

Flight Plastics

Over 100 years old.

New Zealand family owned business.

Started manufacturing plastic packaging in the 1970s.

Part of a \$12m, five year investment program by Flight started in 2012 to research & introduce latest extrusion and thermoforming capability and capacity. Began manufacturing imported RPET in 2014.

Co-funding with the Waste Minimisation Fund of final stage (this PET wash plant) completed in 2017.

As manufacturers of PET plastic packaging, we feel we have a responsibility to minimise the environmental impacts.

This is the first PET washplant in New Zealand.

New Zealand's first integrated PET recycling facility

Background

PET is the most used packaging material in the world.

PET is polyester – versatile – mostly made from fossil fuels.

We started using recycled PET in the UK eight years ago.

Flight introduced plant to use recycled PET to make our packaging in 2014 but have had to import the RPET. Ironically whilst all New Zealand collected PET was being shipped off shore for recycling.

This wash plant means we now have a fully integrated system and no longer need imported RPET. We buy bales of New Zealand PET, put them through the wash plant, produce RPET sheet and use this to make RPET food trays. All in one place.

New Zealand statistics

20,000 tonnes of virgin PET is imported into New Zealand each year. Mainly used for making bottles but increasingly PET food trays.

Around 8000 tonnes of PET bottles recycled each year (mostly bottles).

Flight's new wash plant has capacity to take all the clear PET collected and can increase capacity as Kiwis recycle more.

We have a ready supply of PET waste from kerbside – every tonne of RPET produced will be a tonne of imported virgin PET that is no longer required.





Key points

- Making packaging from recycled PET (RPET) is not a one shot exercise. One tonne of new virgin PET becomes one tonne of RPET and can be recycled again and again.
- New Zealand is not short of waste PET to use – we are taking material from all over the country.
- It's about having an end-use for the recycled material. The greater the customer demand for New Zealand manufactured RPET food containers the more we can recycle.
- An important part of this is about raising the profile of recycling generally, people want to know what is happening to their recycling.
- Flight RPET food trays are the only ones manufactured from New Zealand PET waste. We have the ability to make all rigid trays and containers for meat, produce and manufactured foods such as biscuits and confectionery from New Zealand RPET.
- We believe consumers want to participate and see their recycling efforts arriving back on their supermarket shelves. We can all be part of a genuine circular economy.
- Benefits for New Zealand's productive capacity as a food producing nation – we can export produce in New Zealand recycled PET.
- Benefits for New Zealand balance of payments – every tonne of RPET is one we're not buying overseas (and can be recycled again & again... so we're not buying it again & again).
- Benefits for the recycling industry – simplifies operation because it's all in New Zealand.
- The plant has capacity for up to 6000 tonnes pa, which exceeds the current volume of clear PET being recycled. It can be expanded as recycling volumes increase.