

AIP launches on-line Training Courses



The AIP is pleased to advise that the virtual training course series has kicked off with over 40 people in attendance at Joe Foster FAIP's, **Flexible Packaging: Now & Into the Future** course in June. A huge thank you must go to Joe and his team who spent hours making up samples packs to post to all of the attendees to ensure that they were in front of them during the on-line training. Joe also staged a studio of samples around him so that everyone could see the flexible packaging while he was presenting. The course was very well-received for our first ever virtual training event.

The AIP has four more training courses in the series available for anyone to attend from anywhere in the world. Dates and further details are available on the events section on the AIP website www.aipack.com.au

Informa Markets & WPO Webinar series is underway



The first webinar in the five-part series being run by Informa Markets and the World Packaging Organisation (WPO), and supported by the Australian Institute of Packaging (AIP) was held in late June with Prof Pierre Pienaar FAIP, CPP as the guest speaker. The participants came from over 50 countries across the globe and there were some informative questions at the end of the webinar.

The AIP is proud to have contributed to this webinar series and will have speakers at three of the up-coming webinar starting with the one to be held on the 22 of July. To see the full webinar please visit the link https://youtu.be/l6l_ckyEZL8

NEW MEMBERS

The AIP would like to welcome the following new Members...

NAME	STATE	GRADE
Pippa Corry	NSW	Member
Lis Garbin	NZ	Member
Ken Morgan	NSW	Associate
Yurina Nam	QLD	Associate
Sheahan Perera	QLD	Associate
David Sutton	VIC	Member

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JULY 2020

Deep Dive – The Value of Data & Insights for Packaging In Australia (APCO Webinar)

WHEN: **1 July**

WHERE: Webinar

WHAT: During this webinar APCO will take a deep-dive into the key findings and statistics that have informed our strategic approach to delivering the 2025 National Packaging Targets and building a circular economy for packaging in Australia.

AIP Introduction to Sustainable Packaging Design On-Line Training Course

WHEN: **7 July**

WHERE: On-Line via Zoom

WHAT: How do you work your way through the maze of demands to change packaging to meet environmental challenges? This Training Course is designed to assist anyone who is responsible in their business to make packaging changes to meet 'War on Waste' questions, changes to retailer and consumer trends and behaviours; while not spending any more money at the end.

The Training Course will provide attendees a better understanding of the practical guidelines and criteria needed to design and develop sustainable packaging including the Sustainability Hierarchy of Reduce, Reuse then Recycle and the Circular Economy approach to packaging and the environment.

Discussions will also cover Plastic, Glass and Metal packaging and their impact on the environment and whether the use of non-renewable resources, plant based bioplastics, compostable and recycled materials and various tools can assist their business to understand the full life of packaging. This will involve the impact of 'Food or Product Waste'.

TRAINER:



Ralph Moyle FAIP, CPP
Education Coordinator
Australian Institute of Packaging (AIP)



* = 12.5
CPP PTS

AIP Members to present A Designer's Guide to the Circular Economy and Sustainable Packaging (APCO Webinar)

WHEN: **8 July**

WHERE: Via Zoom

WHAT: This webinar will be exploring two important streams of packaging design – the creative and the technical – and asking how professionals in both fields can work together more closely to deliver better sustainability outcomes.

Topics for discussion include:

- The role of creatives and designers in the circular economy.
- The scope of packaging design processes and the ways different professionals can influence sustainability outcomes.
- Insights into the challenges and opportunities creative and technical teams face during packaging design.
- Powerful opportunities for sustainability when both teams work more closely together.
- Best practice case studies for beautiful, functional and Sustainable Packaging Design.

Speakers:



Pippa Corry MAIP
Founder and Director
Philo and Co



Ralph Moyle FAIP, CPP
Education Coordinator
Australian Institute of Packaging (AIP)



* = 1
CPP PT



JULY 2020

Australian Institute of Packaging (AIP) Members to access Webinar for Free

How to Utilise Advanced Simulation for Achieving Sustainability Goals Webinar (IoPP)

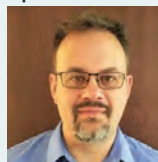
WHEN: **14 July**

WHERE: Via Zoom

WHAT: As part of the partnership with the IoPP, all AIP Members will have access to a 'How to Utilise Advanced Simulation for Achieving Sustainability Goals' Webinar for Free on the Tuesday, July 14th 2020. There is significant momentum in the packaging industry to provide sustainable solutions in packaging. Consumers are demanding that companies address their concerns.

There are a handful of ways companies are moving forward to address the consumer sediment. This includes utilising engineering tools to explore options to provide sustainable packaging solutions and meet the typical requirements of their packages. The focus of this webinar is on how to utilise advanced simulation tools to provide a path forward for sustainability objectives.

Speaker:



Rob States
Principal
Stress Engineering Services



Rob States has over 20 years of experience working in plastics and packaging. He holds a BS in Plastics Engineering and an MBA and is listed as an inventor on multiple packaging patents for companies such as CHEP, BP, WD-40, and BD. Rob started his career in corporate packaging at Procter & Gamble, then went to Newell Brands as a Senior Engineer in Rubbermaid Home Products. He has worked in over 200 manufacturing facilities over the last 16 years and completed hundreds of packaging projects. As a partner with Stress Engineering Services his role is to guide the business by recognising the needs in the market and developing the appropriate services. His role revolves around four categories of services: new packaging development, equipment development, productivity projects, and failure remediation.

Due to the different time zones it would be difficult for AIP Members to attend the live webinar. All AIP Members to email info@aipack.com.au before the 8 July to register to view the rebroadcast. The AIP will arrange your FREE access to the rebroadcast of this IoPP webinar - a USD \$99 saving and special benefit of your AIP membership.

Non-members: Like what you see? Email info@aipack.com.au to request details on becoming an AIP Member.

An introduction to Life Cycle Assessments for Packaging (APCO Webinar)

WHEN: **15 July**

WHERE: Via Zoom

WHAT: This week, to coincide with the launch of our new Member resource, Understanding Life Cycle Assessments for Packaging in Australia, we are exploring Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) and how it works in partnership with other packaging sustainability tools, including PREP and the Sustainable Packaging Guidelines (SPGs).

AIP Future Of Sustainable Labelling On-Line Training Course - Updated Course

WHEN: **21 July**

WHERE: On-Line via Zoom

WHAT: How do you select the right type of label to suit the package to carry the product branding from the filling and labelling line, right through to the consumer, and then enable the package to be effectively recycled? Self-adhesive labelling is the most versatile method of product decoration, being innovative and eye catching for such a wide variety of packages.

However, selecting the wrong label can cause major issues downstream when the package is sorted at a material recovery facility (MRF) for recycling.

This training course is designed to give a comprehensive guide to navigate through the myriad of sustainable labelling options, combined with the PREP Design aspects that are key to selecting the right Australasian Recycling Label helping consumers keep package recyclability at the forefront.

The course will provide attendees with an understanding of the types of self-adhesive labels and their properties, which have been designed with specific selection criteria in mind, and are key to the selection of the right label. Permanent, removable, repositionable and wash-off adhesives, combined with the optimum chemical composition to comply with regulations for safe use on foods/pharmaceuticals, are among the considerations that must be made.

Then, having selected the adhesive, how do you combine the adhesive and label face to achieve optimum performance?

TRAINER:



Dr Carol Kilcullen-Lawrence, FAIP, CPP
Sustainability Consultant
UPM Raflatac





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JULY 2020

Informa Markets & WPO Webinar 2:

How COVID-19 is impacting the role that packaging plays when discussing Food Safety & Food Integrity

WHEN: **22 July**

WHERE: Via Zoom

WHAT: Webinar 2 in the series will discuss how COVID-19 is impacting the packaging industry in relation to the Role that Packaging plays in relation to Food Safety & Food Integrity. The interactive session will include a global panel of experts who will discuss Food Safety/Integrity, Innovative Packaging Designs for Food Safety, Active and Intelligent Packaging and Track and Trace/Labelling.

The Panellists will include:



Dr Johannes Bergmair
General Secretary
World Packaging Organisation (WPO)



Ralph Moyle FAIP, CPP
Education Coordinator
Australian Institute of Packaging (AIP)



Andrew Manly
Communications Director
Active & Intelligent Packaging
Industry Association (AIPIA)



Surendra Soni
Sector Marketing Director – Fluids, Processed
Foods, Ready Meals
Sealed Air Packaging Co Thailand



Facilitator
Prof Pierre Pienaar MSc, FAIP, CPP
President- World Packaging Organisation (WPO)
Education Director - Australian Institute of Packaging (AIP)



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Plastic Free July special: Building a better approach to plastic with behavioural science (APCO Webinar)

WHEN: **29 July**

WHERE: Via Zoom

WHAT: As the 10th anniversary of Plastic Free July comes to a close, we are exploring how behaviour science insights could help us deliver better environmental outcomes around plastic.

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AUGUST 2020

AIP New World Of Plastics Technology: Polymers & Recycling On-Line Training Course - NEW COURSE

WHEN: 11 August

WHERE: On-Line via Zoom

WHAT: Today there are hundreds of identified 'species' of synthetic polymers. Any of these is available in a range of molecular masses, most can be influenced by processing conditions. Therefore the choice in plastics is almost limitless. Polymer science is the subfield of materials science concerned with polymers, primarily synthetic polymers such as plastics. The field of polymer science includes researchers in multiple disciplines including chemistry, physics, and engineering. This Training Course is intended for those that have spent a number of years in some related plastics industry.

TRAINER:



Prof Pierre Pienaar MSc, FAIP, CPP
Education Director
Australian Institute of Packaging (AIP)



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Informa Markets & WPO Webinar 3: How COVID-19 is impacting Sustainable Packaging and Global Recycling Targets

WHEN: 19 August

WHERE: Via Zoom

WHAT: Webinar 3 in the series will discuss how COVID-19 is impacting the packaging industry in relation to Sustainable Packaging & Global Recycling Targets. The interactive session will include a global panel of experts who will discuss Global Sustainable Design Targets, the revival of Single Use Packaging, the revival of plastics packaging to secure food and Littering/Collection contaminated PPE - recycling issues.

The Panellists will include:



Aslihan Arikan
President - Asian Packaging Federation (APF)
Vice President Education - World Packaging Organisation (WPO)



Chakravarthi AVPS
Global Ambassador
World Packaging Organisation (WPO)



Henky Wibawa
President
Indonesian Packaging Federation (IPF)



Nerida Kelton MAIP
Executive Director - Australian Institute of Packaging (AIP)
ANZ Board Member - World Packaging Organisation (WPO)



Facilitator
Prof Pierre Pienaar MSc, FAIP, CPP
President- World Packaging Organisation (WPO)
Education Director - Australian Institute of Packaging (AIP)





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SEPTEMBER 2020

AIP Implementing the Sustainable Packaging Guidelines Within Your Business On-Line Training Course - NEW COURSE

WHEN: **1 September**

WHERE: On-Line via Zoom

WHAT: The 'Implementing the Sustainable Packaging Guidelines Within Your Business' Training Course will enable companies to deep-dive into how to implement Sustainable Packaging Design into your existing and new packaging development processes to ensure that the business is reducing the environmental footprint of all packaging where possible, and at the same time meeting the 2025 National Packaging Targets.

