

DELI CUTS



WORLDSTAR
PACKAGING THAT SAVES FOOD
SPECIAL AWARD
2025 GOLD WINNER



WORLDSTAR
ACCESSIBLE PACKAGING DESIGN
SPECIAL AWARD
2025 SILVER WINNER



DON Smallgoods Deli Cuts

Key Outcomes and Measurement

- Intuitive flow wrapped (envelope pack) with reseal functionality.
- Secondary seal and reseal functionality is secured on the reverse.
- Resealable with clear instructions on how to open and close.
- Does not compromise food quality and freshness.
- Removes the need to decant.
- Uses 50% less plastic.
- Australasian Recycling Labels (ARL) for easy disposal (Check locally recyclable).

Sustainable Packaging Guidelines



Product: Deli Cuts
Company: DON Smallgoods
Country: Australia

DON Smallgoods is one of Australia's largest Smallgoods manufacturers, proudly producing their award winning hams, bacon, salami, franks and continentals from their Castlemaine site in Victoria. They are a leading regional employer and proud of their long heritage and enduring commitment to the tradition of the Smallgoods they produce.



- ✓ **Uses flow wrap technology - the first in Australia for this segment.**
- ✓ **Easy opening.**
- ✓ **Easy closing.**
- ✓ **Unique label adhesive design that allows for easy opening and resealing.**
- ✓ **Tamper evident.**
- ✓ **Resealable.**

- ✓ **50% less plastic.**
- ✓ **Easy to remove and replace remaining product.**
- ✓ **Packaging can be used for storage.**
- ✓ **Product is placed on a food grade board that removes excess moisture keeping the product fresher longer.**
- ✓ **Shelf life has been extended.**

Please provide an overview on your packaging design and why it is unique and different.

The use of flow wrap with label reseal functionality technology is new to Australia. There are similar systems with alternative reseal systems and flow wrappers without reseal but not with the adhesive label.

The reseal functionality preserves food freshness, sealing in moisture and flavour, thus reducing wastage due to dry, spoiled product. It enables consumers to retain product in its original packaging for fridge storage, thus product information such as use by dates are visible to consumers. It also prevents wasteful double packaging through use of cling wrap and therefore reduces packaging disposal.

Consumer research completed by BrandTonic in November 2022 investigated what consumers did and did not like about various closure systems. Ziplocks were described as tricky to manoeuvre, particularly for kids. Stickers that were too small in size were not considered capable of keeping the product fresh, particularly after multiple uses. Tape reseal were considered not sticky enough and tend to lose their stickiness with moist product. This functionality also raised concerns around tamper evidence.

Research showed a clear correlation between the stickiness of the label and the perception of keeping products fresh. The challenge was how to balance this against the ease of opening on first use. Various adhesives and adhesive designs have been tested and research has identified a cross hatch adhesive structure that meets consumer needs, keeping it fresh between use whilst making it easy to open on first initial opening.

Consumer research (Benchmark, June 2023) asked consumers to rate how effective the seal on the pack would be at keeping the ham fresh? After single use, consumers considered the seal to be extremely effective (76). After multiple opening and closing, the effectiveness score was 65 (very effective).

The presence of free liquid from the product was also considered. Many consumers do not like to touch the product or have liquid run out of the pack. To alleviate this, we have placed the products onto an aqueous board which will absorb any free liquid. Consumers have responded well to this addition. The use of the board performed well in research with a score 75 vs benchmark of 65 when asked 'How much did you like or dislike the board?'. After it was revealed that the boards used in the ham packs were moisture wicking, liking of the board directionally increased to 79. The board improves the consumer experience and allows the product to be easily removed and replaced into the pack.

The use of the board has also shown to improve shelf life performance. Shelf life testing has exceeded that of the same product in a thermoformed pack.

The reseal label, heat seal and board provides new innovative manufacturing technique, solving consumers key frustrations around accessibility, reseal ability and freshness.



Please provide details on as many of the criteria below that your packaging design met.

Save Food Packaging Design Criteria #1: Design to contain and protect the product from spoilage & damage through manufacture, warehouse and the various stages of distribution.

