing material for the awards program. Please include images of ARL on-pack. The judges also encourage all entrants to submit video talking about the criteria and showing the packaging in real-time. Please answer the criteria on the video and upload to your own YouTube or Vimeo platform. In addition, the judges require 3x samples of the pack design including any before and after sample packs, if available. With the on-line platform you can save your entry and finish it later. Don't forget to complete all sections of the form by the 27 February 2026.

RECOGNITION:

1. A trophy will be awarded to the Gold Winner. Silver & Bronze will receive a plaque and High Commendations will receive a Certificate.
2. All winners will be recognised within the AIP Newsletter, website and communication channels, as well as within the wider packaging and processing industry trade magazines and websites.
3. All winners will receive a PIDA Award winner logo for use within their marketing material and promotions.
4. All Gold, Silver, Bronze and High Commendation winners will be eligible to enter in to THE SAME category within the WorldStar Packaging Awards in October 2026. Entries to the WorldStar Packaging Awards enable international recognition and opportunities for the nominees. The WorldStar Packaging Awards will incur a cost to enter by the nominee.