The Sustainable Packaging Guidelines (SPGs) have been established to assist the design and manufacture of packaging that meets the sometimes conflicting demands of the market, consumer protection and the environment. Sustainable Packaging ultimately ensures that the design provides the lowest possible environmental impact compared to existing or conventional packaging. Sometimes achieving the lowest possible environmental impact can be challenging, particularly when balancing various environmental criteria with other functional and commercial considerations.

TRAINER:



Ralph Moyle FAIP, CPP
Education Coordinator
Australian Institute of Packaging (AIP)



* = 12.5
CPP PTS

PROUD PARTNER OF THE AIP



Informa Markets & WPO Webinar 4: How COVID-19 is impacting the role that packaging plays in Food Waste and Food Insecurity

WHEN: **23 September**

WHERE: Via Zoom

WHAT: Webinar 4 in the series will discuss how COVID-19 is impacting the packaging industry in relation to the Role that Packaging plays in relation to the Role that Packaging Plays in Foods Waste and Food Insecurity.



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FOODTECH PACKTECH 2020



WHEN: **22 to 24 September**

WHERE: ASB Showgrounds
Auckland

New Zealand

WHAT: New Zealand's leading trade show for the food & beverage manufacturing and supply chain industries.

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OCTOBER 2020

AIP Australasian Packaging Conference

WHEN: 6 to 7 October

WHERE: TBA

PROPAK ASIA 2020: NEW DATES

PROPAK ASIA

WHEN: 20 to 23 October

WHERE: BITECC (Bangkok International Trade & Exhibition Centre)
Bangkok, Thailand

WHAT: ProPak Asia 2020 is the largest annual Processing & Packaging trade event for the ASEAN region with nine industry focused zones bringing buyers from across the world.

Informa Markets & WP Webinar 5:

How COVID-19 is impacting Global Supply Chains

WHEN: 21 October

WHERE: Via Zoom

NOVEMBER 2020

Australasian Waste & Recycling Expo 2020: NEW DATES



WHEN: 25 to 26 November

WHERE: ICC Sydney, Darling Harbour

WHAT: Australians are looking towards the waste and recycling industry to drive positive change. As the premier business event for the waste, recycling and resource recovery sector, the Australasian Waste & Recycling Expo (AWRE) is where the best come together to join forces for a world of solutions towards a cleaner, more sustainable future.

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Up-Coming Tradeshows: New Dates

Update your calendar for 2020 and 2021

February & March 2021

Interpack: NEW DATES



WHEN: 23 Feb to 3 March 2021

WHERE: Dusseldorf, Germany

WHAT: Internationally the most important event in the packaging sector and the related process industry, interpack will be held at the Düsseldorf Exhibition Centre. Both exhibitors and visitors can look forward not only to an entirely new Hall 1 and a new Entrance Süd but they can also benefit from an overall clearer hall structure with even more sharply focused segments. This means even shorter distances thereby making for more efficient trade fair visits.

Interpack's unique selling point is its distinctive solutions package and coverage of entire value chains. This includes processes and machinery for the packaging and processing of packaged goods plus packaging media and materials and the manufacturing of packaging aids as well as services for the packaging business.

The last edition of interpack attracted 2,866 exhibitors and 170,899 visitors from 168 countries and thanks to busy orders from three-quarters of the decision-makers among them made for significant impulses in the sector.

April 2021

Drupa: NEW DATES



WHEN: 20 to 30 April 2021

WHERE: Dusseldorf, Germany

WHAT: There is no other industry event that has such great international appeal as the leading trade fair for printing technologies. More than half of its visitors come to drupa with specific investment projects.

drupa provides crucial impulses for print, media, packaging production, and industrial applications – especially in the vertical markets as well. The world's leading trade fair for printing technologies offers outstanding networking opportunities and potential for excellent business dealings. This is where innovations are brought into the market, new business models are developed, and new partnerships are formed.

drupa is an international magnet for visitor target groups from a wide variety of industries. In addition to the printing and packaging industry, there are also groups from vertical markets such as consumer goods, luxury goods, cosmetics, bank and safety technology, and many more. More than half of its visitors come to drupa with specific investment projects. **AIP Members to receive discounted visitor tickets.**

July 2021

Foodpro: NEW DATES

WHEN: 25 to 28 July 2021

WHERE: Sydney Showground, Sydney Olympic Park

WHAT: Foodpro is Australia's leading food manufacturing event, showcasing design innovations, new technology and the latest in processing and packaging solutions. Whether it's through exhibiting at the triennial event, or taking advantage of the digital opportunities available, foodpro brings the food industry expertise to one place.



APCO unveils priority projects schedule

APCO PRIORITY PROJECTS – FY21

The Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation (APCO) recently announced its schedule of priority projects for the 2020/21 financial year. Developed to drive targeted progress towards the 2025 National Packaging Targets, the 23 projects cover priority areas including re-use, recycling, composting, recycled content uptake and the phase out of problematic, single-use plastics.

The program was developed in consultation with, and will be overseen by, APCO's 2020 Working Groups – a community of 160 participants, representing the entire packaging supply chain.

The working groups, comprising National Packaging Targets Implementation, Design, Systems and Education, and Material Circularity, will each be responsible for the delivery of several projects structured across the next financial year.

All projects connect with the strategies outlined in Our Packaging Future, the framework for how Australia will deliver the 2025 Targets.

Brooke Donnelly, CEO, APCO commented: *"This comprehensive program of projects has been designed to support Australia's collective effort as we transition to a circular economy for packaging. Over the next year, the APCO working groups will work collaboratively to address these issues and develop a range of strategies, materials and resources to ensure Australia's supply chain is fully equipped to deliver the 2025 National Packaging Targets."*

The project schedule was officially launched during the weekly APCO Community Webinar in late June. The webinar included insights into how different organisations will contribute to and participate in this work – and learnings on progressing your own organisation's journey to delivering the 2025 Targets. The webinar can be watched again here.

Project outcomes will be shared regularly on the APCO website: www.packagingcovenant.org.au

About Food and Beverage Industry News

Food & Beverage Industry News, Australia's highest circulating food and beverage manufacturing publication, offers multiple channels across print, online and events.

One of the key components in the industry is food and beverage packaging. It has a huge part to play due to how it keeps products safe, fresh and clean. Along with all the other components that make up the industry, the magazine highlights the latest innovations, products and services. The publication covers an array of special features in the magazine, from the Internet of Things and packaging, through to exporting and plant and machinery.

July Feature – Product Showcases

FoodPro may have been postponed, yet companies still need to get their products and services out to market. In this issue they will look at some of the latest products and technologies being released into the market in 2020.

August Feature – Food Waste

Food waste is a huge issue, with just over 7.3 million tonnes generated in Australia alone. Primary industry contributes more than 30 per cent to that figure, and with both food and packaging waste targets being set, now is the time to act if you are provider of products and services to this market.

September Feature – Processing and Packaging

Food processing and packaging are two essential ingredients in the food and beverage industry. In this issue they look at the latest processing and packaging technologies.

The publication also delves into packaging role in food waste and the on-going targets set to reduce waste.

For further information visit <https://www.foodmag.com.au/aip-partnership/>

Food & Beverage Industry News

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The magazine also highlights the latest innovations, products and services from the Internet of Things and packaging, through to exporting and plant and machinery.



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ANZ WorldStar Packaging Award Trophies have started to arrive



In what was going to be the largest contingent of Australians and New Zealanders, over 50 people from 11x companies were booked and ready to head to Interpack in May 2020 to attend the gala WorldStar Packaging Awards. Unfortunately due to COVID-19, Interpack was postponed and the difficult decision was made to cancel the 2020 WorldStar Packaging Awards.

Over the last month the World Packaging Organisation (WPO) have been busy wrapping, packing and shipping hundreds of trophies across the globe, so that all of the WorldStar Packaging Award winners can still celebrate the prestigious international recognition. The good news is that customs has started to open the borders and the trophies are slowly arriving across the two countries.

Winners from Australia and New Zealand received the third highest amount of WorldStar Packaging Awards in the world behind Japan and China and this is an incredible recognition for the annual Packaging Innovation & Design (PIDA) Awards program which is the exclusive feeder program for the two countries into the WorldStar Packaging Awards.

The AIP once again congratulates all of the companies across ANZ who not only won PIDA Awards, but then went on to win WorldStar Packaging Awards for their innovative designs. We look forward to seeing more photos as the trophies arrive...



ANZ WorldStar Packaging Award Trophies have started to arrive



First and Third Generation of same family recognised with WorldStar Packaging Awards



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Impact International was awarded a WorldStar Packaging Award for the Sarah, Craig and Margorie 100% recycled PE and sugar cane PE tubes in the Health & Personal Care and Aleks Lajovic, Managing Director, Impact International shared his views on what winning a WorldStar Packaging Award means to him and his family business...

"When you work in a family business, it is not only financial results that drives you. It is the history, the protection of the legacy and having something to pass on to the future generations. It is about having a team that you see as extended family members and friends and not just employees."

"My grandfather (Starrapapa) won our first WorldStar Packaging award back in 1994 and sadly it has been less than two years since he passed away."

"Receiving Impacts second WorldStar Packaging award in 2020 is one of my proudest moments since becoming the 4th generation to work at Impact International. The international award ceremony was meant to be at Interpack (Düsseldorf) in May but unfortunately was cancelled due to Corona virus, so we no longer have the huge international awards night to celebrate with other winners from ANZ and across the globe."

"But the best part for me is having Impact win the same prestigious award that my Starrapapa won 26 years ago when he was responsible for running the family business. This one is for you Starrapapa."

Impact International was one of the 11x Australian and New Zealand companies that have been internationally recognised in the prestigious WorldStar Packaging Awards, which are run by the World Packaging Organisation.

Winners from Australia and New Zealand also received the third highest amount of WorldStar Packaging Awards in the world behind Japan and China.

This is an incredible recognition for the annual Packaging Innovation & Design (PIDA) Awards program which is the exclusive feeder program for the two countries into the WorldStar Packaging Awards.



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When you think of outdoor furniture, roads, bollards, fences, patio decking and even footbridges you might not realise that a growing number of these items are made incorporating 'soft plastics' as a way to recycle flexible packaging and materials that have no home at this moment in the current kerbside recycling systems in Australia.

Of the nearly 1.1 million tonnes of plastic packaging placed onto the market in 2017–18, approximately 352 000 tonnes (33%) were soft plastics. However, only 29,000 tonnes or 8% of the soft plastic materials was recycled, with around 28,000 tonnes being recycled from Commercial & Industrial (C&I) sources and only 1,000 tonnes from consumers.

This low recycling figure for soft plastic has highlighted the need for industry and government to give added focus to develop a strong national consumer collection program for soft plastics, combined with investment in additional reprocessing facilities, and innovation to include recycled content in flexible materials. Changes to procurement strategies are key to stimulate further investment in soft plastic recycling and reprocessing and to ensure that soft plastics are seen as a valuable resource that can be recycled, rather than disposed of as waste.

So what does the term Soft Plastics really mean?

Soft Plastics are traditionally Polyolefins which is a collective description for plastics types that include (PE) Polyethylene including HDPE (High Density Polyethylene), LDPE (Low Density Polyethylene), LLDPE (Linear Low-Density Polyethylene), PP (Polypropylene) and (BOPP) biaxially-oriented polypropylene. The polyolefins are the most acceptable materials for current soft plastics recycling and reprocessing programs.

There are other potential materials used in soft plastics including: (PET) polyethylene terephthalate, (PVC) polyvinyl chloride (PVC), (PS) polystyrene, (EVOH) ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer, (PLA) polylactic acid (PLA), bioplastics, aluminium, nylon and paper. These materials reduce the value of polyolefins and, in some cases are incompatible with the majority of reprocessing systems.