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

The new resealable Deli Cuts range has been designed to protect the product from spoilage and damage through the manufacture, warehouse and distribution, through the careful consideration of the packaging design and the equipment selection.

The packing of the product commences with the log being sliced and shingled. The portion is then conveyed to a robotic pick and place system where the portion is positioned on a board. The robot heads have been selected specifically to minimise any damage to the product, when being picked and placed. Like fingers they scoop under the portion to gently lift and arrange the portion on the board.

The board provides multiple benefits:

- The board provides stability and increased rigidity when presented in the vertical position on shelf. This stops the product from slipping down into the pack, making it difficult for consumers to separate the product for use.
- The aqueous coating provides an additional product benefit in the absorption of any free liquid in the pack. This protects the consumer from any liquid running out of the pack and has also proven to provide shelf life protection.
- The board is easy to grasp and remove from pack to enable consumers to take the required portion without damaging or touching the product, thus protecting the product at a food safety level.
- The new flow wrap offers resealable functionality. It is initially heat sealed to ensure product integrity and freshness on delivery to store. This provides secure protection of the product against contamination between leaving site and consumers initial opening. It also provides tamper evidence giving consumers confidence in the quality of the product.

- The secondary seal and reseal functionality are secured on the reverse of the pack with a resealable label with clear instructions on how to open and close the pack for optimal freshness and removing the need to decant product into sealed containers or using secondary plastic for wrapping in the moisture and flavour.
- Once sealed the product is packed into the shelf ready shipper for palletising. In order to ensure the optimal presentation of product, the shippers are transported in the horizontal position. The robotic palletiser lift the cartons via vacuum to stack. The pallet is transported with cartons in the horizontal position so that the first time product is placed in the vertical position is when it is opened on retailer shelves.
- Product is transported in chilled transport to ensure product arrives fresh, ready for consumers to enjoy.

Save Food Packaging Design Criteria #2: Design to preserve, enhance product appeal and extend shelf life.

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

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The colours and print have been used for high contrast. Font is large and images support the directions to assist the consumer. The expiry on the back of pack is black against a transparent film for visibility.

All nutritional and ingredient declarations are high contrast with dark blue against white film. We have used bold font to highlight warnings and allergen information such as 'NOTE HEAT TREATED' and 'MAY CONTAIN SOY' to draw the attention of the user. All information relating to the product inclusions are laid out together, ARLs are clearly identifiable at the bottom of pack.

The expiry on the back of pack is black against a transparent film for visibility. The use by date is on a separate line to the batch information. A large type font has been used, making the information visible.

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Save Food Packaging Design Criteria #3: Design to provide convenience and to not waste food in handling.

Include in this criteria details of 'portion control packaging', 'easy opening and effective resealable packaging' and 'controlled dispensing and enabling the removal of the entire product from the pack'.

Consumers are moving away from purchasing at the Deli counter. Apart from the wait time at the Deli, meats need to either be decanted or re-wrapped once at home to retain freshness and use by dates are disposed of with wrapping.

Consumers are looking for convenience, and reseal functionality. The small pack size is the fastest growing pack size in the fillers category. DON is reinventing this 80/100g pack size as consumers look for pack solutions that provide greater portion control, and minimising wastage.

This innovative packaging solution delivers on providing consumers with a convenient easy open/easy close pack that is compact, provides product visibility, minimises the mess of liquid in the pack, is more sustainable but does not compromise food quality and freshness. The reseal functionality preserves food freshness, sealing in moisture and flavour, thus reducing wastage due to dry, spoiled product. It enables consumers to retain product in its original packaging for fridge storage, thus product information such as use by dates are visible to consumers.

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The inclusion of the board in the pack has multiple benefits which have been described in Criteria 1 and 2 above.

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Save Food Packaging Design Criteria #4: Design to promote and communicate to consumers how to handle, store, prepare and reuse food products.

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

The pack has been designed to make it obvious where and how to open the pack. The aqua blue sash across the top of the pack with a picture of the back of pack aims to direct consumers to turn over for opening. Once turned over, the label has a 4-step process with legible and easy to understand opening instructions with images for opening and resealing the product.

