



MEDIA RELEASE
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GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENT ON SINGLE USE PLASTIC CARRIER BAGS A POSITIVE STEP

Retail NZ says that today's announcement from Government that it intends to ban single-use plastic carrier bags is great news.

"Retail NZ has been calling for Government leadership on this issue for some time now, and it is good news that the Government is stepping up to help retailers tackle the issue of reducing plastic waste," Greg Harford, Retail NZ's General Manager for Public Affairs said today. "Retailers want to do the right thing, and across the sector, many large and smaller retailers have taken significant steps over recent months to reduce or eliminate the number of single-use plastic carrier bags in circulation. The Government's proposals will lock in these steps, while ensuring that there is a level playing field across the entire retail sector.

"Customer views about plastic bags have changed rapidly and consumers are now more willing to take their own reusable bags when they go shopping. Many other Governments around the world have already taken steps to regulate single use plastic carrier bags, and customers have generally adjusted well. Kiwis have demonstrated they are concerned about our marine environments and we have generally seen really positive outcomes from those retailers who have already eliminated plastic bags all together.

"There is a lot of confusion in the market about the value of so-called 'biodegradable' and 'compostable bags'. Including these in the Government's proposal is a signal that they may not stack up, given that we do not yet have the proper infrastructure to process these kinds of bags effectively in New Zealand at any kind of scale.

"Retail NZ is encouraging all retailers to take part in the consultation process and provide feedback to the Government on its proposals."

For further information, please contact:

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