The composition of soft plastic packaging can be broken down into two groups - Mono-layer and Multi-layer. Mono-layer packaging refers to the use of one polymer in the development of the material and quite often the material is PE. Multi-layer packaging is composed of two or more materials bonded together through co-extrusion or lamination. The use of different materials types together provides a package with unique barrier and mechanical properties.

So are Soft Plastics recyclable in Australia?

Currently most Australian kerbside collection of recyclable packaging does not accept soft plastics. This restriction is required as the conventional Material Recovery Facilities (MRF) does not allow for the handling of film and flexible plastics as it gets caught in machinery and causes failures or damage.

This restriction has also meant that many consumers are simply not aware that Australia does have recycling and reprocessing facilities available for the recovery of post-consumer soft plastic packaging. In fact, Australia has a number of companies actively and passionately working hard to create new innovative solutions that will ultimately minimise the amount of soft plastics that head to landfill or end up in the oceans and the environment. Companies including RED Group, Replas, Close the Loop, Plastic Forests, Newtecpoly and others.

So how are Household Soft Plastics Collected in Australia?

The RED Group is a sustainability and resource recovery organisation that developed and implemented the REDcycle Program in 2011. REDcycle is an innovative, recovery model for post-consumer, soft plastic packaging. The program started with 100 Melbourne supermarkets and today has 1830 retail drop off points located primarily in Coles and Woolworths supermarkets across Australia. At this level of stores and locations provided for consumer drop off of soft plastic packaging, the REDcycle program is classified as 'Widely Accepted' recyclability with more than 80% of the population having access to the collection bins.

Follow the RED Recycled Road *Cont'd*

The REDcycle program is a true product stewardship model where manufacturers, retailers and households share the responsibility to create a sustainable future for as many soft plastics as possible. The cost of collecting and processing the material is covered by many of Australia's best-known brand owners and retailers. Together Coles, Woolworths and brand owners enable the REDcycle national program to make it easy for the consumers to actively participate in the collection and recycling of household soft plastics in Australia.

So what types of Soft Plastics are accepted through the REDcycle program?

In the simplest of terms, the REDcycle program accepts clean, dry, uncontaminated flexible packaging materials that meet the REDcycle material thresholds and have been approved through the Australasian Recycling Label (ARL) program. Packaging such as bread bags, pasta and rice bags, old shopping bags, biscuit and ice cream wrappers, confectionery and frozen food packaging, plastic bags, cereal box liners, fresh produce bags and Australia Post plastic satchels are all accepted via REDcycle.

The REDcycle program is recognised through Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation (APCO) and the Australasian Recycling Label (ARL) program and have established 'Return to Store', 'Store Drop Off' or REDcycle logos on-pack for the consumers. All Brand owners must become a REDcycle partner to be able to use these symbols on-pack and are also required to join APCO. The 'Return to Store', 'Store Drop Off' or REDcycle logos on-pack communicate to consumers that they can return the packaging to collection points within major retailers across Australia.

Partners within the REDcycle program have access to the Packaging Recyclability Evaluation Portal (PREP) to assess the recyclability of their packaging within Australian recovery systems. Packaging and artwork must also be approved through the ARL program and be able to meet the REDcycle recycling requirements to include the logo on-pack.

How do I know what Soft Plastics can and cannot be returned in-store?

Keep an eye out for the 'Return to Store', 'Store Drop Off' or REDcycle logos that are increasingly being included on packaging as a part of the wider Australasian Recycling Label (ARL) program. If the packaging does not have one of these logos on-pack then it is either not a part of the program, or the materials have not been approved as recyclable under the REDcycle program. These logos are a true indicator of whether the soft plastics can be returned to the store for collection and recycling via the REDcycle program.

Consumers are encouraged to set up a soft plastics bin at home for clean and dry packaging and then return the plastics back to the retail stores that are participating in the REDcycle program.

Usually the REDcycle collection bins are located at the front of stores near the checkout and maybe something that you have never noticed before. If you are unable to locate the REDcycle bin, please ask one of the staff.

There are now 66 partners in the REDcycle program that includes brands, packaging suppliers and retailers. The REDcycle program has recovered over 950 million pieces of soft plastic returned by customers since 2012. The REDcycle program successfully recovers approximately one million pieces of soft plastics per day and has diverted enough soft plastics to circle Australia three times.

The RED Group website www.redcycle.net.au offers detailed information on what soft plastics are accepted through the REDcycle program and provides a list of all collection points across the country for the consumers. So what happens to the Household Soft Plastics after it is collected from the retailers?

The RED Group collect, sort the recovered soft plastic film packaging and then send it on to their local partners:

1. Replas is Australia's leading mixed recycled plastic manufacturer which aims to provide a solution for plastic waste by delivering quality cost-effective sustainable products. Replas blends this mixed plastic with rigid plastics to form a material viable for use in the manufacture of new recycled plastic products. The company produces a range of over 200 recycled plastic products which includes bollards, signage, outdoor furniture, fitness equipment and Enduroplank™/decking as well as products suitable for traffic control, parks and gardens and the utilities industry. Replas aims to turn waste into robust recycled plastic products; all the while offering sustainable alternatives to the unnecessary use of virgin materials.
www.replas.com.au



2. Close the Loop utilise REDcycle material as a component of high-performance recycled asphalt additive for road infrastructure known as Tonerplas. Tonerplas™ is Close the Loop's ground-breaking asphalt additive, which enhances the characteristics of asphalt. It produces a high-quality road surface, that last 65% longer than traditional asphalt and contributes a major solution to the problematic waste issue of soft plastics. The formulated product is melted into the asphalt mix. A key partner Downer Group then adds recycled glass and recycled asphalt pavement to the mix to create a superior lower carbon pavement with that results in higher quality roads. Every 1 km of road paved with plastic and glass modified asphalt uses approximately: 530,000 plastic shopping bag equivalents, 168,000 glass bottle equivalents, Waste toner from 12,500 printer cartridges and 20% reclaimed asphalt pavement (RAP). www.closeheloop.com.au

3. Plastic Forests uses REDcycle material as a component of products such as mini wheel stops and air conditioner mounting blocks. Plastic Forests became the first company globally to commercialise a unique dry-cleaning process to recycle contaminated soft plastics, without using water. Used soft plastics are recycled into resin for use by the plastics industry or may be repurposed by Plastic Forests into a range of sustainable GreenMongrel products including dunnage, underground cable cover, garden edging and root barrier and the brand new 'GardenBed-Heart'. www.plasticforests.com.au

So how can you get involved in REDcycle?

Everyone has a role to play in both collection of household soft plastics and the purchasing of end-products made from the recycled content. There are several ways that you can get involved in the program both at work and at home.

If you would like to contribute personally then start by making a 'soft plastics bin' at home and at work and arrange to return the packaging to your local collection point on a regular basis. Encourage others to do the same within your workplace and family.

Keep an eye out for products and brands that are advertising the 'Return to Store' and REDcycle logos on pack and next time you are purchasing products consider which brands are committed to the 2025 National Packaging Targets and National Waste Strategy.

The next time you need a deck, fence, garden bed or even a patio consider sustainable solutions that are made from soft plastics. Not only are these solutions designed to be low maintenance they are durable and capable of withstanding the harsh Australian climate.

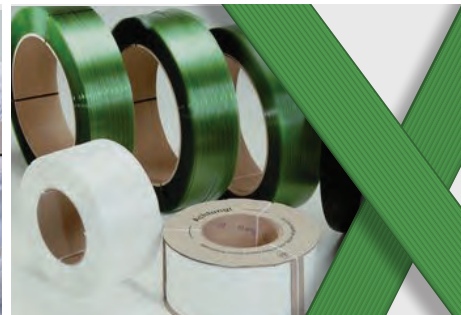
Reach out to your local councils and encourage them to support keeping soft plastics out of landfill by purchasing roads containing Tonerplas and Replas products or reviewing their procurement of outdoor furniture for recreational areas. Imagine if every school, park, recreational facility, government department and office building in Australia committed to purchasing products made from recycled content.

We all have a role to play and I look forward to seeing procurement strategies that actively encourage the purchase of recycled content and more companies taking the lead in purchasing these products to ensure we create a more sustainable world.



Nerida Kelton MAIP

Executive Director – Australian Institute of Packaging (AIP)
ANZ Board Member – World Packaging Organisation (WPO)

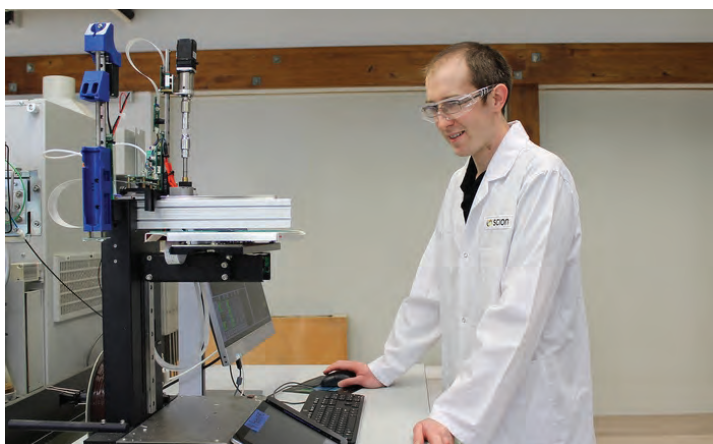


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2020 PIDA Award Trophies have arrived

Directly following the highly-successful first-ever virtual PIDA Awards Ceremony in May the PIDA Awards were packed and shipped to all of the winners across Australia and New Zealand. Sadly due to the current circumstances with freight and shipping delays many PIDA trophies have sat on ports and in customs. The good news is that they are slowly arriving and we can now share with you the winners and their trophies...





've been interested in how things work and what they're made of, for as long as I can remember,' says Dr Kelly Wade.

As a child, he was always tinkering with something. His parents were happy for him to pull things apart and try to fix them or improve them before putting them back together again. Looking back, Kelly thinks these were the habits that started his love of engineering.

A lot has happened since then. Kelly has gone on to begin a successful career punctuated with accolades, the latest award being Young Professional of the Year in the Australasian Packaging Innovation and Design Awards. But Kelly didn't start his career in packaging. Following a Chemical and Materials Engineering degree from the University of Auckland, he undertook groundbreaking research on intervertebral discs (the discs within the human spine).

Biomimicry, biomechanics and biomaterials

Choosing to concentrate on materials engineering because it "sounded like the most interesting specialisation", Kelly went on to get a PhD in biomechanics.

"I took a course where we discussed the materials for knee replacements. I remember being impressed with the far superior performance of natural biomaterials when compared to engineered metals and composites."

When the PhD opportunity came up with Prof. Neil Broom at the University of Auckland, Kelly began work on his intervertebral disc research. Kelly explains: "Intervertebral discs are the main component in the joints of the spinal column. They allow vertebrae to move while bearing substantial compressive loads.

"We were able to show that the soft, mobile centre (nucleus) contains a highly convoluted fibre network that is integrated with the surrounding outer wall (annulus). Knowing that the disc contains structural gradients is key to understanding how it behaves under load and how it fails or degenerates."

Further research into disc failure and understanding how the herniation process affects the disc at the microstructural level, landed Kelly a prestigious fellowship from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation.