The instructions for opening were also tested in consumer research. In June 2023 Benchmark asked consumers 'Were the instructions on opening this pack clear?' 98% of respondents answered 'Yes'.

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Save Food Packaging Design Criteria #5: Design to meet the 2025 National Packaging Targets & Global Sustainable Packaging Targets.

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

The future of the smallgoods category is all about less waste, less packaging waste, less food waste, and less energy waste. This innovation addresses these issues through food preservation, less plastic, and less energy utilisation. The Sustainable Packaging Guidelines have been a key driver in the design of the DON Deli Cuts resealable range.

The material being utilised in the new packaging design is CEFLEX compliant achieving our goal for APCO 2025 targets. The ARL for the soft plastic is 'check locally'. The label does not need to be separated from the pack. The internal board is made from renewable sources and is kerbside recyclable and complies with requirements for pulpability. No hazardous materials have been used.

The new flow wrap pack uses 50% less plastic than the current DON 100g Fillers Range (10.2g vs 4.9g plastic) and 69% less plastic than current competitors 100g Fillers Range in market (15.8g vs 4.9g).

The smaller packs, enable smaller cartons and greater pallet utilisation so more packs can be shipped in this new format.

In addition to these primary benefits, research completed by Benchmark (June 2023) reported that consumers inclination to store the product in its primary packaging rather than decant or use cling film increased from 2% for thermoformed product to 76% for the new flow wrap pack, thus resulting in a reduction in the use of plastic for storage.

Flow wrap technology enables manufacturers to make a step change in terms of reducing the weight of plastic being put into the market and sent to waste by 50 - 70% compared to current thermoformed packaging.

The benefits of this change are cascaded through the supply chain. Through smaller, lighter packs the cycle of polymer manufacture, through to the consumer pack purchase, is made more energy efficient.

Transportation of materials becomes more efficient between supplier to manufacturer and manufacturer to retailer.

Manufacturers are increasingly looking for more energy efficient conversion of materials. Flow wrap technology uses 50% less energy compared to conventional packaging.

Save Food Packaging Design Criteria #6: Design to meet the 2030 National Waste Targets & Global Sustainable Packaging Targets.

Outline how the new packaging design aspects have been contributing to reducing or preventing food waste. Provide specific information identifying the amount or percentage reduction in food waste associated with the new design relative to a replaced packaging design or a competitor's design.

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

DON KRC are investing in automation not only in their packaging area but in processing as well. This investment is planned to run over the next 3 to 4 years.

DON has stated their support of the 2025 sustainable packaging commitments and all future packaging investments will be designed to meet these requirements.

What does winning an Australasian Packaging Innovation & Design (PIDA) Award mean to you and your team?

"DON KRC are proud to have won multiple PIDA Awards for our Deli Cuts packaging. To be recognised at an Australasian level is a great honour for the DON team and our packaging and machinery partners. Winning PIDA awards means a great deal to us as we strive to meet our 2025 commitments as well as reducing material used." says Mark Kerr FAIP, Packaging Manager, DON KRC.



Deli Cuts recognised with WorldStar Packaging Award + 2 Special Awards

"DON was so honoured to win a general WorldStar Packaging Award and to then find out that we also won a Gold Packaging that Saves Food & a Silver Accessible special award was an incredible feeling. It is rare to win three WorldStar awards, and I understand this is the first time an Australian company has taken out two special awards. The WorldStar Awards are the pinnacle of awards for packaging, and it is a great reward for all of the effort the DON team has put in to developing and launching of this packaging. It has been a great team effort starting from researching the packaging concept, purchasing machinery to presenting it to the consumer in a usable form. I have been lucky and privileged to have been involved in this process from start to finish. It is a great result," says Mark Kerr FAIP, Packaging Manager, DON KRC.



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GLOBAL
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2025 WINNER**



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

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

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

There are four special awards available:

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

The **Save Food Packaging Design Special Award** is designed to recognise companies that are working to minimise or prevent food waste from paddock to plate using innovative and intuitive design features that can contain & protect, preserve and extend shelf life; all the while meeting global sustainable packaging targets. This is a WorldStar Packaging Award category.

Follow the PIDA Awards on LinkedIn



Australasian Institute
of Packaging

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

