

Frequently asked questions – Choosing the right barrier bag for unpackaged meats, seafood and dairy goods.

Butchers, delicatessens, cheese and seafood suppliers

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In January 2025, the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation confirmed that the scope of the existing ban on prescribed plastic barrier bags would be expanded from 1 October 2025 to include loose nuts and confectionery. Additionally, barrier bags used for unpackaged perishable fruit and vegetables would expand to include bags for unpackaged meat, seafood and dairy (collectively termed wet proteins).

From 1 October 2025, all retailers supplying prescribed barrier bags will need to use certified compostable barrier bags that comply with the [design standard](#). This means that from this date, the design standard will apply to all barrier bags used to supply unpackaged fresh fruit and vegetables, loose nuts and confectionery.

The design standard will apply to barrier bags used by retailers of 'wet proteins', such as delis and butchers from 1 October 2026.

Understanding your alternatives

First, encourage customers to bring in their own clean reusable containers to avoid single-use packaging entirely.

Then, consider minimising the use of single-use barrier bags for goods such as sliced deli meats and hard cheeses by using alternatives, such as wax paper or butcher's paper, which can be lined with a thin plastic sheet when needed.

Finally, if you need disposable alternatives, you can supply ban-compliant compostable barrier bags. Additionally, you can continue to supply clear plastic trays for raw meat and seafood, which may serve as a useful single-use alternative for packaging kebabs, skewers and whole seafood.

These frequently asked questions are designed for butchers, delis and seafood suppliers. They should be read in conjunction with the [Barrier bag factsheet](#), which details the scope of the ban and outlines the requirements of the design standard.

► What would be considered a wet protein?

The term wet protein encompasses a range of meat, seafood and deli items, including deli meats, raw and marinated meat, poultry, fish or seafood, as well as soft, hard and marinated cheeses.

► Will this ban impact my pre-packaged offerings or my use of plastic trays for raw meat and seafood?

No, the ban on plastic barrier bags will not require you to change how you package food items in advance of sale (i.e. pre-packaged or pre-packed offerings). However, if you have a range of pre-packaged or pre-packaged takeaway goods, we recommend checking that your current packaging solutions comply with the 1 September 2024 ban on [takeaway food containers](#).

Clear plastic trays (such as those made from PET, HDPE and PP) can continue to be used for raw meat and seafood, in keeping with the ban on [expanded plastic trays for raw meat and seafood](#).

► How do I know the bag I have chosen is certified compostable?

Look for bags certified to the Australian composting standards AS4736-2006 and/ or AS5810-2010. These standards are administered by the Australasian Bioplastics Association (ABA) and are commonly referred to

as the 'commercial composting standard' and 'home composting standard' respectively.

As the design standard requires barrier bags certified as compostable to be labelled with either the Seedling compostable logo (for commercial composting) or the Home compostable logo (for home composting), you can verify the compostability of the bags you have chosen by looking for AS4736-2006 or AS5810-2010 labels on the supplied bag. These logos should contain an ABA verification number, which can be used to search for the item's certificate of conformity on the ABA database. Alternatively, a certificate of conformity with this number can be requested from the supplier and verified via this ABA database: [Who is Certified in AUS & NZ – ABA Australasian Bioplastics Association](#)

The [Ban Solution Finder Database](#) is also a valuable tool for businesses seeking compliant alternatives to banned single-use plastics in Western Australia.

► **Are there any support materials available for businesses transitioning to compliant barrier bags?**

Businesses are encouraged to engage with available support materials to aid the transition from non-compliant single-use barrier bags to compliant alternatives. The government of Western Australia has engaged the [National Retail Association](#) (NRA) to support businesses in preparing for, transitioning to and managing the bans. A comprehensive [guide for business](#) is free to download and contains details of all existing and upcoming bans in Western Australia. The NRA also deliver free online information sessions on the first Friday of each month throughout 2025. All businesses impacted by the ban are encouraged to [register](#) their attendance. For other queries, a toll-free hotline (1800 817 723) and email are listed on the NRA website.

The [WA Plan for Plastics](#) webpage provides support material for businesses, and community awareness resources such as banners, video and radio ads that can be used by businesses to inform their customers about the ban.

The government has also engaged Boomerang Alliance to provide a WA version on the [Ban Solution Finder](#), an online database that can help businesses find compliant alternatives to banned single-use plastic items, including barrier bags.

► **How can I educate my staff about the changes and ensure they are prepared?**

There are several ways to educate your staff on the ban and ensure they are prepared for any changes in the day-to-day service requirements of their role. These include distributing key Government guidance and fact sheet materials, as well as posting back-of-house signage on any new operational requirements or scale-taring requirements that may arise as you transition to compliant alternatives.

► **What's the price difference between compostable and non-compostable produce bags?**

Currently many compostable barrier bags on the market are more expensive per unit. However, there are some options available that are comparable in price to single-use plastic barrier bags. Compostable barrier bags are becoming more affordable, and we expect these margins to improve as economies of scale respond to the increased need for compostable barrier bags in Western Australia.

► **Can a compliant compostable produce bag be used as a caddy liner for FOGO collection?**

Compliant barrier bags displaying the ABA's Commercial Compostable (Seedling) or Home compostable logo can be used as kitchen caddy liners to collect food waste in households located in local government areas that offer kerbside Food Organics & Garden Organics (FOGO) collection services.



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