During this time Kelly also won the International Society for Study of the Lumbar Spine (ISSLS) Prize and the AG-Grammer prize, the two major awards in spine research.

Back home to New Zealand

At the end of his fellowship, Kelly heard more about Scion. He liked the idea of working towards more sustainable products and industries, as well as the challenges of working with different biomaterials.

At Scion, Kelly's focus has been on packaging material trials in the WHITE room for industry and for research (Scion's humidity and temperature-controlled facility, the WHITE Room is used for testing the performance of cardboard boxes in chilled supply chain conditions).

Currently, Kelly and the team are looking into how the moisture content of cardboard boxes is influenced by their environment and they believe this will result in new insights into the process that leads to boxes failing in storage.

Dr Kelly Wade won the Young Packaging Professional of the Year 2020 in the Packaging Innovation and Design Awards, after just 2 years working in the packaging research.

Industry for the future

Packaging is one of the key enablers for any nation undergoing the transition from linear to circular economy. All science and innovation within Scion's packaging programme are based around circular principles. Transition of an export/import dependent nation like New Zealand to a circular bioeconomy without appropriate packaging solutions is impossible.

Packaging, particularly single use plastic packaging, has been under scrutiny recently. It is seen as a major contributor to today's waste problems, but also essential to protect the products within. As such, it is an area ripe for innovation as we look to apply the principles of the circular bioeconomy in our products and systems.

For the packaging industry to make the shift to a circular bioeconomy, Kelly says we need to "move towards more easily recycled packaging, fewer multi-material packages and a dramatic reduction in single-use plastic packaging. Use of biobased polymers to replace petrochemicals, will also be part of the solution and I expect to see growth in traceability to ensure safety and origin of goods."

If we don't innovate, there could be trouble for New Zealand's economy. "As an export nation, it is important for New Zealand manufacturers to meet the increasingly high environmental standards for packaging that are demanded by our overseas markets, while also protecting products.

I believe we are well placed to support this effort here at Scion."



Packaging queen

Planet Protector Packaging founder Joanne Howarth's moment of reckoning was when she felt like she was "single-handedly destroying the planet". Now, with the warmth of wool, she's doing the opposite. **Doris Prodanovic** writes.

In March, Planet Protector founder Joanne Howarth was recognised for her work in developing sustainable packaging solutions as a finalist in the 2020 Cartier Women's Initiative.

While it was a "highlight of my career" moment for Howarth, she was quick to point out the Planet Protector story was a collective effort that must be recognised.

"I always say 'us' because everything we do is as a team here, so it's never 'I' or 'me' – it's 'us,'" Howarth told *Food & Drink Business*.

The eco-friendly packaging business started in late 2016 with the mission to eliminate polystyrene in cold chain packaging by using sheep wool waste in its place. Within 18 months, Planet Protector took

out two awards in the 2017 Packaging Innovation and Design Awards (PIDA), represented Australia at the WorldStar Packaging Awards, and won across four categories.

It has replaced the equivalent of 5.2 million polystyrene boxes from landfill, and the rapid growth of the business has seen accounts such as DHL, Blackmores and Unilever added to the customer portfolio.

"I hadn't even had my LinkedIn page up and running yet, so it was the biggest surprise of my life when I was approached by Cartier," says Howarth. "They said they'd seen what we'd done at the PIDA and WorldStar Awards, and invited us to put in an entry for the Cartier Women's Initiative."

The global initiative enables

Howarth to gain insight from – and be a part of – the international network Cartier has established, while accessing mentoring and business workshops.

When speaking to *F&DB*, Howarth was finishing up her investment proposal, as part of the program, to pitch to investors globally in the Cartier network. "Hopefully, it will enable us to raise capital and to grow and take over the world."

"It's so exciting – it's not just a women's award, it's a life-changing moment. I credit Cartier for having this vision because being in business is not just about making money. You have to be in business with a bigger vision and passion. We are in a race to become the market leader in thermal packaging that does not harm the planet."

PROBLEM SOLVING POLYSTYRENE

Armed with around 20 years of experience in the seafood and retail industries, as well as in food logistics, Howarth was determined to find a solution to keep food fresh in the supply chain without the need for packing in polystyrene.

Planet Protector won the contract as the outsource partner for one of Australia's largest meal kit companies back in 2016 to help with food logistics, which was packing up to 500 boxes a week in polystyrene and being shipped around the country.

"It got to the point where, as that business grew, I felt like I was single-handedly destroying the planet," says Howarth.

"We were packing 55,000 boxes in polystyrene each week and so it was just unsustainable. There were toxic fumes from the polystyrene that would



come into the warehouse, it took up so much space as well."

A solution developed 11 years ago using sheep wool by a packaging engineer in the UK was the answer Howarth was looking for. She met with the engineer to secure the Australasian licence and tweaked it for the Australian market.

"Wool is the best insulator on the planet – it keeps sheep warm in winter and cool in summer. We've created a patented technology where the blend of the fibres that gives wool its thermal performance can be used."

Planet Protector offers a range of applications to help customise packaging solutions. A gel ice is "snuggled" into the wool liners, which are made from 100 per cent natural wool and can be used for composting. The plastic film on the outside of the box can be either a compostable or recyclable film.

Planet Protector is also a member of REDcycle, giving customers the option to recycle the film through regular channels.

"The fact that our product is created from waste wool is really exciting because we are diverting it from landfill. We want to leave a legacy and we are all about encouraging reuse and the circular economy."

"We've created a patented technology where the blend of the fibres that gives wool its thermal performance can be used."





Happy as a lobster in an insulated box.

LEFT: Planet Protector founder Joanne Howarth.

BELOW LEFT: Recyclable, biodegradable, renewable and compostable.

SLOWLY BUT SURELY

“Our product outperforms polystyrene in terms of temperature stability,” says Howarth.

“When we’re winning a new customer, we get some samples of their product and simulate the temperature conditions of their supply chain in one of our environmental test chambers... so if you’re shipping chocolate in the middle of summer to Alice Springs, we can customise it. There’s a lot of science behind it.”

Planet Protector’s product is the same price as polystyrene but it occupies only 20 per cent of the warehouse space of a similar quantity of polystyrene because it comes flat packed, leaving opportunities for cost savings around rent for storage space, pallet movements and labour

costs, Howarth says. Branding opportunities are also possible because unlike with polystyrene counterparts, “we use regular shipping boxes”.

One thing Howarth says she underestimated was the amount of time it takes people to make a change, as many products have been introduced to substitute polystyrene that “just haven’t cut it”. Polystyrene has dominated the world for 60 plus years, she says, “so when you go to a salmon company and tell them there is an alternative to polystyrene that works, you need to prove to them and validate that the solution will give comparable thermal performance”.

“One of the things that makes me happy to face the day is that I have never met with a prospective customer that hasn’t loved our product. Even if they’re not interested for themselves, they tell us we’re doing great work and give us the details of another business who could use the product, but it’s been a slow process.


“Telling customers DHL is using our product and that they’ve given us a global referral was a huge win. Being able to leverage that name has been incredible.”

Two of Planet Protector’s products were finalists in the


2020 PIDA Awards, including its Lobster Protector pack, which won in the Food category. The team is currently on working on a solution for shipping abalone. Howarth says seafood is the most challenging of all sectors.

“It’s a wet environment so whatever product we have to deliver, it needs to be water resistant and leak-proof. If we can achieve this, in seafood, we can achieve anything.”


Howarth also has sights set on expansion into Tasmania to supply its producers and to secure Tasmania with its title as the first polystyrene-free state in the country by 2023. These are just two of the most recent steps in what seems to be Planet Protector’s world takeover. As Howarth says, “Then everyone has to follow the leader, right?”. 🌟




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Maximum taste, minimum waste as Australia takes home global award



Poultry brand 'The Bare Bird' together with Sealed Air's CRYOVAC brand 'Darfresh on Tray' packaging received the 'Packaging that Saves Food' – gold star award from the 2020 WorldStar packaging awards, given annually by the World Packaging Organisation. As Australia addresses food waste challenges to meet the National Food Waste Strategy 2030 targets, what's there to learn from companies that have gotten it right?

There's a reason the best of the best take home shiny gold trophies. It's because from farm to plate, the entire product is designed with sustainability in mind. While industries shift to drive a circular plastics economy, food waste remains a challenge for all. Each year, it is estimated Australian's generate almost 300 kilograms of food waste per person.

Growing from strength to strength, 'The Bare Bird' put another feather in its cap taking home the gold international World Star award for "Packaging that Saves Food". The 100 per cent antibiotic-free, vegetarian fed, free range chicken offers consumers a healthy chicken choice and its pack, CRYOVAC brand Darfresh on Tray manufactured by Sealed Air offers consumers extended freshness.

"Reducing waste, driving sustainability and being resource savvy isn't a new thing, it has been a central focus of our family-owned business since inception," said John Hazeldene, director of Hazeldene's Chicken Farms, which supplies chicken sold under the The Bare Bird name. "We're delighted for The Bare Bird brand to be acknowledged on a global scale."

Hazeldene's Chicken Farm is a poultry producer and processor located near Bendigo, in central Victoria and has been part of the industry for more than 60 years.

While poultry is less resource intensive than other proteins, it still requires significant volume of water.

"We have invested heavily in water saving and water recycling programs across our facility and achieve best-in-class water usage rates per bird for poultry," said Hazeldene. "It's great that packaging solutions that extend shelf life also serve to protect resources like water from going to waste."

Beyond reducing food waste, the CRYOVAC brand Darfresh on Tray packaging system is a zero-scrap packaging platform, which eliminates plastic processing scrap by 40 per cent. For a typical mid-sized processor producing 30,000 packs per week, this would avoid 3,070 kg being sent to landfill each year.

"The zero-waste Darfresh on Tray system is a great solution that aligns with our environmental goals," said Hazeldene.

Achieving a 25 per cent improvement in shelf life has been a win not only for The Bare Bird but also retailers and consumers.

Growth in production and demand for free range chicken meat has been particularly strong over the past five years (approximately 15 per cent of the total market) and this trend is expected to continue (according to AgriFutures Australia), so reducing resource waste is important for a more sustainable and efficient end to end supply chain. Longer shelf life enables wider product distribution and better market access. This year, Hazeldene's is looking to take The Bare Bird to international markets.

With food waste having an impact on retailer's bottom line, shelf life now factors more prominently into retailers' product and purchasing decisions. As with retailers, food waste is also an important concern and purchase consideration for consumers, who contribute to more than half of our nation's food waste problem.

"Around the world we're working to be better than we were yesterday, and in times as extreme as this pandemic, the focus on bettering community health ranks high," said Alan Adams, Sealed Air's regional sustainability director. "Failures in our food supply chain will compromise food safety and that also means recalls, compromised confidence in our food supply chain and compromised community health."

Maximum taste, minimum waste as Australia takes home global award

Packaging's ability to enable food safety and reduce waste makes it an everyday super hero. It's an essential material and consumers would benefit in knowing this.

"Consumers are the biggest contributors to our nation's food waste, so with focused activities around consumer behaviors, we can collectively make a difference and we know education is the hook.

"With concerted efforts in these areas, together with our National Food Waste Strategy to halve food waste by 2030, a less wasteful supply chain is a requirement. It's a time to undo waste and the beauty is we can all contribute to making a difference. Through education and a willingness to change often lazy, wasteful food habits, reducing the aforementioned 300kg per capita (annual) contribution to food waste should be front of mind for every single Australian. That's how we'll reduce waste and leave our world better than we found it."

