



NEED TO KNOW



Whole Foods to Further Reduce Plastics Across All Stores

Whole Foods announced it will become the first national grocer to ban plastic straws as of July 2019.

Waste360 Staff | May 24, 2019

Whole Foods Market recently announced it will eliminate plastic straws from its stores in the U.S., the U.K. and Canada by July 2019, becoming the first national grocer to make this change.

In addition, the grocer said it switched to smaller plastic bags in its produce department this year and is replacing hard plastic rotisserie chicken containers with new bags that use approximately 70 percent less plastic. Together, these packaging changes will reduce an estimated 800,000 pounds of plastic per year.

“For almost 40 years, caring for the environment has been central to our mission and how we operate,” said A.C. Gallo, president and chief merchandising officer at Whole Foods Market , in a statement. “We recognize that single-use plastics are a concern for many of our customers, team members and suppliers, and we’re proud of these packaging changes, which will eliminate an estimated 800,000 pounds of plastics annually. We will continue to look for additional opportunities to further reduce plastic across our stores.”

By July 2019, Whole Foods Market will remove plastic straws from Whole Foods Market-operated venues, including Allegro coffee bars, juice bars and cafes. As a replacement for plastic straws , it will offer customers paper straws with frozen drinks or upon request; the paper straws are Forest Stewardship Council certified, recyclable and compostable. The company will offer a plastic straw option for customers with disabilities.

Whole Foods’ plastic reduction efforts include the following:

- In 2008, Whole Foods became the first U.S. grocer to eliminate disposable plastic grocery bags at the checkouts of all its stores.
- Whole Foods recently eliminated all polystyrene/Styrofoam meat trays in all stores in the U.S. and Canada.

- Whole Foods also provides customers with environmentally responsible food containers for items from its Prepared Foods department, including salad boxes made of 100 percent commercially compostable material.

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