

# B

## A TO Z OF WASTE



### BULK BUYING

As consumers we have a valuable opportunity to take responsibility and reduce our impact on the environment. One of the ways we can do this is by eliminating unnecessary packaging from our purchases. Product packaging is a major concern for the environment, with companies competing for the biggest and brightest packages to capture your attention. The effects of packaging has become such a major concern that in some countries, such as Germany, strict laws have been set in place to help combat this excessive waste.

With Australians being second to the USA as the biggest producers of waste in the world (Clean up

Australia), buying in bulk is a great way to help reduce consumer waste. Many supermarkets have bulk sections, allowing you to reduce your packaging rubbish while more often than not paying cheaper prices than for packaged goods. Bulk buying doesn't have to mean buying lots of the one product because you are able to choose the exact quantities you desire.

As an effective tool towards being a conscious consumer, bulk buying is a simple method anyone can use to reduce our excessive waste.

Reference: Clean Up Australia, available at [www.cleanup.com.au](http://www.cleanup.com.au)

#### WHAT CAN I DO?

- As bulk buying is a means of reducing packaging, offer your own durable bag or container for purchases. By doing this, you are leading by example for those around you as well as encouraging the shop to consider alternatives.
- Buy products in bulk containers with less packaging, when practical.
- Many items can be bought in bulk-detergents, dog food, pasta, cereal, cleaners and paper products. Supermarket alternatives for bulk buying purchas-

es include, rural buyer stores, local farmers markets, health food stores, office suppliers, food co-ops and environment centres are good leads to look into.

- Beware of "bulk packages" of individually wrapped items that are simply packaged yet again and sold as a bulk item. Contact companies you feel could improve their packaging efforts and let them know how you feel.

#### MORE INFORMATION

- [www.4ormore.co.uk/articles/bulkbuy.htm](http://www.4ormore.co.uk/articles/bulkbuy.htm)- a UK site providing examples of places to bulk purchase
- [www.pathtofreedom.com/backtobasics/food&cooking/article\\_bulk.shtml](http://www.pathtofreedom.com/backtobasics/food&cooking/article_bulk.shtml)- ideas on storing your bulk purchases
- Northern Rivers residents can look up [www.fundies.com.au](http://www.fundies.com.au) for details on the nearest fundamental food store that sells bulk goods - remember to take your own bags and jars!