Four ways to less waste

It starts by connecting with your audience and sharing a common goal

COVID-19 has shown what's possible when communities work together for a common goal. On pack, in-store and social media platforms can make a huge impact. How many of your consumers are aware of food waste and its impact on global warming? Teaching consumers is important and in doing so, not only are you helping consumers learn more about avoiding food waste, but also increasing brand awareness for your retail product.

Callouts such as "sealed for freshness" is a good example currently witnessed across some retail channels but we need more.

Avoid confusion with easy to understand on pack dates

Through a better understanding of when food is actually no longer safe to eat, as opposed to its 'packed on' dates, consumers are likely to make better food choices rather than disposing it prematurely. There are many examples of packaging solutions where it's hard for consumers to even find these dates. For packaging providers and retailers, a quick fix such as more prominent date placement can enable better food management and The Bare Bird is a great example we can learn from.

Keep it chilled

The importance of temperature cannot be discounted. It plays a major role in food safety and freshness. Clear guidelines on how to store and freeze products will help consumers with efficient meal planning all while diverting less waste to the kitchen bin. Solutions like CRYOVAC brand Darfresh vacuum skin packaging are convenient freezer-ready options, but how many consumers know this if you're not telling them?

Portion perfect

Portioned packs provide for accurate faster and less wasteful meals. They are ideal for households that prefer convenience, as well as the new generation of home cooks who have appeared in the COVID-19 crisis.

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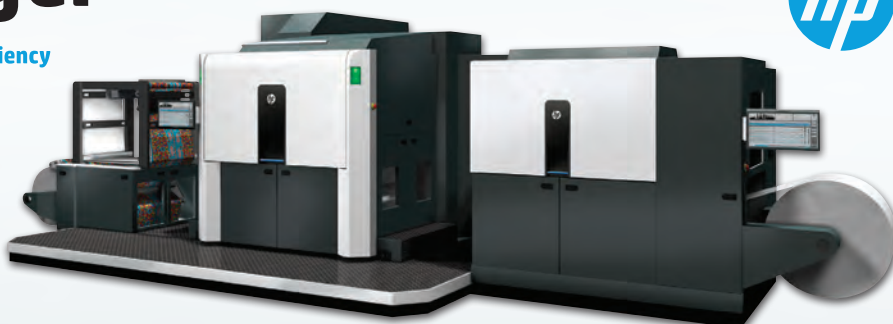
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Rich rewards

In a highly successful first-ever virtual awards ceremony in early May, the Australasian Packaging Innovation & Design (PIDA) awards brought recognition to innovators putting the region's packaging design on the global map. **Food & Drink Business** reports.

THE PIDA 2020 awards ceremony, organised by the Australian Institute of Packaging in conjunction with Packaging New Zealand, ran across two days and saw the presentation of awards in six market categories, including Food and Beverage, as well as three special awards – Accessible Packaging Design, Sustainable Packaging Design, and Young Packaging Professional of the Year. Where relevant, all entrants were judged on sustainable packaging design considerations and what

packaging changes they are undertaking to meet the 2025 National Packaging Targets.

GOLD RUSH

This year, three companies took out double gold awards. Ecolan (see page 9) won gold with its lightweight pouch for Bannister Downs Dairy's chilled pasteurised range in the Accessible Packaging Design special category, as well as joint gold with Coca-Cola Amatil (CCA) in the Beverage category. Apart from the Beverage award, CCA's 100 per cent rPET bottle for carbonated soft drinks, warm-fill beverages and aseptic dairy products also won gold in the hotly contested Sustainable Packaging Design – Retail Pack sub-category.

Also scoring double gold was Sealed Air Brand Protective Packaging, in the Domestic & Household categories for its

Korrvu e-commerce packaging solution, and in the Sustainable Packaging Design – Product Protection

sub-category for its paper-based TempGuard Solution.

Both wins play to the growth our market has seen in the e-commerce and meal-delivery sectors.

Commentator and host for the events, publisher of *Food & Drink Business* Lindy Hughson said: "At a time when we've seen unprecedented growth in e-commerce retailing, even prior to the pandemic catalyst, demand has been high for e-commerce packaging solutions that reduce material usage, offer a sustainable option, enhance product safety in transit and create a positive unboxing experience for the consumer, while also offering the brand owner the opportunity for creative on-pack messaging and to deliver the retail experience into the home. Sealed Air has ticked all these boxes."

FINEST IN FOOD PACKAGING

"When it comes to good food packaging design, the top priorities are food waste prevention, food safety, product protection and sustainability," Hughson said. "It's the high level of innovation we are consistently seeing in the PIDA

food category that is putting Australian packaging design on the world map. This year's winner is no exception."

Gold in the Food category was awarded to Planet Protector Packaging (see Rising Star, page 10-11) for its Lobster Protector solution. The flat-packed, recyclable, biodegradable, renewable and compostable packaging is made from 100 per cent food safe materials and marks a first-time development in the seafood industry.

The packaging design consists of three key components: a wool liner, a fibreboard insert and a corrugated carton with a unique coating to make the carton water resistant.

The company demonstrated that its Lobster Protector packaging is able to keep live lobsters at 7-12 degrees Celsius for more than 36 hours. The packaging is also designed to work with data logging technology to enable real-time temperature monitoring by the customer during transit.

According to the award citation, industry testing has also proven that the Lobster Protector design outperforms



Gold in the food category, and a first for the seafood industry: Planet Protector Packaging's Lobster Protector.



“It’s the high level of innovation we are consistently seeing in the PIDA food category that is putting Australian packaging design on the world map.”

traditional packaging such as polystyrene, and has the capacity to remove around 1.2 million polystyrene boxes from the supply chain each year.

ACCOLADES FOR CCA RPET

Coca-Cola Amatil (CCA) was a worthy winner of its double gold recognition, not least because it has delivered a world-first by converting all of its single serve PET bottles from largely petroleum-based PET resin to 100 per cent post-consumer recycled PET resin (rPET).

Many other bottlers both in Australia and around the world have converted their water bottles

to 100 per cent rPET, however, CCA is the first to achieve this on carbonated soft drink (CSD) bottles, sensitive warm-filled bottles and aseptic dairy bottles.

By converting all of these SKUs to 100 per cent rPET, seven out of every 10 bottles CCA sells in Australia are made from recycled post-consumer resin. This equates to over 55 per cent of CCA’s total PET tonnages.

Hughson said, “CCA’s recycled PET bottle development, which covers not just carbonated soft drinks, itself a huge retail category, but also the big retail movers of sensitive warm-filled drinks, and aseptic dairy drinks, marks a huge step forward for beverage packaging, and for our 2025 National Packaging Targets.”

PROTECTION FIRST

In the Product Protection sub-category of the Sustainable Packaging Design award, the gold was a tie between Orora Fibre Packaging (now named Opal) for its recyclable moulded paper inserts, and Sealed Air Brand Protective Packaging for the TempGuard kerbside recyclable packaging for pre-packaged, temperature – sensitive goods.

The Orora Fibre inserts provide protection and presentation for fresh produce – like avocados and mangoes – inside the carton and offer a recyclable alternative to standard, non-recyclable PVC

plastic inserts.

The paper inserts are made from responsibly sourced fibre and can be customised with specific colours and branding for a range of products. The trays provide shock and vibration protection and offer ventilation and moisture control characteristics to ensure fresh produce integrity.

Sealed Air’s TempGuard is a 14mm thick paper pouch liner made from virgin kraft paper, filled with 100 per cent recycled paper. An alternative to EPS, it is used for lining cartons for the distribution of chilled items, providing exceptional thermal insulation for ready meals, pharmaceuticals and chocolate.

Hughson noted that this category underscores the importance of packaging’s main role: to get the product from factory to shelf and into the hands of the consumer while fully maintaining its integrity.

“This is to some extent the less glamorous side of packaging, if we’re comparing it to the branded pack on shelf, but it’s no less important, in fact, arguably more so.”

PIDA is the exclusive feeder programme for the Australasian region to the World Packaging Organisation’s WorldStar awards. PIDA 2020 winners are eligible for entry to the 2021 WorldStars. Find out more at www.aipack.com.au

ABOVE: No smashed avocados with this design: Orora Fibre’s gold-winning recyclable moulded paper inserts for produce transit packaging.



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Proven convenience is no lightweight

Ecolean's lightweight packaging solutions are known around the world as environmentally sound, safe and convenient to use. Recognition of its partnership with Bannister Downs Dairy as a double gold winner in the 2020 PIDA Awards is testament to that.

IN 2005, Bannister Downs was the first Australian dairy to adopt Ecolean's lightweight packaging solutions. The range is 50-60 per cent lighter than other packages for liquid food.

The format features an easy tear-off to open the package and an air-filled handle, which is easy to hold when pouring. Ecolean's mission is to provide safe and convenient packaging solutions for liquid foods that also have minimal environmental impact. It means the company has an embedded lifecycle approach in developing and producing packaging solutions.

Bannister Downs managing director Sue Daubney says the sustainable environmental profile of Ecolean's packaging was a major factor in the company's decision to use its solution. It offered lower environmental impacts as well as positive features around convenience, she says.

"Ecolean is an excellent fit for our business and personal values as we focus on making

ethical choices in everything we do. We find the packaging very well suited to this priority, and it stands out from all other available packaging."

At this year's Australasian Packaging Innovation and Design (PIDA) Awards, Ecolean won gold in the Accessible Packaging Design category for its innovative packaging solutions, which are certified as easy-to-open and easy-to-use by people with reduced hand function. The gold award in the Beverage category was tied between Coca-Cola Amatil's 100 per cent rPET bottle and Bannister Downs Dairy's lightweight Ecolean packages, making a strong case for lightweight plastic packaging.

"We are so proud to see our packaging partners enjoying recognition in Australia and New Zealand, for their long-term commitment to developing lightweight and unique packaging, which makes a difference for us, our consumers and the

Ecolean lightweight pouch:
easy to hold, easy to pour,
and easy on the eye.



"We are so proud to see our packaging partners enjoying recognition in Australia and New Zealand, for their long-term commitment to developing lightweight and unique packaging..."

environment," Daubney said.

"Consumer sentiment towards plastics in particular has changed dramatically. As the ground beneath beverage packaging producers is shifting, many are shifting along with it, investing in recycling facilities, new material development, new packaging closures, and innovating new ways of packaging drinks that not only meet sustainability goals but continue to engage and excite the consumer," said Lindy Hughson, *Food & Drink Business* publisher and the host and commentator at the PIDA Awards. "Both winners of the beverage category are forward-thinking players whose entries go beyond delivering packaging with sustainability as a selling point to providing a solution that moves the whole industry forward towards a circular economy."

"Plastic packaging makes a big difference in the beverage and liquid food industry today," said Johnny Sajland, global sales director of Ecolean.

"Our packages are lightweight, tough, durable and have excellent food safety properties. We're glad that the benefits of plastic packaging are increasingly recognised, by conscious consumers worldwide as well as by the PIDA awards."

Daubney says every single decision Bannister Downs Dairy makes is about having the best produce on offer.

"When we say the best produce, we're talking the best flavour, the best taste, great nutrition and the most sustainable options, including our choice of packaging and the difference it makes."

The Bannister Downs' grounded decision-making approach goes hand in hand with Ecolean's ethos.

