

# Plastic Free

## A guide for campus retailers



**Say no to  
single-use**

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Plastic Free is a sustainability initiative to reduce the University of Newcastle's plastic footprint.

To achieve this, we engage directly with UQ food outlets, events, markets and catering providers to switch from single-use plastics to better alternatives. We also encourage students, staff and visitors to adopt a plastic-free lifestyle.

Our target is single-use, disposable plastic items which represent the most problematic and prolific sources of the litter stream.













These items include coffee cups/lids, takeaway food and drink containers (cups, plates, boxes), utensils (plastic cutlery, straws), plastic bags and single use water bottles.

Plastic Free conforms with NSW Government legislation in the staged roll out of targeted bans on single-use plastic items from July 1, 2022.

The following table has been created to assist retailers at University of Newcastle to eliminate single use plastic items.



# Swap it Out

REMOVE	SWAP IT OUT	COMPOSTABLE ALTERNATIVES	
<b>Plastic Cutlery</b> 	Remove plastic cutlery including 'landfill biodegradable' or 'oxy degradable' plastics.	Switch to compostable cutlery such as responsibly sourced wood or bamboo. Avoid bioplastics which persist in the environment when littered and look like plastic to customers.	
<b>Paper Coffee Cups lined with plastic</b> 	Remove non-certified compostable coffee cups, including 'landfill biodegradable' or 'oxy degradable' plastic-lined cups.	Accept customers with BYO cups and consider offering a discount for this. Stock certified compostable cups with a waxed or biodegradable (PLA) lining. Consider rewarding customers that bring their own cup with a discount.	
<b>Plastic Straws</b> 	Remove plastic straws from sight and only provide upon request.	Provide a paper or pasta straw dispenser at your point of sale or on request only (reducing the total required to save on any price difference). Make sure you have plastic straws available for people who rely on them.	
<b>Plastic &amp; Polystyrene Packaging</b> 	Remove plastic and polystyrene plates, trays or clam shells, including 'landfill degradable' or 'oxy degradable' plastics.	Switch to compostable plates and trays such as responsibly sourced paper, bamboo or sugarcane. Avoid clear plastic viewing panels in trays which are generally made from plastic. Remove plastic lined paper cups.	
<b>Plastic Cups &amp; Paper Drink Cups (with plastic lining)</b> 	Switch to certified compostable (hot or cold) cups with a thin waxed or biodegradable (PLA) lining. Avoid unmarked bioplastic cups, which are confusing for customers who mistake them for plastic and incorrectly recycle them.	If water points are available on site, avoid water bottles and provide glass or canned cold drinks instead of plastic or composite packaging.	
<b>Plastic Bag</b> 	Remove plastic, bio-plastic or degradable bags of any thickness – including plastic bags or produce bags.	Provide boxes, paper bags or reusable bags for free or at a small cost.	

# Compostable Product Catalogues

The below plastic-free catalogues can be used to source compostable products.

BioPak

GreenMark

Bygreen

DetPack



## Final tip

Be clear to your distributor on exactly what products you are ordering. Biodegradable or degradable does not mean the same thing as compostable and may be a plastic product. Always ensure you purchase 100% certified compostable. Where possible, try to choose natural products such as paper, bagasse, cardboard, wood, palm, wheat fibre or bamboo.

Remember to prioritise in order of sustainability:

1. Dine-in
2. Takeaway with BYO reusable containers
3. Takeaway with compostable single-use containers



In addition to support from the University of Newcastle, the National Retail Association will be hosting free online drop-in sessions for retailers to gain advice and ask questions about the single-use plastic ban. Register via the link below:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/nsw-plastics-ban-monthly-pop-in-sessions-for-impacted-organisations-tickets-259345217527>