

# **What the Spec?**

## **Reusable Plastic Products Specification (EC-06-19)**

### **Is all plastic bad?**

Not all plastic is bad. Plastic is a versatile and durable material but its durability becomes a problem if a plastic product is designed for a single use. Single-use products have a short design life and then are disposed of either through recycling (if available) or to landfill where degradation could take hundreds of years.

### **Can single use plastic products be licensed with Environmental Choice New Zealand (ECNZ)?**

No, single-use plastics cannot carry the ECNZ ecolabel. The Reusable Plastic Product Specification requires licensed products to be durable and reusable and to meet the minimum recycled plastic content (which differs dependent on the type of plastic).

### **How does the Reusable Plastic Product specification reduce environmental burden?**

Plastic products licensed under ECNZ must be durable, fit for its intended use and have a proven life expectancy.

EC-06 promotes recycling of plastics through requirements that set minimum recycled content in licenced products, ensure plastic parts can be easily separated from other materials in the product and require plastic products to have the appropriate plastic resin identification code (to make it easier to recycle the product once its reached the end of its useful life).

The specification also requires licence holders to consider product stewardship during design and end-of-life of its products.

### **Does the Reusable Plastic Product specification consider the chemical content or use within plastic products?**

This specification includes criteria to minimise the use of hazardous substances as additives, either by promoting use of less hazardous alternatives or providing limits on the amounts of hazardous substances that may be present.

## **What are the environmental benefits of the Reusable Plastic Products specification?**

Products that meet the criteria for the Reusable Plastic Products specification (EC-06-19) have less environmental impact because they reduce the amount of plastic entering our waste streams, conserve resources through product reuse, reduce the subsequent release of environmentally harmful substances to the environment, and minimise the impacts of packaging.

## **How often will the Reusable Plastic Products specification be reviewed and updated?**

Generally, ECNZ specifications are reviewed three to five years. As information and technology change however, product category requirements for this specification will be reviewed, updated and possibly amended.

## **About the Environmental Choice ecolabel**

- *Environmental Choice New Zealand (ECNZ) is the official environmental label of New Zealand.*
- *Environmental Choice New Zealand is the only Type I Ecolabel in the country, meaning it is among the world's most rigorous environmental labels for products and services.*
- *Type I ecolabels review the whole lifecycle of a product or service using science-based measurements. Licensees that achieve an Environmental Choice New Zealand licence undergo stringent, third-party verification of their products and/or services, from the materials sourcing through to end-of-life.*
- *ECNZ is New Zealand's only member of the Global Ecolabelling Network (GEN), ensuring our ecolabel meets ISO 14024:2018 standards for Type I Environmental Labelling.*