Being recognised as gold winners in this year's PIDA Awards provides further recognition of the company's partnership with the WA dairy as well as the packaging's integration into consumers' lives. 🌟



Premium can craft

In the 2020 Australasian Packaging Innovation & Design (PIDA) Awards, gold in the Labelling & Decoration category was won by NCI Packaging for the DuluxGroup Porter's Paints can.

THE PIDA Labelling & Decoration category recognises the addition of content to a pack that creates a unique or innovative appearance, function or communication. This may include labels, sleeves, tags, coding or marking, etching, directly applied inks, or other packaging decoration processes.

This year the top award went to NCI Packaging and DuluxGroup for the Porter's Paints paint can range.

The awards citation read that NCI Packaging collaborated with the Porter's Paints team "to produce a superior crafted paint can that showcased the brand's premium quality".

In the competitive DIY retail space,

consumers can be overcome by brands fighting for attention that often leads to overwhelmingly bright and glossy packaging. The Porter's Paints point of sale concept was designed to create a store-within-a-store platform at Bunnings, with the entire Porter's Paints range positioned in one location, simplifying the shopping experience. This is in contrast to counterpart brands that are typically grouped by category.

A team of creative designers at Porter's Paints and NCI were tasked with creating a standout package to enhance that shopping experience. The team decided to use a matte finish along with colours, fonts and dyes that create a smoother, more

NCI Packaging and Porter's Paints: Gold standard pack decoration to differentiate the brand on shelf.

"We were always good at the basics, but the new NCI is about meeting and exceeding the difficult challenges, especially in the innovation space."

— Frauke Tyrrell, NCI

luxurious print, hence differentiating the brand in the crowded and glossy retail environment.

As the leaders in metal decoration in this market, NCI took on the challenge to develop the matte concept and made it commercially achievable for the first time in the Australian market with an outstanding result.

Frauke Tyrrell, executive chair of NCI, said "We were always good at the basics, but the new NCI is about meeting and exceeding the difficult challenges, especially in the innovation space."

MC and commentator for the PIDA awards, PKN publisher Lindy Hughson added: "Packaging is a powerful persuader, not only in the supermarket aisle but also in the virtual retail space. It is the billboard for the brand and, in this digital era, the platform for an enhanced consumer experience and engagement with the brand. And thus, it is the way the packaging is decorated, either by direct print or its label or sleeve, that is the pivotal touchpoint for the consumer making the purchasing decision.

"This year's winner has clearly leveraged this understanding of the value of high quality pack decoration to differentiate a brand on shelf and provide clear communication cues to the consumer," she said. ■



Australasian innovation finds



LEFT: Hand-washing gold: Pact Group won for its 100% PCR rPET bottle range for Earthwise's Glow Lab branded toiletries.

BELOW: Korrvu for e-commerce – a winner for Sealed Air Brand Protective Packaging.

OPPOSITE: CCA's gold win is also a world-first, with all of its single-serve PET now converted to 100% PCR (rPET).

In a highly successful first-ever virtual awards ceremony in early May, the Australasian Packaging Innovation & Design (PIDA) awards saw three double golds presented, and recognition for companies and individuals making a significant contribution in their respective fields. PKN reports.

THE PIDA 2020 awards ceremony, organised by the Australian Institute of Packaging in conjunction with Packaging New Zealand, ran across two days and saw the presentation of awards in six main categories, as well as three special awards. Where relevant, all entrants were judged on sustainable packaging design considerations and what packaging changes they are undertaking to meet the 2025 National Packaging Targets.

GOLD ON GOLD

This year, three companies took out double gold awards. Ecolean (see full story page 18) won gold with its lightweight pouch for Bannister Downs Dairy's chilled pasteurised range in the Accessible Packaging Design special category, as well as joint gold with Coca-Cola Amatil (CCA) in the Beverage category. Apart from the Beverage award, CCA's 100 per cent rPET bottle for carbonated soft drinks, warm-fill beverages and aseptic dairy products was also recognised with gold in the hotly contested Sustainable Packaging Design – Retail Pack category.

With this packaging innovation, CCA has delivered a world-first, converting all of its single-serve PET bottles from largely petroleum-based PET resin to 100 per cent post-consumer recycled PET resin (rPET).

While many other bottlers in Australia and around the world have converted their water bottles to 100 per cent rPET, CCA is the first to achieve this on carbonated soft drink (CSD) bottles, sensitive warm-filled bottles and aseptic dairy bottles.

Converting all of these SKUs to 100 per cent rPET means seven out of every 10 bottles CCA sells in Australia are made from recycled post-consumer resin. This equates to over 55 per cent of CCA's total PET tonnages.

E-COMMERCE EXCELLENCE

Also scoring double gold was Sealed Air Brand Protective Packaging in the Domestic & Household categories for its Korrvu e-commerce packaging solution, and in the Sustainable Packaging Design – Product Protection category for its TempGuard Solution. Both wins play to the growth our

market has seen in the e-commerce and meal-delivery sectors.

Commentator and host for the events, publisher of *PKN* Lindy Hughson said: "At a time when we've seen unprecedented growth in online retailing, demand has been high for e-commerce packaging solutions that reduce material usage, offer a sustainable option, enhance product safety in transit and create a positive unboxing experience for the consumer, while also offering the brand owner the opportunity for creative on-pack messaging. The winning packaging ticks all these boxes."

A DIFFERENT VIEW

An event highlight was the announcement of a new category for the PIDAs from this year, called Outside of the Box, which saw a casket make history by winning a packaging design award for the first time.

"The creation of this new category is welcome news because packaging takes many shapes and forms beyond the decorated pack on the retail shelf, or in the ecommerce channel, or in the warehouse. It touches our lives in ways we don't always consider. And whatever form it takes, we need to be coming up with the most eco-friendly solution possible," Hughson said.

The gold winner was Outside the Box Caskets for an ecological solution to the traditional timber and MDF casket. Constructed from cardboard, the casket was designed in a way that requires no glue, staples, screws, or

Demand has been high for e-commerce packaging solutions that reduce material usage, offer a sustainable option, enhance product safety in transit and create a positive unboxing experience..."

gold

metal parts. Weighing 20kg less than alternatives, and with a load-bearing capability of 300kg, the casket consists of an outer base, an insert which adds to the structural integrity, a rigid laminated cardboard base, and a lid. The structural design meets the strict requirements of the global green burial movement by being fully compostable.

PACT FOR THE PLANET

Pact Group took away two awards this season, a silver in the Sustainable Packaging Design – Retail Pack category and a gold in the Health, Beauty & Wellness Category. Both entries were for packaging developed for New Zealand brand Earthwise.

The gold was won for the 100 per cent rPET range of bottles for Earthwise's Glow Labs toiletries range, comprising seven 100 per cent rPET bottles that replaced the former virgin PET designs. Converting to rPET, Pact Group was able to further lightweight Glow Lab's amber bottles by an average of 27 per cent (approximately 37 tonnes per year). Based on Glow Lab's volumes, this equates to approximately 130 tonnes of plastic that has been reused and diverted from landfill.

"The Health, Beauty and Wellness category is one where consumers really want to align not only with a product that's good for them, but also with a brand that makes a stand for what is good for the planet. A solution that meets not only the brand's sustainability goals around recycling and recycled content, but also moves us closer to meeting our 2025 targets, is a deserving winner," Hughson said.

FOOD FINESSE

One of the most highly contested award categories this year, alongside Beverage and Sustainable Packaging Design, was Food.

Commenting on the category overall, Hughson said, "When it comes to good food packaging design, the top priorities are food waste prevention, food safety, product protection, and sustainability. It's the high level

PIDA 2020: HONOURS BOARD

ACCESSIBLE PACKAGING DESIGN

- **GOLD:** Ecolean – easy-to-open, lightweight packaging for Bannister Downs Dairy chilled pasteurised range (see p18)

BEVERAGE

- **GOLD:** Coca-Cola Amatil – 100 per cent rPET bottle
- **GOLD:** Ecolean – lightweight flexible pouch for Bannister Downs Dairy range (see p18)
- **SILVER:** Brownes Dairy – Australia's first renewable gable top milk carton



DOMESTIC & HOUSEHOLD

- **GOLD:** Sealed Air Brand Protective Packaging – Korvvu e-commerce packaging
- **SILVER:** Birdstone Collective & NCI Packaging – DuluxGroup Cabot's Ready Bucket
- **BRONZE:** Birdstone Collective & Orora Cartons – recyclable Telstra Sleeve

FOOD

- **GOLD:** Planet Protector Packaging – Lobster Protector
- **SILVER:** Platypus Print Packaging – Youfoodz Meal Kit
- **SILVER:** Disruptive Packaging – Uniqor for cold chain environments
- **SPECIAL COMMENDATION:** Primo Foods – Red Range Slice Pack

HEALTH BEAUTY & WELLNESS

- **GOLD:** Pact Group – NZ Earthwise brand's Glow Labs PCR 100% rPET bottle range

LABELLING & DECORATION

- **GOLD:** NCI Packaging & DuluxGroup – Porter's Paints Superior Crafted paint can range (see p17)

OUTSIDE OF THE BOX

- **GOLD:** Outside the Box Caskets
- **SILVER:** Gaprie – P.C. Nets (see p52)
- **BRONZE:** Sealed Air – Daisy Pool Covers

RETAIL PACK

- **GOLD:** Coca-Cola Amatil 100% rPET bottle
- **SILVER:** Pact Group – NZ Earthwise brand's PCR 75% rHDPE household cleaning container range
- **BRONZE:** Brownes Dairy – Australia's first renewable gable top milk carton
- **BRONZE:** UPM Raflatac & Kiwi Labels – Custom-Pak rPET Cherry Punnet with self-adhesive label

PRODUCT PROTECTION

- **GOLD:** Orora Fibre Packaging (now Opal) – for the recyclable moulded paper inserts
- **GOLD:** Sealed Air Brand Protective Packaging – TempGuard kerbside recyclable packaging for pre-packaged, temperature sensitive goods
- **HIGH COMMENDATION:** Omni Group – PerformX 100% recyclable stretch wrap

YOUNG PACKAGING PROFESSIONAL

Wade Kelly, Scion

AIP SPECIAL AWARDS

- **HONORARY MEMBER:** Mark Kelton
- **HARRY LOVELL AWARD:** Alysha Baggett and Alexandra Brayshaw
- **FELLOWSHIP OF THE INSTITUTE:** Joe Foster, OF Packaging
- **LIFETIME MEMBER:** Terry Waterson, Metalprint
- **FOUNDERS AWARD:** Ralph Moyle, Simplot

PKN's website carries more detail on the PIDA 2020 finalists and winners. Visit www.packagingnews.com.au and search PIDA 2020.





FROM FAR LEFT:
Packaging seen differently – Outside the Box Caskets won gold in a new category.

Lobster Protector marks a first for the seafood industry and a gold for Planet Protector Packaging.

of innovation we are consistently seeing in this category that is putting Australian packaging design on the world map. This year's winner is no exception."

The gold award went to Planet Protector Packaging for its Lobster Protector solution. Flat-packed, recyclable, biodegradable, renewable, and compostable, the Lobster Protector is made from 100 per cent food-safe materials. This pack is a first-time development in the seafood industry.

The packaging design consists of three key components: a wool liner, a fibreboard insert, and a corrugated carton with a unique coating to make the carton water resistant. The Lobster Protector is able to keep live lobsters at a temperature of 7-12°C for more than 36 hours. It is also compatible with data-logging technology. This means that real-time temperature monitoring during transit is possible.

