coles

MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday 4 June

Coles offering customers checkout bag choice

Coles will be selling new re-usable and biodegradable checkout bags in its stores across Australia from September 1 this year.

The new checkout bags are part of Coles' plan to provide a broader range of alternatives to single-use plastic bags.

Coles will offer a re-usable heavyweight plastic bag at 15 cents per bag, and a biodegradable bag that meets the Australian Standard (AS 4736 - 2006) for 25 cents per bag. Both new bags will be sold to customers at cost price.

Coles' new biodegradable bag is made from corn starch and has been extensively tested to meet the Australian Standard. It is designed to break down in an industrial organic composting facility.

Coles Operations Director Stuart Machin said that customers had told Coles they wanted access to a range of checkout bag options.

"We've had a very positive response to the new bags in South Australia following the government ban on single-use plastic bags, as well as in other trial stores around the country," Mr Machin said.

"We think these new bags will make it even easier for our customers across Australia to make a better bag choice."

Coles will continue to offer the popular re-usable "green bag", available for 99 cents. Five cents from the sale of each of these bags goes to Coles' School Garden Grants Program, where schools can apply for a grant to build a school garden to help teach students about caring for the environment.

The program is coordinated by Junior Landcare, and donations from green bag sales in 2009 have already raised nearly $250,000. The total number of gardens funded by Coles will reach over 350 this year.

Landcare Australia CEO Brian Scarsbrick said he was thrilled with the new bag rollout.

"This is another example of Coles' commitment to the environment, and Coles customers now have even more ways to kick the single-use plastic bag habit," Mr Scarsbrick said.

"We are proud to have Coles as one of our longest-standing supporters. Through the green bag donations we've been able to help raise the environmental awareness of thousands of children across hundreds of schools."

In addition to offering the new bags, Coles will introduce a range of incentives to encourage customers to either reduce, reuse or recycle their shopping bags. For example, from July 1, new-look recycling bins will be progressively rolled out to all stores to encourage customers to return plastic bags for recycling.

Further information,

Jim Cooper, Ph (03) 9829 4354

Coles Re-useable Bag Options - Fact Sheet

"Re-use me. Don't forget me" bag. 15 cents

A thicker plastic bag developed to be re-used several times.

"Re-use me. Biodegradable bag". 25 cents

- Coles new biodegradable bag is made from corn starch. It's designed to carry up to eight kilos of groceries.
- It has been extensively tested and meets the Australian standard for biodegradable plastics: AS 4736 – 2006. This standard sets guidelines for a bag breaking down in an industrial composting facility used by councils offering a green waste collection service.
- The bag will start to break down within 7 days and will be significantly broken down within 45 days in a professionally run industrial organic composting facility.