

INDUSTRY LEADING TRIAL IN SUPPORT OF PROPOSED DEPOSIT RETURN SCHEME DEMONSTRATES OVERWHELMING CONSUMER SUPPORT

- **Iceland's UK-first trial of in-store Reverse Vending Machines has seen over 310,000 plastic bottles recycled**
- **Significant results achieved via installation of just four machines installed in stores across the UK with average of 2,583 bottles recycled per day**

Following the launch of its market-leading trial of in-store reverse vending machines, Iceland has reported significant consumer take-up, with more than 310,000 bottles recycled.

The UK's leading frozen food specialist was the first UK supermarket to install reverse vending machines in-store, in support of the Government's proposed Deposit Return Scheme in England, and in line with the supermarket's continued efforts to reduce the impact of single-use plastics on the environment. The trial was launched after the retailer became the first globally to commit to removing plastic packaging from all own label products by 2023.

Since the launch of the trial six months ago, a total of 311,500 bottles have been scanned into the reverse vending machines in stores across the UK. The trial incorporated England, Scotland and Wales with machines installed in Fulham, Wolverhampton, Musselburgh and Mold.

In November alone, a daily average of 2,583 bottles were recycled across the four sites, with an average of £250 in coupons refunded per day.

Reverse vending machines reward individuals for recycling, by providing money or vouchers in return for empty containers. Iceland's reverse vending machine accepts any Iceland plastic beverage bottle and repays customers with a 10p voucher to be used in store for each bottle recycled.

In addition, 40 interviews were conducted across the trial stores to understand consumer perceptions and appetite for the proposed official Deposit Return Scheme. Monetary rewards,



environmental consciousness, additional recycling potential and assured recycling were all listed as key factors influencing the use of the scheme.

A key finding of the qualitative research was the role of children in recycling via reverse vending machines – children seemed particularly engaged with how the machines work, with some even educating their parents and encouraging them to use. A number of schools have engaged with the trial, which further supported in engaging consumers through word of mouth recommendations.

Richard Walker, Managing Director at Iceland, commented: “Iceland has continually led the way in the fight against the scourge of plastic since making our announcement to eliminate plastic from our own label product packaging.

“The launch of reverse vending machine trials in our stores is one sign of this. We’ve gained hugely valuable insights into both consumer interest and the functionality of the schemes, and it’s clear from the results that consumers want to tackle the problem of plastic head on, and would be in support of a nationwide scheme.

“We’ll be using these findings to inform future Iceland initiatives, and will be sharing our findings with DEFRA and across the industry to ensure any nationwide roll-outs are comprehensive and effective in our goal of tackling the issue of single-use plastics.”

Following the success of the trial, Iceland will extend for a further six months in order to collect further data on the positive environmental impact of a potential national roll-out.

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ABOUT ICELAND

Iceland is recognised as the UK’s leader in frozen food and operates over 900 stores across the country, together with a multi-award-winning online shopping service. It 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, frozen food and groceries. For



more than 20 years Iceland has also offered a unique, free home delivery service for in-store purchases.

Iceland has won multiple awards for the quality of its food and service. Recent honours including being named Best Online Retailer and Best Frozen Food Retailer at the Retail Industry Awards 2018, best UK supermarket for customer service in the 2018 UK Customer Satisfaction Index, Community Retailer of the Year at the Retail Week Awards 2018, Online Retailer of the Year at the IGD Awards 2017, and Online Supermarket of the Year at the Grocer Gold Awards 2017. Iceland's online shopping service was also named the UK's best in the 2016, 2017 and 2018 Which? supermarket surveys. Iceland 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.

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, while naturally generating low levels of food waste. Always committed to doing the right thing for customers, communities and the environment, Iceland was a pioneer in removing artificial colours, flavours and non-essential preservatives from its own label food in the 1980s, and in banning genetically modified ingredients in the 1990s. In 2018 it committed to becoming the first major retailer, globally, to eliminate plastic packaging from all of its own label products by the end of 2023, and to remove palm oil as an ingredient from its own label range by the end of 2018.