

Should We Take a Step Back in Time?



Milk in Glass Bottles, selling at Höhepa, Hawkes Bay.

Milk in plastic bottles is found at nearly every gas station, dairy or supermarket in New Zealand - basically around every corner. Single-use plastic is a threat to our environment. We have to become aware of our options and alternatives to Keep New Zealand Beautiful!

Altogether, the majority of our plastic milk bottles are going into recycling but when looking at the number of bottles not getting recycled, it can be quite scary.

(1) New Zealand consumes the 3rd highest amount of fresh white milk per capita in the world. (1) Roughly, two hundred, two-litre bottles of milk are sold every minute in New Zealand supermarkets - all of which are in plastic bottles or paper cartons.

(2) The estimated amount of plastic drink and milk bottles put in kiwi household rubbish bins every year, instead of recycling bins, is ninety-seven million. But, most kiwi's don't take the second to consider the consequences to the

environment before placing them there. The World needs to consider ways to avoid wasting so much plastic, especially single-use, which simply just goes into landfills.

I surveyed fifty-one individuals from school asking about what milk their family is buying. I've found that forty-five (88.2%) of their families drink milk from plastic bottles and from these families, eleven (23.9%) of them either do not or most likely don't recycle their milk bottles. With the average family drinking a mean of four and a half litres per week, that doesn't sound too bad, right? Well, really if there are eleven households, not recycling, around, twenty-five, two-litre bottles are not being recycled each week out of only

those fifty-one families, in the community. This places a question of why we even made the change in the first place.

(3) In the mid sixties the world was introduced to plastic milk bottles.

(4) New Zealand then made the change from glass bottles to paper and plastic in the nineties. (1) Nowadays, New Zealanders are consuming 400 million litres of milk each year.

(3) But they did have multiple reasons why they didn't like glass bottles: milk would go bad within a day without refrigeration, hand-delivered bottles were heavy and needed to be returned for sterilization by the milkman and sometimes, with a little bit of

clumsiness, glass bottles break. Then, of course, there are solutions to deal with problems. With the brains and technology in today's world, there are so many options to be thought of. If we work together, the problems we will face will be gone. The last glass milk bottles used was thirty years ago. Now we can make a system better and stronger.

In Hawkes Bay, there are multiple companies selling milk in glass bottles - just like the good old days. (5) This happened since Kirsten Wise, Napier Mayor, launched returnable and reusable glass milk bottles, in November 2020. One of which is Hohepa.

(5) Since 1957, Hohepa has provided employment and residential opportunities for those living with intellectual disabilities and now they have brought back milk in glass bottles. (6) A goal of Hohepa's had been to move away from plastics to make it more sustainable, as they think the last

bottles they had were inefficient. (6) They produce 500 bottles of milk a week, which sell at five different locations in Hawkes Bay. (6) They hope to start deliveries to homes in Hawkes Bay by the end of this year.

(7) Another company looking for a change to reduce the use of single-use plastic milk bottles in Hawke's Bay is Origin Earth. (7) They have teamed up with cafes, businesses and schools that are using large quantities of milk, ever since 2018. (7) So far they have around thirty Waste Reduction Partners. (7) They are changing their ways and fighting for a difference, just as we should.

We have opinions and alternatives that need to be considered. Single-use plastic is ruining our environment and becoming not an option anymore. Milk bottles are not the only thing we need to change, they are just one of many. The world needs to take a second, to think.

Bibliography

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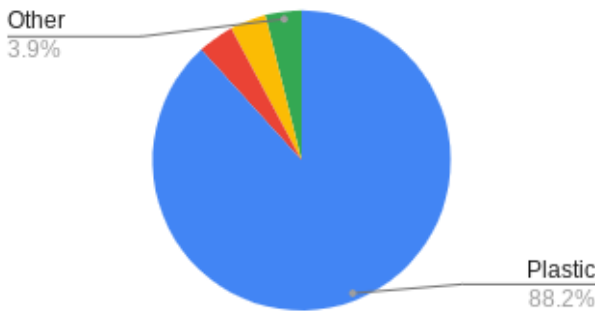
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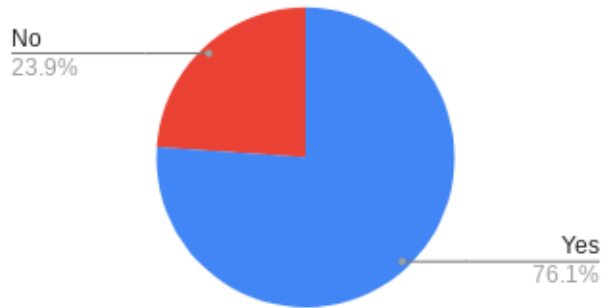
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7) <https://www.originearth.co.nz/bulk-milk-waste-reduction-scheme>

Milk Packaging



Do you recycle your milk bottles?



Information Graphs about my community and their milk.

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