

25 July 2019

ICELAND TRIALS UK'S FIRST PLASTIC BAG FREE STORE IN FIGHT AGAINST PLASTIC

- **Trial will see customers in Hackney store offered paper, jute and cotton bag alternatives**
- **Replacement paper bags will be available for 15p and will hold up to 16kg**
- **Iceland trialling paper bags alongside plastic 'bag for life' option in 40 stores to monitor consumer preference**
- **Trials expected to save in excess of 210,000 plastic carrier bags from being newly purchased**

Iceland has launched an industry leading trial, removing plastic bags altogether from one of its stores, as it continues to lead the way in the fight against plastic.

The trial will run in Iceland's Hackney store, with customers being offered extra-strong paper bags for 15p. The bags can hold up to 16kg – the equivalent of 70 packs of Iceland's No Bull Burgers (226g per pack).

Lighter weight paper carrier bags (10p), jute bags (£1), Disney branded cotton bags (£1), and small paper bags for meat products will also be available, providing a complete range of plastic-free options for customers.

At the same time, Iceland will also trial the 15p paper bags alongside plastic bags for life (15p) in North Wales, Wirral and Cheshire, covering 25 stores. This additional trial will be rolled out across a further 15 stores in the Manchester area from 10th August and will be used to monitor consumer preference in a setting where the two options are offered side by side.

Based on current usage and estimated switching rates for the side by side trial, it is anticipated that the trials will collectively save over 210,000 plastic carrier bags from being newly purchased.

Both trials will run for six months, with the findings to be analysed throughout and used to inform Iceland's long-term approach to replacing single use plastic carriers. The retailer removed plastic single-use carrier bags from all stores in 2018 and is working to explore non-plastic alternatives which meet the needs of customers and will support in challenging consumer behaviour.



Last year, Iceland was the first retailer globally to commit to remove all plastic from its own-label packaging by the end of 2023.

Richard Walker, Managing Director at Iceland, commented: “We know that many customers are using ‘bags for life’ only once and the retail industry needs to work together to challenge this behaviour and find alternative solutions. Over 1.2 billion plastic bags for life were sold last year in the UK and this needs to change drastically.

“These trials will help us to understand how our customers feel about removing one of the most common objects associated with plastic, the supermarket carrier bag, and how they respond to various alternatives. We’re looking forward to seeing how customers respond and using the results of the trials in our wider plans to reduce our plastic footprint.”

This is the latest in a series of industry leading trials which have seen the retailer launch the UK’s first in-store reverse vending machines and trial plastic free produce, offering fruit and vegetables in either loose format or alternative packaging.

Since making its commitment in January 2018, Iceland has reduced or removed plastic packaging across 81 lines and removed over 1,500 tonnes of plastic in its packaging.

For further information please visit www.sustainability.iceland.co.uk

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ABOUT ICELAND

Iceland is recognised as the UK’s leader in frozen food and operates over 950 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

Iceland

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 13 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.