

SME ARL Campaign Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The Australasian Recycling Label (ARL)

What is the ARL?

The ARL Program was developed in 2018 by APCO (Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation), Planet Ark and PREP Design. Since the launch of the label in September 2018, hundreds of organisations have started using it, including many of Australia's best-known brands and retailers. The ARL is supported by all levels of government to make recycling easier. As part of the National Plastics Plan, the Australian Government has committed to working with industry to see the ARL displayed on 80% of supermarket products by 2023.

Does the ARL work?

Consumers say the Australasian Recycling Label (ARL) helps them to recycle more and recycle correctly. More than two fifths report the label would encourage them to recycle a little or a lot more. The ARL is helping to cut through confusion around complicated packaging materials, such as foil.

How can I put the ARL on my current packaging?

Currently, businesses can only use the ARL on their packaging once they become Members of the [Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation \(APCO\)](#), which provides access to the [Australasian Recycling Label \(ARL\) Program](#).

Want to apply the ARL today? Contact APCO to find out more at arlmktplace@apco.org.au or call 02 8381 3735.

Why should I use the ARL on my packaging?

The Australasian Recycling Label (ARL) makes it easy to meet your business's sustainability obligations and generate a range of benefits for your business, your customers and the environment.

Good for business

- Introducing sustainable packaging into your business is an easy and cost-effective way to show your customers you are serious about sustainability. It can help improve your brand reputation and attract new customers.
- The ARL cuts through recycling confusion. Feel confident you're giving your customers the right information by providing one clear, consistent, and evidence-based label on-pack.
- When you use the ARL, you join a community of like-minded businesses that are working to reduce the harmful impact of packaging on the environment.

Good for consumers

- Research shows that consumers value the ARL on their packaging and 75% of Australians want to see the ARL on every item of packaging.
- Nearly 50% of Australians say the presence of the ARL would positively influence their purchasing decisions.

Good for the environment

- Using the ARL on your packaging is one of the simplest ways you can reduce your brand's environmental impact.
- By helping your customers recycle correctly, it reduces the amount of packaging that enters landfill or ends up as litter in our environment. Recycling correctly also reduces the amount of contamination in Australia's recycling system.
- Packaging is made from valuable, finite resources. By helping customers put the right packaging in the right bin, the ARL ensures packaging materials are recovered and processed into new products.

The SME ARL Campaign

What is the SME ARL Campaign?

The SME ARL Campaign is a new program underway to raise awareness among small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) about the benefits of adopting the Australasian Recycling Label (ARL) on their packaging. It is run in partnership by the Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation (APCO), the National Retail Association (NRA), the Australian Institute of Packaging (AIP) and the Australian Food and Grocery Council (AFGC). The project received grant funding from the Australian Government, to support SMEs to improve the sustainability of their packaging and to adopt the ARL.

Who is responsible for the SME ARL Campaign?

The SME ARL Campaign is being delivered in partnership by the Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation (APCO), the Australian Institute of Packaging (AIP), the National Retail Association (NRA) and the Australian Food and Grocery Council (AFGC). This campaign received grant funding from the Australian Government.

APCO is a not-for-profit organisation leading the development of a circular economy for packaging in Australia. APCO is the agency charged by government to deliver Australia's 2025 National Packaging Targets and make all packaging reusable, recyclable or compostable by 2025. To achieve this goal, APCO is working closely with government and industry to deliver a range of sustainable design, recycling, waste to landfill reduction and circular economy projects. In 2018, APCO developed the Australasian Recycling Label Program in partnership with Planet Ark and PREP Design. In 2022, APCO launched a new campaign in partnership with the National Retail Association (NRA), the Australian Institute of Packaging (AIP) and the Australian Food and Grocery Council (AFGC) to raise awareness among small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) about the benefits of adopting the ARL on their packaging. At the heart of the campaign is the ARL Marketplace, a new educational website featuring free sustainable packaging tools and resources. Visit the ARL Marketplace today to register your interest and stay up to date on the ARL and all things sustainable packaging.

Who is responsible for the SME ARL Campaign? (Cont'd)

The **AIP** is the peak professional body for packaging education and training in Australasia; helping to shape the careers of generations of packaging professionals - from packaging technologists to international packaging business leaders along with a host of people in associated disciplines – sales and marketing, purchasing, production and environment. Having served the industry for over 59 years the AIP is the only professional body designed to provide professional and personal development to all levels of the packaging industry; educational offerings include the Diploma in Packaging Technology, the Certificate in Packaging, the Master in Food & Packaging Innovation, Certified Packaging Professional (CPP) Designation, Fundamentals of Packaging Technology course, half-day training courses, conferences, technical forums, site visits, Influential Women's Mentoring program, internship program and more. The AIP covers Australia, New Zealand and parts of Asia.

