

PLANET PROTECTOR PACKAGING



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

Planet Protector Packaging

Woolpack



Key Outcomes and Measurement

7million

Estimated number of expanded polystyrene (EPS) boxes replaced since inception

70%

Savings on storage and movement costs from using Woolpack packaging



7 million dollars in revenue given to sheep farmers and processors



Woolpack is a natural cooling system designed to support stable e-commerce for cold chains.



Made from unusable sheep waste wool



Reduced ice pack usage means new lower delivery costs



Less fuel and transport costs with more boxes fitted on trucks



Reusable and recyclable food-grade liner



Wool is washed with only soap and hot water



Woolpack liner material is compostable



Company: Planet Protector Packaging

Product: Woolpack

Country: Australia

Planet Protector Packaging was established in January 2016. Their flagship product, Woolpack aims to reduce fossil-fuel based packaging through waste wool based thermal insulation. Woolpack is an environmentally friendly product that transforms supply chains and is a 'game changer' in high performance packaging options for many different industries (e.g. food, seafood, pharmaceutical).

This winning entry provides cold chains with scientifically proven environmental performance to deliver temperature sensitive goods. Since winning the PIDA Awards, Planet Protector has expanded its geographical footprint with operations in Sydney, Tasmania and Auckland and has won numerous packaging and sustainability awards globally.



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- Planet Protector manufactures Woolpack – ‘Australia’s most sustainable packaging’.
- Woolpack comprises a proprietary blend of felted waste wool, encased in either compostable or recyclable outer layers to deliver thermal protection for food and pharmaceutical products.
- Planet Protector Packaging works with clients to customise ‘fit for purpose’ Woolpack solutions.
- Legislation requiring more sustainable packaging or incentives to convert are necessary – as are R&D and education for the future.

What is sustainable packaging to you?

Joanne Howarth MAIP, Co-founder and CEO of Planet Protector Packaging sees sustainable packaging as something that delivers the product to market with the least amount of impact to production, to transport, to its use, and its disposal. The winning entry, Woolpack, addresses each of these areas.

Joanne explained, *“we wanted to use a natural fibre for our packaging, and a fibre that delivered thermal properties. We found waste wool provided that – its actually the best natural insulator on the planet.”* Joanne and the team found waste wool could deliver a product that not only helped their customers, but with performance superior to EPS, with the benefit of using a waste product. Folding flat, and being compostable¹ Woolpack reduces its impact in transport, in use, and at end of life.



What is the story behind the design?

After more than two decades working with the food service industry, and as a seafood market owner, Joanne saw her fair share of EPS boxes. Contracted to build a leading home food delivery service, sending out thousands of EPS boxes a week, Joanne says, *“I felt like I was single handedly destroying the planet.”* Joanne explained they had customers who would cancel subscriptions because of the constant stream of EPS. That was the trigger to start the research to uncover a more sustainable option.

Joanne saw the broader move in society away from plastics and polymers, and after spending many months researching various options, she came across a wool option in the UK. *“I spent the next 12 months talking to farmers, visiting and connecting to secure supplies.”*

“We brought the product here but we had to formulate it to perform in Australian conditions,” explained Joanne.

“We can now support companies who want to offer sustainable delivery options, but also want to expand their businesses into new delivery regions because we can offer Woolpack. They can send products to the Northern Territory, or far north Queensland with a conscience knowing their products are delivered with thermal protection and their delivery boxes have sustainable end of life options,” Joanne explained.

Four years on, Joanne and her team supply Australian and New Zealand food service, seafood and pharmaceutical companies with wool-based box liners that are tweaked and modified for each application.

¹ The wool itself is compostable and can be combined with a compostable outer layer option

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Rising through the challenges

Joanne and her team realised from early on they were entering a stronghold market, one accustomed to EPS boxes. But they could also see some were looking for an alternative.

"Packaging is not always high on the priority list of many businesses. Because we have a customisable approach, we are able to work with clients to understand their supply chain. Our clients see the benefit of Woolpack; they've grown to believe in the product as much as we do – It's a great thing," says Joanne.

What about the future?

Joanne says legislation is perhaps the biggest motivator for changes to packaging for the future.

"We need to see policy applied to products with a negative impact on the environment," says Joanne.

Joanne also says that the industry is moving very fast, and that R&D needs to keep up. *"More education will help too,"* says Joanne.

*because
there's no
planet B!*



**we are in the race
to become the market
leader in sustainable
thermal packaging that
does not harm the planet.**



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PACKAGING

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

Joanne Howarth MAIP, Co-founder and CEO of Planet Protector Packaging says, "We entered the PIDA awards when the business was only 12 or 18 months old. As a start-up - even though we were really hopeful - we never thought we would win and yet we won,"

"The PIDA has given us recognition. Breaking into an industry so accustomed to one product for cold chains, EPS, was tough; the PIDA helped us to break through with credibility."



Planet Protector Packaging Receives Global Recognition with WorldStar Packaging Award



Following the win at the PIDA awards Planet Protector Packaging was then awarded multiple WorldStar Packaging Awards 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
- Accessible & Inclusive Packaging Design
- Save Food 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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