



## Open Letter to the Horticultural Industry calling for Packaging Sustainability

Wednesday, 24 June 2020

Australia's horticulture industry is a vital contributor to the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the nation. In addition to providing significant regional and urban employment opportunities across a diverse value chain, horticulture enables the beautification of private and public landscapes, provides nutrition to the population, and encourages physical health and engagement with the natural environment. It plays a vital role in addressing environmental challenges, such as urban heat islands and water-sensitive urban design.

Currently, more than 80% of plastic plant packaging used by the Ornamental Horticulture sector is manufactured from Polypropylene (PP - Plastic Identification Code #5), including pots, trays, stakes and tags. A lack of accessible collection infrastructure through household recycling schemes has resulted in much of this material being either exported for down-cycling with other mixed plastics, or sent directly to landfill.

As a substantial user of this versatile material, the horticulture industry is perfectly positioned to close the loop on PP plant packaging by providing widespread access to aid recovery and through the purchase of recycled packaging utilising recovered PP.

Local pilot programs undertaken during 2019 demonstrated a viable collection pathway for these packaging materials to be recycled repeatedly into new plant packaging in Australia. This initial effort has already led to improved PP recovery and local reprocessing, resulting in an increasing quantity of recycled Polypropylene going back into horticultural packaging. With industry support, we can expand this system nationally and achieve a circular economy for all plastic plant packaging in Australia.

**We call on the Australian Horticulture industry to publicly commit to closing the loop on Polypropylene plant packaging and drive sustainable packaging across the sector.**

To enable the rollout of a national scheme, we ask all participants along the Horticultural value chain in Australia to:

1. **PLEDGE** to harmonise the use of Polypropylene for all plastic plant packaging and labelling in Australian ornamental horticulture, to streamline the flow of materials through the system and reduce the complexities associated with reprocessing these materials. (include link to Pledge Page)

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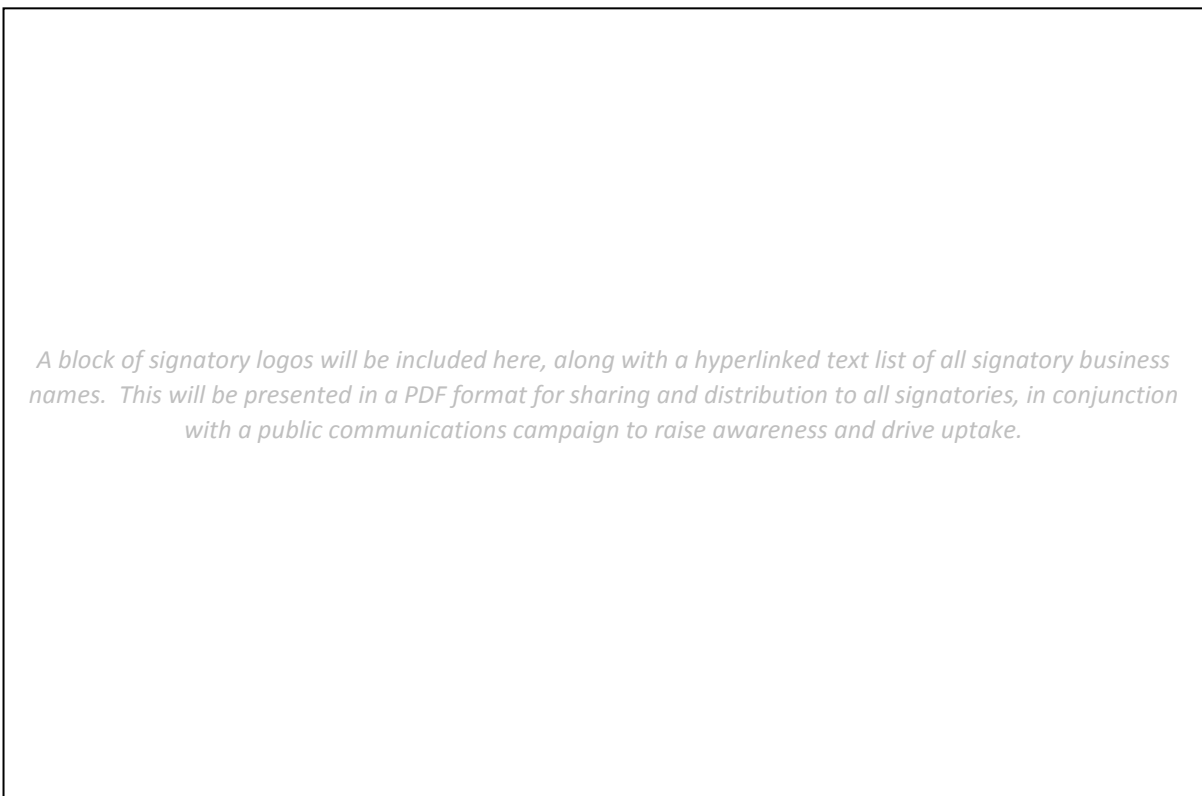
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2. **EDUCATE** customers and suppliers on the Polypropylene Recycling Initiative and encourage participation in the scheme
3. **SUPPORT** the national expansion of the Polypropylene Recycling Initiative by action such as:
  - a. When choosing plastic plant packaging for your business, commit to purchasing recycled Polypropylene packaging materials, to drive end-market demand for recycled content and close the loop on horticultural PP.
  - b. Committing to provide accessible collection points, to achieve a national collection capacity for recovery of plant packaging
  - c. Encourage active participation across business networks to build a national recovery framework for horticultural PP.

Through the national expansion of the PP Recycling Initiative, the Horticultural industry can become a leader in delivering a circular economy for polypropylene plant packaging across Australia. We invite you to join us.

Signed:



*A block of signatory logos will be included here, along with a hyperlinked text list of all signatory business names. This will be presented in a PDF format for sharing and distribution to all signatories, in conjunction with a public communications campaign to raise awareness and drive uptake.*

**(NB - Open Letter Text will be transposed to a generic letterhead, using the 'PP5 in Horticulture' logo – currently being finalised)**

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