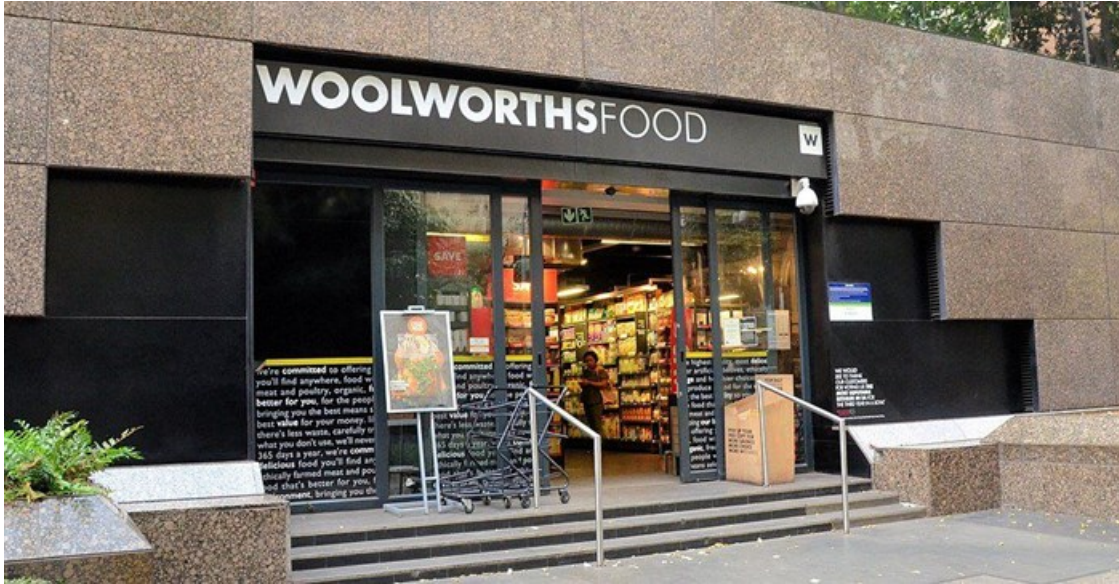


# Woolworths implements further single-use plastic reductions in stores

Woolworths is expanding its 'plastic shopping bag free' policy to 52 more stores around the country by the end of April and has announced the replacement of plastic packaging with kraft packaging in 'Ripe and Ready' avocados, equating to an annual plastic saving of 35 to 40 tonnes, according to the retailer.



These milestones help steer Woolworths towards its vision of zero packaging waste to landfill, which includes the removal of single-use plastic from its stores and a commitment for all its packaging to be either reusable or recyclable.

“These additional 52 stores based mainly in Gauteng and the Western Cape, takes us to over 200 single-use plastic bag free stores in Southern Africa. A significant achievement at a time when we have had so many supply uncertainties,” confirms Latiefa Behardien, Woolworths head of foods technology, safety and Good Business Journey.

## New avocado packaging

The recent rollout of the new avocado packaging to all varieties sees the polystyrene plastic punnet being replaced with a kraft box base made from 63% recycled paper which equates to an annual plastic saving of between 35 to 40 tonnes and is covered with a fully recyclable shrink wrap.



It has also had its challenges as the transportation of 'Ripe and Ready' avocados from farm to distribution centre to store and then into customers' homes requires gentle but robust packaging choice. "We have been working closely with our suppliers and packaging manufacturers for over two years on this new design, including extensive customer trials over the last eight months with the various avocado varieties.



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"We are confident that the new packaging will deliver the functionality that we need. Kraft board is an excellent packaging alternative to plastic in that it is 100% fully recyclable, biodegradable, Forest Stewardship Council (FSC N002141) certified and locally-sourced," concludes Behardien.

Woolies customers in the Western Cape may also notice that the retailer is trialling a moisture-resistant kraft pot to replace the traditional plastic pot for their 'Grow Your Own' herb range. If the trial is successful, this shift could result in a 13.9 tonne plastic reduction per annum, says Woolworths.