

PRESS RELEASE

ICELAND LAUNCHES PLASTIC-FREE CHEWING GUM

Research reveals that 85 per cent of Brits don't realise chewing gum contains plastic

1st August, 2018 – Iceland has become the only supermarket chain in the UK to sell plastic-free chewing gum.

The primary ingredient in most chewing gum is 'gum base' – a non-biodegradable substance made with synthetic polymers (plastic)¹, plasticizers, softeners, texturizers and emulsifiers among other ingredients, which impart their unique properties to chewing gum².

With more than 100,000 tons of chewing gum being consumed every year, it is estimated that 95% of Britain's streets are now stained with the substance³ and local councils spend around £60m each year cleaning it up⁴.

Simply Gum is made from all natural ingredients and is completely biodegradable, making it better for the environment. The gum is made from a tree sap called chicle which is extracted from the sapodilla tree, native to Central America.

The decision to stock the product forms part of Iceland's mission to enable UK consumers to reduce their single-use plastic consumption. This has included a pledge to go plastic-free in its own label food packaging by the end of 2023.

Iceland Founder and Executive Chairman, Sir Malcolm Walker commented: "I absolutely detest the mess that discarded plastic chewing gum creates on our streets, and the fortune that is wasted by councils trying to clear it up. For decades, regular gum makers have hidden their synthetic ingredients behind the catch-all term of 'gum base' which is consistently used as an ingredient on pack.

¹ <https://www.nobelprize.org/educational/chemistry/plastics/readmore.html>

² <http://www.gumassociation.org/index.cfm/facts-figures/frequently-asked-questions/what-is-gum-base/>

³ [Keep Britain Tidy](#)

⁴ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-39599329>

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“Simply Gum uses the original, natural gum base of chicle and is fully biodegradable. We are delighted to make it available to UK consumers in our stores so that they can have a real choice about what they are consuming and the impact they make on the environment.”

Before launching the new gum Iceland, working in partnership with food psychologist Dr Christy Fergusson, commissioned research among 2,000 UK adults which found that 80 per cent had no idea what ordinary chewing gum is made of. In particular, 85 per cent were unaware that it usually contains plastic.

Around 60 per cent of those surveyed use chewing gum and of those who do, around two thirds said they would prefer a gum which isn't made from synthetic ingredients. More than three quarters of gum buyers said they would think twice about buying regular chewing gum again in the future.

The survey also found that 85 per cent of participants think brands have a responsibility to make it clearer what ingredients their products contain. Nine in 10 are worried about the damage being done to the environment by plastic, and three quarters said they have actively attempted to cut down of the amount of products they purchase that contain or are packaged in plastic.

Commenting on the findings, Dr Christy Fergusson said: *“Over the past several years, as consumers we have become more conscious when it comes to the products we buy and the impact that our diet and lifestyle choices have on the environment. As a result, we want to know what we are purchasing, so we can make more informed decisions.*

“With the introduction of Simply Gum, Iceland is taking another step forwards to that goal.”

Simply Gum Creator, Caron Proschan commented: *“I created Simply Gum because I recognised a need for a natural gum that was made with high quality, sustainable ingredients. We chose Iceland as our UK launch partner because of this shared commitment to quality and sustainability. Iceland continues to lead the way in terms of enabling consumers to make informed and responsible choices.*

“We're excited to introduce Simply Gum to the UK market and we hope that Iceland's customers will be excited about trying a better chew.”

Simply Gum is now available in Iceland stores across the country and online and costs £2 for a pack of 15, in Mint, Maple and Ginger flavours.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

ABOUT ICELAND

Iceland is recognised as the leader in frozen food with over 900 stores in the UK. The company prides itself on being a convenient and friendly place to do the family's weekly shop, as well as meet everyone's daily top-up shopping needs for fresh, chilled and frozen food and groceries.

Iceland's nationwide online shopping service has been named the UK's best in the 2016, 2017 and 2018 Which? supermarket surveys, and for more than 20 years Iceland has offered a unique, free home delivery service for in-store purchases.

Since 1970, Iceland has been proudly demonstrating to shoppers just how the Power of Frozen can deliver an extensive choice of high quality, great-tasting food from fine sources around the world at great value prices.

With the Power of Frozen at its heart, Iceland naturally generates low levels of food waste. The company is also known as a pioneer in removing artificial colours, flavours and non-essential preservatives from its own label products. It has ranked as one of the UK's Best Big Companies to Work For in each of the last 12 years, and was number one in both 2012 and 2014.

In 2018 Iceland committed to becoming the first major retailer, globally, to eliminate plastic packaging from all of its own label products by the end of 2023.

ABOUT SIMPLY GUM

Launched in 2014, Simply Gum is a New York based food company that creates natural, premium chewing gum. Unlike regular gum, which is packed with artificial substances, such as aspartame and plastic, Simply Gum contains only a few natural ingredients, which are crafted into the highest quality gum on the market. The result is a lightly sweetened,

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biodegradable gum, that is better for the planet. Simply Gum is available online at simplygum.com and can be found in stores throughout the US.

ABOUT DR CHRISTY FEGUSSON PHD

Dr Christy Fergusson PHD is a Doctor of Psychology, Chartered Psychologist, Nutritional Therapist and Hay House Author

Through a combined integration of her expertise in nutrition, psychology and hypnotherapy she launched The Food Psychologist, quickly becoming the 'go to' food psychology expert in the UK, including on Channels 4's Secret Eaters.

A former Sun columnist and in-house nutritionist at Women's Health Magazine, Dr Fergusson published her first book 'Hot, Healthy, Happy' with Hay House in 2013.

<https://www.thefoodpsychologist.com/>