The **NRA** is Australia's most representative retail industry association which represents over 40,000 outlets from every category of retail. We work across a broad range of issues including sustainability policy. We currently partner with various State and Territory Government's to inform retailers of the respective plastic bans and partner with APCO to ensure more businesses transition to the Australasian Recycling Label.

Founded in 1995, the **AFGC** is an industry association whose mission is to be the voice of the food and grocery supply industry and a valued service provider to members. Our vision is for a thriving and trusted industry that Sustains Australia. We work with members to develop policy positions and represent member views to government, trading partners and stakeholders. We also provide members with a platform for collective action and provide information and insights to help them navigate complex industry issues.

The ARL Marketplace

What is the ARL Marketplace?

The ARL Marketplace is a one-stop-shop for resources and information for small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) wanting to learn more about the Australasian Recycling Label (ARL). Launched in 2022, the new website features a range of free educational tools and resources designed to help small businesses take action to improve the sustainability of their packaging. This includes fact sheets, toolkits, action guides and a series of free online training videos developed by the Australian Institute of Packaging (AIP). The ARL Marketplace is a core feature of the SME ARL Campaign, a new initiative underway to raise awareness among small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) about the benefits of adopting the ARL on their packaging. Visit the ARL Marketplace today to register your interest and stay up to date on the ARL and all things sustainable packaging. To find out more visit: www.arlmarketplace.org.au.

How can I access the ARL Marketplace?

The ARL Marketplace is now live and can be accessed at www.arlmarketplace.org.au. The ARL Marketplace is home to a range of educational tools and resources to help small businesses understand sustainable packaging. Businesses can also register their interest to stay informed about all things sustainable packaging and the ARL.

What other resources are available through the ARL Marketplace to help me improve the sustainability of my packaging?

The ARL Marketplace features a range of educational videos, guides, fact sheets and learning modules to help small businesses understand the Australasian Recycling Label (ARL) and sustainable packaging. Visit the [ARL Marketplace](https://www.arlmarketplace.org.au) today to learn more.

How can I register my interest and receive updates about the ARL Marketplace?

Register your interest in the ARL Marketplace by visiting the website www.arlmarketplace.org.au and clicking register. You will receive regular updates about new sustainable packaging resources, events, and tools available to help your business.

General Sustainable Packaging Questions

What is packaging?

Packaging is any material used to wrap or protect goods. This includes packaging on products sold directly to a consumer (B2C packaging), such as a beverage container or shampoo bottle. Packaging also includes materials that are used to transport and store products before they reach the end consumer (B2B packaging), such as tanks or drums that are used to move products from one business to another.

What is recyclable packaging?

Packaging is considered recyclable when it can be collected, processed and recycled in the Australian kerbside recycling system by at least 80% of the Australian population. Recyclable packaging should ideally contain accurate recycling instructions to help customers correctly dispose of packaging.

Annually, each council across Australia reports on the packaging formats or materials they will and won't accept in household kerbside recycling bins. This threshold ensures as many items and valuable materials can be captured and recycled by as many Australians as possible.

What is sustainable packaging?

Sustainable packaging is any packaging that has little or no impact on the natural environment at every stage of the supply chain. This includes the way it is made, used and disposed of.

Is there a way to know if the packaging I currently use is recyclable?

When it comes to packaging, even the smallest details can have an impact on its recyclability, including its shape, size, weight, inks, adhesives and the materials used to make it. The most convenient way to understand if your packaging is recyclable is to buy it from a trusted packaging supplier or to talk to your existing supplier about the recyclability of their packaging. Additionally, businesses can join the ARL Program, which includes access to the Packaging Recyclability Evaluation Portal (PREP), an online tool that identifies whether a piece of packaging can be recycled in the Australian and New Zealand resource recovery systems. Read more information about [PREP](#) and the ARL on the [APCO website](#).

Beside changing my packaging, what else can my business do to be more sustainable?

Small business owners care about the environment, but when they're busy running a business, finding the time to prioritise sustainability can be tough. Luckily there are a lot of simple, small changes they can make in their operations that make a big difference to the environment. Visit the following organisations to find out more:

- Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation (www.apco.org.au)
- National Retail Association (www.nra.net.au).
- Australian Institute of Packaging (www.aipack.com.au).
- Australian Food and Grocery Council (www.afgc.org.au).
- Planet Ark Environmental Foundation (www.planetark.org).