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**Plea to Give Single Use Plastics a Second Life**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA 8TH NOVEMBER 2022 – Thousands of businesses have started offering thicker plastic bags whilst industry leaders encourage consumers to recycle the soft plastics used to package perishable goods.

“It’s become clear that many retailers have switched to thicker, 36 micron carry bags,” says Gavin Wilson, Managing Director of packaging supplier Upac. Mr Wilson has been championing recycling as the solution to reducing the amount of plastic ending up in landfill for decades. “When we recycle these bags we achieve the goal of removing single use plastics from the environment.”

The increased thickness of bags has offered new branding opportunities for Upac’s clients, with surprising benefits for the environment too. “Our clients have welcomed the move to thicker bags which can be reused more often, which increases brand awareness for them. The quality of the bags also means they last longer before they even need to be recycled,” says Gavin.

Realising that retailers were offering thicker bags when the ban came into effect, Gavin Wilson and his team decided that education was the key. The Upac team redesigned packaging and has launched a new website, <https://duraplasbags.com.au/>, to help educate businesses and the public about soft plastic recycling.

Barrier bags are recognised as essential packaging for perishable goods. This includes bread bags that are necessary to ensure freshness, quality, and hygiene. Barrier bags are exempt from the single use plastics ban that came into force in June 2022. However, many consumers aren’t aware that these bags are 100% recyclable and can be removed entirely from the waste stream through the REDcycle program (<https://redcycle.net.au/>).

The food manufacturing industry is keen to play its part through recycling. “We supply our bakery clients with 100% recyclable bread bags. We’ve worked closely with a number of them to redesign the bags with symbols. These symbols help the end user navigate the recycling system,” says Gavin. The idea to add the symbols to bread bags came from team member, Caleb Williams, whilst he was redesigning new packaging for a client. The logos are being rolled out to bakeries across NSW. “Bakeries and their customers want to do the right thing, and we’re keen to do our bit to make that easy for them.”

Upac is just one company navigating the move towards more circular economy materials. Other companies, such as Plastic Forests, [https://plasticforests.com.au/](https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=https%3a%2f%2fplasticforests.com.au%2f&c=E,1,EkAsNRn5DL02CjNfhW5NsxCSw8CsXAlrmxCiLXT4QqgJSdbfzR398E-gCF1H_7xHYABvfUgR-JOVJOKS-meM4eLYhbFuVwoB5UkszZOm-oU,&typo=1), are already taking advantage of the tonnes of plastic diverted from landfill by recycling it into other useful outdoor products.

Gavin remains passionate about what the packaging industry can do to help. “As it stands we have customers saving over 5.5 tonnes of plastic a year by using high quality, lighter weight bags. If we all work together, we can make a huge difference whether a business is impacted by the legislation or not. There’s always ways to improve our recycling efforts.”

Businesses and consumers can learn more at <https://duraplasbags.com.au/> and <https://redcycle.net.au/>.

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Upac is an industry leader in branded packaging including 100% recyclable plastic bags. Taking a consultancy approach, Gavin Wilson from Upac has guided hundreds of businesses through the transition towards the NSW Single Use Plastic Ban. Upac recently launched the Duraplasbags.com.au website to help educate retailers and the public about how to recycle plastic bags. Upac's goal is to ensure that every Duraplas plastic bag is recycled with other soft plastics to be given a second life through the REDCycle and other recycling programs.

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