

Effective 1 September 2025 - Plastic Label Bans & New Compostable Labels for Fresh Produce

What's happening?

- South Australia¹ will be the first Australian jurisdiction to ban plastic stickers on fresh fruit and vegetable produce such as apples, pears, avocados, citrus and mangoes.
- The ban will come into effect on 1 September 2025. Excess stock of banned products cannot be supplied following this date.
- The ban applies to non-Australian Standard (AS) certified compostable plastic labels affixed to produce (fruit or vegetables) for sale in South Australia.
- There will be a 3-year temporary exemption until 31 August 2028 for plastic produce stickers certified compostable to some alternative standards.



What are the Australian Standards for compostable labels?

Under the upcoming ban on produce stickers in South Australia, compostable plastic produce stickers certified to either AS 4736:2006 Biodegradable plastics suitable for industrial/compostable composting and other microbial treatment or AS 5810:2010 Biodegradable plastics suitable for home or commercial/industrial composting will be compliant.

- Industrial compostable only: AS 4736:2006
- Industrial and home compostable: AS 5810:2010

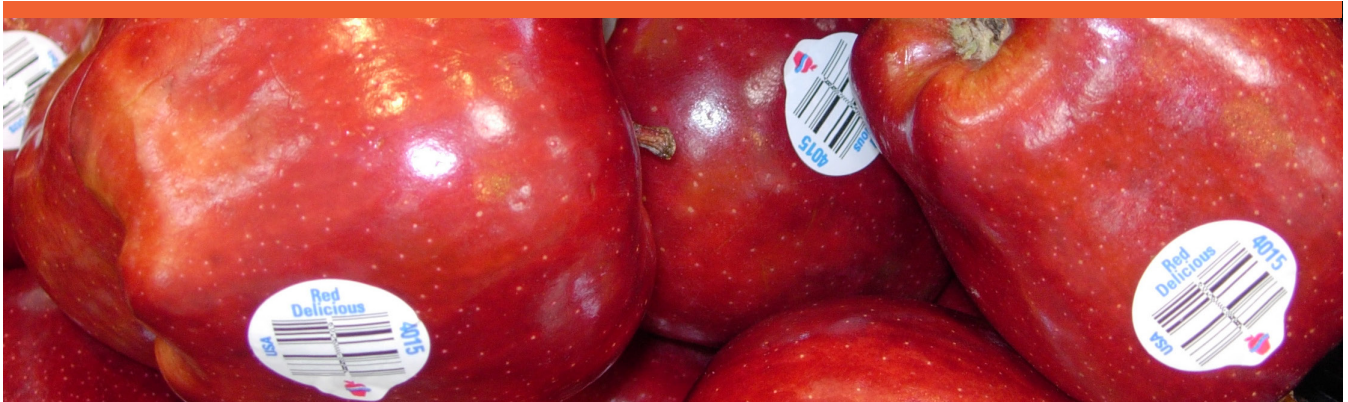
What steps should you take?

- Review your fresh produce sales for South Australia (fruit and vegetables).
- Review your stock holdings of any stickers non-compliant for South Australia.

- Transition to compostable labels as required.
- Manage future sticker orders proactively to minimise leftover non-compliant stock.
- Consider future compostable label requirements of other jurisdictions.

How will compostable labels incorporate the GS1 DataBar?

- GS1 Australia has successfully tested the GS1 DataBar printed on the certified compostable labels as per the global ISO/IEC 15416 standards.
- GS1 has compliant solution providers already capable of offering AS-certified compostable alternatives. Contact us at primary.industries@gs1au.org



What's the bigger picture?

Other Australian States and Territories

- NSW² is reviewing a proposition that by the end of 2030 fruit and vegetable stickers and their adhesives will be required to be certified compostable.
- Tasmania³ is currently investigating phasing out stickers on fruit and vegetables.

Global

- The European Union⁴ plans a transition to compostable fruit stickers by 2028.
- New Zealand⁵, is currently considering regulatory amendments. If approved, labels on all produce sold in New Zealand, including the adhesive, must be certified home-compostable by July 2028.
- Globally, a collaborative industry and government meeting was hosted by Canada⁶ in October 2024. This proposed a Global Roadmap towards a Certified Compostable Price Look Up (PLU) Sticker Standard.
- Globally, the International Federation for Produce Standards⁷ is connecting with industry and governments around the world regarding sustainability efforts related to PLU stickers.

Brands

- Zespri⁸, the world's largest kiwifruit marketer, announced in October 2024, its intention to change all fruit to a fully home compostable label within the next year.

What are the benefits of the GS1 DataBar and Price Look Up (PLU) stickers?

- The GS1 DataBar is a barcode system to identify smaller or harder-to-mark items like fruits.
- The GS1 DataBar and Price Look Up (PLU) stickers have addressed significant supply chain identification issues that retailers and primary producers were grappling with, which were leading to considerable food wastage.

- The benefits of the unique GS1 identification number contained in the DataBar barcode are:
 - accurate identification and pricing
 - faster checkout transactions
 - food safety management: the stickers track the source of the produce, which is crucial for recalls.
 - optimised inventory control and forecasting
 - operational replenishment control and food waste reduction
 - brand logo inclusion, fostering brand recognition and consumer choice.
- The transition from plastic to compostable labels on fresh produce, with timeframes that enable growers and packers to implement alternative packaging and labelling protocols, is supported by GS1 Australia.
- Information on how to apply the GS1 DataBar to your produce can be [found here](#).

Further information

¹ <https://www.replacethewaste.sa.gov.au/guideline-2025-bans>

² <https://yoursay.epa.nsw.gov.au/nsw-plastics-way-forward>

³ <https://nre.tas.gov.au/environment/single-use-plastics>

⁴ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ%3AL_202500040&qid=1737530299148

⁵ <https://environment.govt.nz/publications/plastic-products-banned-from-july-2023/>

⁶ <https://cpma.ca/docs/default-source/media-releases/2024/press-release-certified-compostable-plu-stickers-10-8-24.pdf>

⁷ <https://www.ifpsglobal.com/sustainability> ⁸ <https://www.zespri.com/en-NZ/publications/newsroomdetail/Kiwifruit-climbs-the-ranks>

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