According to the award citation, industry testing has also proven that the Lobster Protector design outperforms traditional packaging such as polystyrene. Its adoption by end-users could potentially remove

around 1.2 million polystyrene boxes from the supply chain each year.

PRODUCT PROTECTION

For the first time this year the Sustainable Packaging Design award introduced the Product Protection sub-category.

Hughson noted that this sub-category underscores the importance of packaging's main role: to get the product from factory to shelf and into the hands of the consumer while maintaining its integrity.

"This is to some extent the less glamorous side of packaging if we're comparing it to the branded pack on shelf, but it is no less important, and some would argue more so," she said.

There was a tie for gold. Orora Fibre Packaging (now named Opal) won for its recyclable moulded paper inserts for fresh produce, and Sealed Air Brand Protective Packaging for the TempGuard kerbside recyclable packaging for pre-packaged, temperature-sensitive goods.

The Orora Fibre Packaging inserts provide protection and presentation for fresh produce inside the carton and offer a

recyclable alternative to standard, non-recyclable PVC plastic inserts.

The recyclable moulded paper inserts are made from responsibly sourced fibre and can be customised with specific colours and branding for a range of products. The inserts are currently available for avocado and mango segments in multiple count sizes.

The individually moulded trays provide shock and vibration protection (no ringing on fruit) and offers ventilation and moisture control characteristics to ensure fresh produce integrity.

Sealed Air's TempGuard paper pouch liner is made from virgin kraft paper and is filled with 100 per cent recycled paper. It lines cartons that are used for distribution to deliver exceptional thermal insulation for chilled items including chilled meals, pharmaceuticals and chocolate. ■

PIDA is the Australasian region's exclusive feeder programme for the World Packaging Organisation's WorldStar awards, and PIDA 2020 winners are eligible for entry into the 2021 WorldStars.



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The true role of packaging comes to light in the midst of the COVID-19

In part two of how COVID-19 has impacted on the packaging industry, The Australian Institute of Packaging executive director Nerida Kelton talks to the experts about packaging's role in a pandemic world.

In part two of this two-part feature, Michael Dossor MAIP, group general manager, Result Group; Dr Carol Kilcullen-Lawrence, FAIP, CPP sustainability specialist, UPM Raflatac; Alan Adams MAIP, sustainability director APAC, Sealed Air; Professor Pierre Pienaar FAIP, CPP, education director – Australian Institute of Packaging (AIP) and president – World Packaging Organisation (WPO); and Keith Chessell FAIP, APCO board member all bring different views to the discussion on COVID-19 and how it will affect the packaging industry.

One outcome from the current situation is the resurgence of single-use plastics. How can we manage this as an industry?

Michael Dossor: This is the most important question of all. There are ways to protect the product, while at the same time ensure materials will fit within APCO's circular economy model and we have done it many times over at Result. The term single use package does need to be used as much as it is and with the correct solution, brand owners can put that claim on pack. The question is: will they? The consumer knowing there are recycling options has become as important as claims on the product itself in my opinion.

Carol Kilcullen-Lawrence: Single use plastic for food packaging is not likely to be replaced any time soon. So, its management is about providing suitable convenient recycling options – these will continue to evolve as Australia moves towards more local recycling as part of the APCO projects that steer us towards meeting the 2025 National Packaging Targets.

Alan Adams: Single-use plastics is a widely used term that is perhaps better used with the term 'problematic' as APCO recommends. As an industry, the needs for recovery and better use of resources in plastics at end of life has not changed, work is continuing to generate better outcomes. Sealed Air continues towards our pledge of being 100 per cent recyclable by 2025 and including 50 per cent recycled content. Recently, we launched plastic mailers with recycled content made from waste generated in our food packaging plants and waste from post-consumer streams. The resurgence of single-use plastics is more about increased understanding of safety, security, and the supply chain performance of high-performance plastics.

Pierre Pienaar: The same consumers, who have been demanding governments ban single-use bags and who have been leading the uptake in the keep-cup concept, are the ones shouting for shoppers to leave their reusable bags and keep-cups at home. It is called survival. WPO is hopeful, with the entire planet, that this pandemic will pass, and life will settle back into a pattern we enjoyed prior to the pandemic outbreak. I am hoping the resultant and overriding attitude in response to these forms of packaging will be a sense of how much the consumer has been directly responsible for our polluted planet to date.

Keith Chessell: Most states have in place or are working on implementing a single use plastic ban covering items such as lightweight plastic shopping bags, disposable plastic plates/bowls, cutlery, cups, stirrers and some other single-use food service items, expanded polystyrene food and beverage containers, plastic straws,

heavier/boutique plastic bags and oxo-degradable plastics. Although attitudes may have changed through this COVID crisis, the phasing out of these items will certainly occur. The packaging and manufacturing industry need to get on board with the 2025 National Packaging Targets and become APCO members and utilise their resources (PREP recycling tool, Australasian Recycling Logo), the recently issued Sustainable Packaging Guidelines (SPGs) plus a ranging of packaging material guides. The industry has been on the back foot for far too long with Australian consumers with regards to plastic packaging. We have failed to defend and support the important role that packaging has in protecting, preserving, extending shelf life, reducing food spoilage and waste, providing important information on ingredients, nutrition, storage and recipes as well as the convenience that consumers require. The industry right now must ensure their packaging meets the sustainable packaging guidelines – recyclable or reusable, is working towards recycled content and has the ARL for the consumer's disposal understanding.

There have been growing concerns that with the world in one form of lockdown or other consumers are no longer caring about the environment as much and are not recycling. There have also been many photos on the Internet showing all of the medical PPE being littered around the world. What should be done to ensure that we maintain the course for recycling globally?

Michael: The answer is simple. The industry has the capabilities to develop a packaging material of any

type to fit the circular economy and be 100 per cent recycled, be made from recycled content but at the end of the day the consumer still has to put the packaging in the right bin or dispose of it correctly. I am pretty sure our Prime Minister said it best when people started panic buying toilet paper. "It is wrong, stop doing it, it is un-Australian". The same applies for PPE littering.

Carol: Even though our short-term focus has necessarily shifted towards "physical distancing" we also have an opportunity now to think about what is truly important and there is definitely an emerging sense of community. The measures we are taking are for the benefit of everyone. So, when we switch back to our





longer-term goals, I believe protection of our environment will still rank highly. The problem of medical equipment being littered is a difficult one. I have come across used gloves being left in a shopping trolley. Also, there are so many people wearing masks incorrectly. We need more government guidance about when PPE is actually recommended. Gloves are not a substitute for good hand hygiene and masks worn for too long harbour many germs.

Alan: The vast majority of consumer recycling is done at home and this service continues without interruption. In fact, with more time at home, less travel and less dining out and fast food consumption it is highly likely that traditional litter rates are dropping and recycling rates increasing. The improper disposal of Medical PPE is similar to other forms of littering; poor choices by individuals or organisations. Pressure to deliver on 2025 recycling targets in Australia and globally remain in place. While changing behaviour is part education, there are always that small percentage that are inconsiderate of others and the environment. It is pleasing to see law enforcement taking action on those making poor choices including elevated and specific fines for littering PPE.

Pierre: Survival always remains

our most essential need, hence the current medical PPE littering. I am of the opinion that this pandemic will ultimately bring the opposite effect. I am hoping that after this pandemic, and as a result of self-isolation, we may have greater appreciation for our cleaner planet and for our family, friends and neighbours. This pandemic is a leveller like no other we have seen in living history. We are dependent on our earth, on our family and our neighbours. Nobody is the centre of the universe. Hopefully it takes being alone to appreciate the need for us to work together.

Keith: There has been little said around the world about the disposal of medical PPE. The current littering pictures that are being circulated of PPE gloves and masks really don't assist consumers' perspectives about packaging, litter, ocean and planet contamination.

Up until the COVID-19 impact, consumers were concerned for the environment, climate change, recycling and there was negativity towards plastic packaging. The improved understanding of packaging by consumers through the protection benefits during this COVID period will be quickly lost unless each industry addresses the environmental design requirements for their products and educates the consuming public for the reason/benefits their packaging

provides to the food and beverage products.

How do you think packaging will be perceived after this is all over?

Michael: As an industry, if we keep doing the great work we have been undertaking, then packaging has an opportunity to have its recent perceptions changed at a consumer level. It is all about the consumer facing communication and education. We need to continue to showing and explain all of the great work that is being done within the packaging industry. Packaging has a role to play that is far greater than just protecting the product. Controlling and minimising food waste stands out and that is a bigger problem than the packaging itself, costing the country more in the longer term.

Carol: I hope the importance of packaging will be appreciated, particularly its role in preserving food. And as brands continue on a journey towards more sustainable packaging, we have a huge opportunity to take consumers with us on this journey.

Alan: The value and types of packaging will have changed. E-commerce and home delivery will remain, with higher adoption so efficient and effective protective packaging is needed. New packaging

formats are accelerating like TempGuard, a recyclable fibre solution that extends the operating window for chilled food home delivery. Cooking at home rates have changed as new cooks are created so packaging making cooking and preparation accessible will be valued. We are seeing a spike in demand for ready meals in packaging like Simple Steps. Food safety, security of supply and damage protection will not be taken for granted.

Pierre: A realisation that it is every country's culture that is directly responsible for how much pollution they are causing. It is not the fault of packaging. Japan's culture is currently proving its saving grace in this pandemic. With a population two and three times that of Italy and Spain respectively, Japan's hygiene culture of no handshaking (rather bowing), wearing of masks, respect of social distancing etc. has managed to keep its COVID-9 numbers relatively low. Japan's culture too demands extravagant packaging of all goods, to the point of over packaging and single food item packaging. Packaging in Japan is considered a necessary luxury. They have almost a fetish with packaging for a number of cultural reasons. Re-use of items such as plastic chopsticks (as opposed to disposable wooden ones) and cloth napkins is unheard of. In response to this, however, they are among the world's foremost recyclers. Over 70 per cent of Japan's plastic is recycled. Lower than 20 per cent is sent to landfill in comparison with the US landfill figure of around 70 per cent of plastic. A culture shift may be required by many countries as they realise – after the pandemic – how much they were to blame for the Earth's demise. The WPO through its member countries like the AIP, is intent on working with countries to educate consumers to manage pollution themselves rather than depend on a government to dictate behaviour.

Keith: As we look back on the COVID experience, I am sure as a packaging and manufacturing industry we will be able to see we have been thrown a 'lifeline' to restore in the consumer's mind that packaging is not evil, it does serve a critical purpose and is an essential part of providing food safety and integrity to our consumer products. **F**



Packaging has a huge role to play in a pandemic world especially in terms of preserving food and beverages.

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Packaging in the time of coronavirus: Australia's way

In recent months, Australia has been ravaged by one disaster after another. Drought, fire, floods, and now a pandemic. And every time, without fail, the packaging industry has risen to the challenge of supporting the greater community and innovating in the face of crisis. Lindy Hughson writes.



WHEN I first researched this article for website publication on 9 April, Australia's states and territories were in various levels of shutdown. We had recorded 6073 cases of Covid-19, and our death toll was 51. As I write this update on 12 May, recorded cases are at 6927 and deaths at 97. Relative to other nations, we are in a good position. For the most part, Australians have responded well to the federal and state governments' social distancing regulations and, in simple terms, we have flattened the curve. There is an air of cautious optimism in our leaders' rhetoric as we start to lift restrictions in a measured fashion. But the message is clear: conquering this pandemic will come at a huge cost, socially and economically, for all of us.

