



**2017 SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING DESIGN
SPECIAL AWARD - RETAIL
GOLD WINNER**

Pact Group

rPET Moisturelock Meat Tray



Key Outcomes and Measurement

50%

Post-consumer rPET resin
used in the design

100%

Recyclable tray



Supporting New Zealand
PET recycling



Committed to 2025
National Packaging Targets



Accepted in kerbside
recycling



Replaces soaker pads



Shaped cells in the bottom
of the tray to collect fluid



Replaces expanded
polystyrene (EPS) trays



Clear PET tray



Supports the circular
economy

PACT
GROUP

Company: Pact Group

Product: rPET Moisturelock Meat Tray

Country: Australia

Pact Group is a leading provider of specialty packaging solutions in Australasia, servicing both consumer and industrial sectors. Pact specialises in the manufacture and supply of a range of packaging solutions, including rigid plastic. The vision of Pact Group is to achieve a circular economy through reuse, recycling and packaging solutions.

The winning entry, rPET (Recycled Polyethylene Terephthalate) Moisturelock Meat Tray, is an example of the Pact Group commitment to sustainability. The tray comprises 50% recycled, clear material that is accepted by every kerbside recycling scheme. The real innovation lies in the ability of the tray to capture fluid in the base using 'dimples' that hold the fluid even when tilted or turned upside down. Their cross-functional team has created a product that cements Pact Group as leaders in the circular economy.



- **rPET Moisturelock Meat Tray is a multi-award winning innovation that:**
 - ✓ Removes EPS meat trays
 - ✓ Removes soaker pads
 - ✓ Uses recycled post-consumer PET resin
- **The design was the result of work to support a New Zealand supermarket chain in their goal to reduce EPS.**
- **Recycled PET was selected because of its relative availability for food-grade packaging.**
- **Consumers and industry benefit from the design.**
- **For the future, a mix of education, policy, investment and technology are need to create change in packaging design.**

What is sustainable packaging to you?

Pact Group's vision is to lead the circular economy through packaging, reuse and recycling solutions. In the context of this packaging innovation, they wanted to use locally sourced post-consumer recycled content to reduce waste to landfill, keeping in circulation well into the future.

For Steve Long, Designer, PACT Group, *"sustainable packaging is something that's fit for purpose and can be recycled and is not a disposable item that goes to landfill. It should be recycled, going back around in the stream."* Steve says that to design a sustainable package is to ensure the food is protected with a package that can be reused, coming back into the system to make another tray.

What is the story behind the design?

The product was first developed in 2012. Pact Group knew that creating a suitable alternative to the hard to dispose of expanded polystyrene (EPS) meat trays has been a long running global environmental challenge. Hundreds of millions of EPS trays are sent to landfill every year because they are not accepted via kerbside schemes. The lightweight properties of EPS means it can escape from landfill and becomes rubbish which can harm wildlife should they ingest the material.

A tender advertised by a New Zealand supermarket chain gave Steve Long, Designer, PACT Group, the chance to explore how to design a meat tray that wasn't EPS, that didn't need a soaker pad, and could use recycled PET resin. The result has been an innovative design that keeps liquid in place and optimises air in the tray and uses rPET.

Steve says the main reason behind using post-consumer resin (PCR) PET flake is it's one of the most popular resins. Steve explains, *"PET is in soft drink bottles and many other types of food packaging, so the recycling stream is there. We can gather postconsumer waste and, through our process, use it to make new meat trays."*

Steve worked with a cross-functional team at Pact to develop the award-winning rPET Moisturelock tray.



Consumer and industry benefits

Pact Group says the rPET Moisturelock tray has received positive feedback from both customers and industry.

For customers, because of the 'dimples' designed in the bottom of the tray to capture the liquid, they no longer have to worry about any meat fluids sully their shopping or having to remove and dispose of the unsightly liquid soaker pad prior to preparing their meat. Also, in a survey by Pact Group, 88% of customers rated the overall performance of the packs as better than the traditional EPS meat trays packs.

According to Mike Sammons, Sustainability Manager, Foodstuffs New Zealand Ltd, *"the business decided to ask itself – could we find a truly workable, sustainable alternative to the 'destined for landfill' foam meat trays? Any replacement product needs to look better, work just as well, be available at the same cost and be 100% recyclable at kerbside. We are determined to listen to our customers who have been clear in telling us it's time to move towards packaging that is more environmentally friendly."*

The meat packing industry also benefits from labour savings. Depending on the plant, the manual loading of the soaker pads into meat trays equates to approximately 70,000 hours of labour for the meat processor.

Another design feature that was built into the tray design is the patented 'no-tear rolled edge' technology. This important feature allows for the tray to be over-wrapped without piercing or tearing the film.

For example, for supermarkets with in-house butchers, traditional EPS tray machinery can easily transition to Moisturelock trays. Other rigid trays have sharp edges that can tear the overwrap film when used on these machines. The rolled edge on Moisturelock eliminates this problem.

Lastly, according to PIQET (Packaging Impact Quick Evaluation Tool), by moving from EPS trays to rPET Moisturelock, there is the equivalent of 14 Olympic size swimming pools of polystyrene saved from landfill every year. For councils, the avoidance of cost to landfill equates to NZD1.8 million per annum.

Including both PCR and virgin PET in the design, because the tray is a one-piece product from one polymer, the tray is 100% recyclable.

Multi-award winning design

Pact Group's recycled polyethylene terephthalate (rPET) Moisturelock meat tray has won a prestigious Green Ribbon Award for environmental waste minimisation. The Green Ribbon Awards recognise the outstanding contributions made by individuals, organisations, businesses and communities to protecting and enhancing New Zealand's environment.

Steve Long says the Green Ribbon Award was one of many received for the Moisturelock tray. *"The first award the design won was the Australasian Packaging Innovation & Design (PIDA) Award,"* says Steve. Since then, the design has won a Pact Group global innovation award for the company and more recently, a WorldStar Packaging Award.

Steve says the design has helped to prompt the industry to look for alternatives that remove the liquid soaker pads. *"The enquiries keep coming, and I think there will be a multitude of new trays coming that build on this design in the future,"* Steve said.

What about the future?

For the future, Pact Group is focused on achieving a circular economy in their product range. Important elements to achieve this include education, policy/legislation and co-investment by government to upgrade domestic recycling infrastructure.

In New Zealand, Steve Long, Designer, PACT Group agrees and says, *"I think better collection and sorting at the material recovery facilities (MRFs) will help. If you can expand what's collected, how it's sorted, then you could improve everything."* Challenges currently exist with separating black, colours and some white packaging, depending on the MRF. *"By investing in technology, for example, being able to separate polymers by colour, this would be a great help in increasing resource recovery,"* Steve said.



What does winning an Australasian Packaging Innovation & Design (PIDA) Award mean?

Steve Long, Designer, PACT Group says that winning the PIDA was a surprise.

"The marketing team led the submission, so to hear we had won the PIDA was a nice surprise," he said.

For PACT Group, winning the PIDA reinforces their commitment to the circular economy and their position as leaders in sustainable packaging design.



**PACT Group
Receives
Global**



**WORLDSTAR
WINNER 2018**

**Recognition with
WorldStar Packaging Award**

Following the win at the PIDA awards PACT Group was then awarded a WorldStar Packaging Award which provided global recognition for the design.



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.

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