

GS1 50 years of transforming tomorrow

40%-50% less food waste for retailers

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# Food & Drink BUSINESS

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## The GS1 barcode turns 50

By Pippa Haupt | 3 April 2023

**As the barcode turns 50, GS1 says next-generation barcodes, such as two-dimensional QR codes, 'promise to once again change our lives in new ways'. To usher in this new reality, GS1 is building a coalition of industry leaders to deploy next generation barcodes around the world.**

Since its creation in 1973, the barcode is now on over 1 billion products, and the 'beep' at the checkout counter is instantly recognisable around the world.

From farm to store, barcodes—and the data behind them—enable more resilient and transparent supply chains.

GS1 says that for the next generation, the ambition of the leaders who in 1973 came together for the common good needs to be replicated, and that transitioning to the next generation of barcodes powered by GS1, will put technology at the service of efficient trade, more sustainable consumer shopping and patient safety.

At the end of 2020, GS1 launched a global initiative to transition from traditional to next generation barcodes together with key players in the retail sector. There are over 20 countries and districts including Australia, China, US and Brazil that have already started successful pilots.

In 2021, GS1 China started to promote 2D barcodes and 20 major key branches—including the Zhejiang Branch of GS1 China (Zhejiang Institute of Standardisation)—have joined the project. In Australia, a 2D program designed to create awareness, build capability and support adoption is currently in full execution.

GS1 says the barcode is globally-recognised and ready for new business.

"As consumers rightly demand more and better product information, and the planet requires us all to maximise the power of data for smart and efficient decisions, we are now launching a global transition from traditional barcodes to next generation barcodes and we welcome everybody on board for this journey."