As a packaging journalist, it has been a privilege to report on the positive response made by so many

companies and individuals in our industry in their efforts to not only ensure the safety of their own staff, but also to lend support to their customers and suppliers and pivot their businesses to solve immediate shortages of supply. The pandemic has highlighted the community's basic needs for security of supply, food safety and product protection – and in this the packaging industry has a huge role to play.

“And what a change in our markets... from pressure to eliminate plastic bags and wrapping fresh produce, to food safety and availability being top of mind for all of us...”

— Alan Adams Sealed Air.



For the most part, Australians have responded well to the federal and state governments' social distancing regulations and, in simple terms, we have flattened the curve.

INDUSTRY STEPS UP

In compiling this report, *PKN* spoke to a selection of Australian Institute of Packaging members who represent different packaging supply chain sectors about their companies' response to the current crisis.

For Melbourne-based flexible pouch specialist OF Packaging, even before the shutdown was mandated by government, the company moved quickly to implement new processes and technologies throughout its business to ensure minimal impact to the people involved at all levels of its supply chain.

“Our company ethos of collaboration has been influential in the face of adversity. It has allowed us to effectively continue our packaging supply in a time where demand for flexible packaging has had an uptick, especially in the local manufacturing sphere,” Joe Foster, managing director of OF Packaging, says.

Foster says the company has been working on multiple packaging

The world will never be the same again and as ultimately we look in the rear-view mirror at the crisis, we will be able to look forward to a bright future as a packaging industry. Packaging is not only fit for the present but undoubtedly fit for the future.”

— John Bigley, Zipform Packaging



innovations it is now expediting, including new coatings and materials that could be useful in the current situation, such as a range of anti-microbial, anti-bacterial, and aseptic packaging innovations.

Like other food packaging suppliers, Sealed Air Australia has an important part to play in rising to the challenge of major demand increases for food packaging and protective packaging to keep supermarkets and e-commerce running.

The company's priority was establishing a people protection team and then protecting its Australian manufacturing plants' ability to fulfill unprecedented supply demands. This included screening measures and new ways of working that safeguard the wellbeing of employees and the community.

“We have seen an increase in demand of more than 200 per cent for some lines of meat, seafood, and poultry trays. Having manufacturing plants and an avid production team here in Australia has been critical to a quick response to the surge in demand,” says Alan Adams, Sealed Air's sustainability director, Asia Pacific.

Commenting on a shift in focus around packaging, Adams says: “And what a change in our markets... from pressure to eliminate plastic bags and wrapping fresh produce, to food safety and availability being top of mind for all of us, and Woolworths' CEO Brad Banducci even being asked by ABC reporters if single-use shopping bags will make a comeback!”

Foster has noted a change in sentiment too. “It has been interesting to see the shift in public view from packaging sustainability to product protection, shelf life, and safety. This threat has reminded us the true purpose and importance of packaging, and rightfully so – plastic should not be seen as waste, but a resource,” he says.

“We hope that once this crisis is over, public perception will have changed on issues of sustainability and will no longer perpetuate the unrealistic notion of removing plastic altogether, to instead focusing on improving our waste infrastructure, and working on new innovations that allow us to better collect, recycle and reuse plastic material for packaging applications.”

Weighing in from Western Australia, Zipform Packaging managing director John Bigley says that apart from ensuring all employees are operating safely and healthily, the company's packaging operations have been business as usual.

“We all still have a job to do to drive innovation that delivers better sustainability solutions and there's no reason to halt or slow down initiatives to address the 2025 National Packaging Targets,” Bigley says.

“It is clear that packaging has a huge role to play in terms of maintaining the integrity of food supply at a very challenging time and of course, as we all know, packaging plays a vital role in minimising food waste.”

Bigley believes issues like food safety and food waste will become

increasingly front-of-mind for the consumer so the crisis will undoubtedly raise the profile of the packaging industry positively.

“We will be one of the key industries to emerge with a stronger public awareness of what we deliver and the role of packaging compared to a lot of the previous negative perceptions around packaging and waste.

“The world will never be the same again and as ultimately we look in the rear-view mirror at the crisis, we will be able to look forward to a bright future as a packaging industry. Packaging is not only fit for the present but undoubtedly fit for the future,” Bigley says.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN FOCUS

Amid the Covid-19 crisis, as government calls on industry to make products in short supply, manufacturers are turning to Australian packaging companies for help.

Local packaging suppliers are seeing a change in demand from the market as manufacturers who were dependent on overseas supply chains find themselves in a position they would prefer not to be in. So says Aleks Lajovic, managing director of Australian-owned tube and closure manufacturer Impact International.

He tells *PKN Impact* is prioritising tube production for demand from existing, loyal customers as well as for items that the Australian government views as “essential”, such as hand sanitiser.

“We have tried to offer customers tubes that maximise efficiencies on our production lines and we have tried to reduce the number of change-overs required on each production line,” he says.

“Our staff and our suppliers have been fantastic, with everyone pitching in so that we can manufacture as many tubes for hand sanitiser products as possible. We are running extra shifts across our site as we try and assist as many people as possible.”

Commenting on the reported packaging supply shortages for hand sanitiser (typically supplied in a plastic bottle with pump dispenser) Lajovic says, “When you think of a plastic bottle, there is not one company that

I know of in Australia that covers off the three main areas of manufacturing the bottle: manufacturing; applying the cap or pump head; and decorating the bottle using either direct print or a label.

"Trying to manage these three areas in this current environment is extremely challenging. The pump supplier is probably based overseas, has huge orders, and international freight is far from routine at the moment," he says.

"At Impact, we manufacture the tube, we manufacture the cap, we fit the cap onto the tube, and then we decorate the tube, so all in-house and you get to deal with one company... plus, the tube understands how gravity works, so the product is already sitting at the dispensing orifice, you are not trying to get the product to flow uphill.

"We are also pricing in Australian dollars, so there is no exchange risk when dealing with us," Lajovic says.

As Lajovic observes, many companies are now reconsidering their packaging supply chains, the problem is that everyone is doing it at once. Consequently, the next challenge for Australian packaging manufacturers will be supply of raw materials (especially plastic resin). According to Lajovic, two resin suppliers have moved to allocated supply of certain resins for the next few months.

Sydney-based family company Wellman Packaging supplies rigid plastic packaging across a range of sectors but primarily food, household care, personal care, and pharmaceutical, and therefore has a broad exposure to the types of products

"If Covid-19 has taught us nothing else it is that excessive reliance on manufacturing from China and other parts of the world – of not being self-sufficient – is no longer an acceptable option, especially for items of an essential nature in terms of public safety."

— Craig Wellman, Wellman Packaging



that have come under heavy demand due to the Covid-19 crisis.

CEO Craig Wellman tells *PKN* that the bottles, closures, and caps the company produces for these sectors – including domestic and commercial cleaning products and hand sanitisers – have seen increased demand.

"The rapid elevation of the crisis and resulting panic buying by consumers together with a significant increase in the general levels of sanitisation throughout the community have driven this," Wellman says.

"I expect this to continue long after the Covid-19 crisis has abated in strict medical terms because this pandemic has changed consumer and social behaviours that most likely will be locked-in as part of the new normal. This will translate into higher demand for products of this kind over coming years when compared to general average demand of say 2019," he says.

Wellman says this is also the case for food, with high volumes on products consumed in the home as a result of social distancing and

work-from-home policies – and of course many restaurants closing or being restricted to take-away only.

"As demand normalises after the panic buying of recent weeks, demand in this sector should also continue at a generally uplifted level until people return to public places like restaurants – and have the money to do so, noting that we are heading for 10-15 per cent unemployment and possibly a deep and protracted economic contraction," he adds.

Commenting on the packaging and product shortages around hand sanitiser, Wellman notes that aside from having put in place "hospital grade" procedures for combating infectious diseases so that the company may continue to supply packaging to other "essential businesses" for their cleaning chemicals and hand sanitisers, Wellman Packaging has also commenced its own production of hand sanitiser internally.

"For us it is a common supply item – we've had dispensers on the walls everywhere for years and something that we have been giving out to our staff and their families since the start of Covid-19. However, now our regular supplier, Johnson & Johnson Medical, is struggling to keep up," he says.

Wellman Packaging is also looking at the production of masks in conjunction with the Victor Chang Research Institute.

"It's game on and we all need to play a part in the control and management of this outbreak – including being respectful of social distancing

Local packaging suppliers are seeing a change in demand from the market as manufacturers who were dependent on overseas supply chains find themselves in a position they would prefer not to be in."

— Aleks Lajovic, Impact International



rules. I very much doubt that this will be the last time we as a community need to rally against a contagion of this kind, so developing the infrastructure and skills to deal with such events will certainly not be a wasted effort.

As Wellman says, if Covid-19 has taught us nothing else it is that excessive reliance on manufacturing from China and other parts of the world – of not being self-sufficient – is no longer an acceptable option, especially for items essential for public safety.

Melbourne-based Caps & Closures continues to experience unprecedented demand for a wide range of closures and dispensing options, as managing director Brendon Holmes tells *PKN*.

Holmes says the company has put measures in place to increase production to meet the nation's essential packaging needs.

"Even with the global supply-chain network in crisis, our experienced staff have done great work in managing the influx of emergency orders, production planning and fulfilment logistics.

"We are attracting new customers who are seeking an Australian manufacturer with credibility and a proven record, to fast-track supply of product to the consumer. We are innovating with existing caps and developing new designs to serve their needs. We have committed additional shifts for production round the clock, with careful planning, to support our customers both locally in Victoria as well as interstate to ensure the quick production of essential commodities by their manufacturers. That way, we can get it out to those who need them quickly," Holmes says.

"Now is the time, as the Industry Minister Karen Andrews and NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian recently pointed out, to learn from the pandemic experience that has exposed Australia's reliance on overseas supply chains, and support investment in retooling for products that should be manufactured domestically."

Holmes relates that Caps & Closures has seen some "amazing outcomes"



"Now is the time... to learn from the pandemic experience that has exposed Australia's reliance on overseas supply chains, and support investment in retooling for products that should be manufactured domestically."

— Brendon Holmes, Caps & Closures.



within its customer base, with local operations from breweries, distilleries, and bottlers converting lines to meet the ever-increasing demands of sanitiser and cleaning products.

One such customer is Urban Alley – a Melbourne-based independent craft brewery located at Docklands, now using its resources and facilities to produce hand sanitiser. Holmes tells *PKN* Caps & Closures was able to put measures in place promptly to adapt to the requirements of Urban Alley and at the same time save an estimated 100 jobs in the supply chain.

"The challenge going forward is to continue to support our new customers and expand our business together, in a highly competitive industry with many international competitors," Holmes says.

Taking into account the views of all interviewees, one of the silver linings from the pandemic will be a more robust manufacturing sector in Australia that could once again become the engine room for innovation, economic growth and job creation. ■

TETRA PAK CALLS-OUT TRENDS

Based on market observations accessed through its global network, global food packaging giant Tetra Pak says the impacts of Covid-19 on its customers and their brands are playing out as follows:

- The emerging new retail channels are becoming more important – online grocery and meal deliveries are seeing huge rises – both in China and globally.
- Back-to-basics trend on consumer expenditure – consumers are spending highest on basic grocery items. Alongside this, there have been significant spikes in hoarding emergency supplies to build what is called a "pandemic pantry".
- Beyond this crisis, as can be compared to post SARS, consumer preferences will navigate further towards quality of source, immunity boost, and nutrition for longevity.

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