

To whom it may concern,

I strongly support the recycling of soft plastics and believe large corporations must take real responsibility for the waste they create. However, I am deeply concerned about the current proposal from supermarkets and major brands to fund the SPSA scheme in a way that shifts costs onto the community while allowing these corporations to benefit financially.

Households and councils are already paying to deal with this waste, and we should not be asked to subsidise REDcycle or other failures again. If supermarkets and big brands want to be part of the solution, they must pay their fair share and deliver measurable environmental outcomes – not profit from greenwashing.

Key points that must guide approval:

- **No supermarket payouts.** Money must go directly into genuine recycling initiatives, not corporate profit.
- **Public funds, public benefit.** Any levy or funding must achieve environmental outcomes, not line the pockets of large retailers.
- **Fairness.** Communities must not be forced to subsidise waste created by supermarkets and big brands.
- **Innovation is essential.** REDcycle failed because of a lack of innovation. A repeat of this mistake cannot be allowed.
- **Independent governance.** SPSA must be led by independent experts and community voices, not dominated by the very corporations that caused the problem.
- **Real targets.** Ambitious and enforceable targets must be set, with transparent reporting and accountability.
- **End greenwashing.** Supermarkets must deliver real solutions, not PR campaigns.

I also want to highlight that supermarkets themselves are responsible for creating unnecessary plastic waste in the first place. A significant proportion of fresh produce is needlessly wrapped in soft plastics – often against customer wishes. Shoppers overwhelmingly prefer to choose their own fresh fruit and vegetables without pre-packaging, yet supermarkets continue this practice. Any credible stewardship scheme must address this issue at the source by requiring supermarkets to reduce unnecessary plastic packaging, not just recycle it after the fact.

In summary, I support a stewardship scheme only if it is designed around strong conditions that prioritise community benefit, innovation, waste reduction, and independent oversight. Without these safeguards, the scheme risks repeating the same failures of REDcycle, while allowing supermarkets and big brands to profit from the problem they created.

Regards,

Shannon Meilak