

Supermarket Launches First Plastic-Free Aisle

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Category : Science/Environment

Unlocking Word Meanings

Read the following words/expressions found in today’s article.

- 1. **break new ground** / **breɪk noʊ, nyu graʊnd** / (idiom) – to do something that has never been done before
Example: This research seeks to **break new ground** by discovering ways to solve waste problems.
- 2. **compostable** / **kəmˈpɒstəbəl** / (adj) – referring to something that can be used to enhance garden soil
Example: Our product’s packaging is made of **compostable** materials like wood pulp.
- 3. **originate** / **əˈrɪdʒ ə, nert** / (v) – to create or conceptualize something
Example: The administrative department **originated** a new policy on attendance.
- 4. **take steps** / **teɪk steɪps** / (idiom) – to do actions to achieve a goal
Example: The local government **took steps** to reduce plastic waste in the city.
- 5. **incinerate** / **ɪnˈsaɪn ə, reɪt** / (v) – to burn something
Example: It is illegal to **incinerate** hazardous wastes.

Article

Read the text below.

A supermarket in the Netherlands has recently created and launched the world’s first plastic-free aisle.

Supermarket chain Ekoplaza has **broken new ground** in the fight against plastic pollution by putting up a plastic-free aisle in one of its stores in Amsterdam, the Netherlands’ capital. The packaging of around 700 products in the said aisle is made of **compostable** materials, glasses, cardboard, and the like. Ekoplaza plans to have a plastic-free aisle in its 74 branches within this year.

Ekoplaza’s initiative is part of A Plastic-Free Aisle campaign, which was **originated** by the environmental group named A Plastic Planet. With this campaign, A Plastic Planet hopes to lessen plastic usage and its impact on the environment. The group also hopes that other supermarkets will follow suit.

Another supermarket chain is also **taking steps** to reduce the amount of plastic waste it generates. Iceland, a British supermarket, plans to eliminate the use of plastic packaging in its own products by the end of 2023. Instead of plastic, the company will use paper-based packaging for products like ready-to-eat meals and fruits.

Initiatives to reduce plastic production are important because the amount of plastic waste worldwide is continuously increasing. To make matters worse, plastic takes over 400 years to naturally decompose.

According to a study published in the journal *Science Advances* in 2017, the world has accumulated a total of 6,300 metric tons of plastic waste as of 2015. Of this amount, only 9% was recycled, 12% was **incinerated**, and 79% was left unprocessed in landfills and other places.

Viewpoint Discussion

Enjoy a discussion with your tutor.

Discussion A

- Do you think having plastic-free aisles is enough to encourage people to use less plastic? Why or why not?

- What are other ways to reduce plastic waste?

Discussion B

- If you were to create an environmental campaign, what would it be? Give details.

- How will this campaign help protect the environment?