

# BUSINESS BEAT

## Eco-friendly help on food packaging

DAVE CAIRNS

INCREASED use of compostable packaging for takeaway meals will be encouraged under a new program set to be rolled out on the Surf Coast.

Environmental consultancy B-Alternative is steering the Compost-It program that includes an education element to help households dispose of the packaging correctly.

B-Alternative engagement manager Katie Traill said the consultancy had partnered with Surf Coast Energy Group to deliver the program after receiving a Surf Coast Shire Small Grant.

"Where reusables are not an option, B-Alternative will supply certified compostable packaging to venues to minimise plastic waste, as well as commercial composting to divert organics from landfill where they slowly rot and produce climate-harming methane," Ms Traill said.

"We learned in conversation with business owners that much confusion exists around knowing how to correctly dispose of packaging. This confusion, combined with the lack of standardisation and regulation of packaging labelling in Australia, leaves a large gap for education.

"We'll be making cards,

posters and stamps that venues can distribute with takeaway meals that clearly and simply direct people on correct compostable packaging disposal."

The move comes as Victorian ratepayers are set for significant increases in council waste disposal fees as the government ramps up landfill levies as part of a long-term strategy to increase recycling and reduce waste going to landfill.

Ms Traill said the Compost-It program was a new initiative for B-Alternative, which for the past six years had been working with Victorian businesses to reduce waste and identify

cost-effective solutions that took into account the business's ability to deliver.

"Businesses often want to change but don't know where to start," she said.

Founded by Melbourne Jace Rahilly, B-Alternative's influence in the region is growing on the back of the appointment of Surf Coast locals James McLennan, the general manager, and Ms Traill in 2020.

It has helped reduce the environmental footprint of some festivals in the region including Queenscliff Music Festival, the Falls Festival in Lorne and Nightjar Market in Torquay and Geelong.

It has also worked with

hospitality venues including Geelong environmental leader Little Green Corner for which it recently sourced reusable tiffin baskets for its home delivery service.

With Covid-19 impacting heavily on its core business working with festivals and hospitality business, B-Alternative has also started working in healthcare and recently appointed a health solutions manager

B-Alternative is also working with a handful of local schools and offers an "EcoBank", where 5 per cent of school product purchases go into a "bank" that is set aside to fund environmental projects.

## Carbon wheels turning slowly

CARBON Revolution's confirmation that uncertainty in the global car manufacturing market will continue to impact the hi-tech wheel manufacturer appears to have shaken some investors.

Release of the Geelong company's latest market guidance resulted in its share price shedding 15 per cent in the past week to be at its lowest since March last year when it suffered a Covid-triggered collapse.

Due to major uncertainties in the global market, the company will not provide any sales outlook guidance for the 2021-22 financial year.

The move continues a rollercoaster ride for Carbon Revolution investors since the company listed on the ASX in November 2019 with a starting quote of \$3.21.

In its fourth-quarter market update, the company told investors that it was continuing to monitor the local and global impacts and risks related to Covid-19.

"While significant progress has been made globally to vaccinate populations, there are ongoing Covid-19 related uncertainties and disruptions facing the global automotive industry in the near term," the company said.

"The ongoing global shortage in the supply of semiconductors also continues to impact global car production."

Carbon Revolution announced in May that a customer had suspended vehicle production as a result of the impact of ongoing semiconductor chip shortages in the supply chain.

Despite the issues, wheel sales for the quarter to June 30 were up 2.7 per cent, taking full-year sales of its world-leading carbon fibre wheels to 12,749, 8.6 per cent lower than the previous year.

Full-year revenue was \$34.9m, which was 10.2 per cent lower than in FY20.

The company expects the second half of FY22 to have significantly higher sales than the first half due to the introduction of a new program in the second half, the gradual ramp of two new Ferrari programs and the seasonality impact in the first half of an existing program.

Ferrari this year launched two new car models that feature Carbon Revolution's carbon fibre wheels, the 812 Competizione and the 296 GTB.

Shares in Carbon Revolution ended the week trading at \$1.

## Stores happy to back recycling scheme

SIMONE KEALY

EIGHT councils across the Barwon South West region have banded together to launch a "Buy Recycled" campaign.

The scheme aims to reduce single-use consumption by encouraging more purchases of goods made from recyclable materials.

Dresden Vision Geelong, an environmentally friendly optometrist and eyewear store in Newtown, is among the businesses supporting the campaign.

Regional manager Rowan Smith said all of Dresden's products were sustainable and made from recyclable materials.

He said Dresden Vision produced glasses from new or waste plastics and recycled Swiss nylon.

Beauty, skincare and lifestyle store Natural Supply Co in Newtown is also involved.

Director Celeste Robertson said the company did everything it could to be sustainable.

"Anything that encourages people to be aware of and make purchasing decisions based on sustainability factors is really valuable," she said.

Geelong Mayor Stephanie Asher said it was a "simple choice" to shop sustainably.

"It can be as simple as swapping out some of our regular household items such as clothing, toiletries, bags and furniture for products that are made from recycled goods," she said.

Cr Asher said the region



was "fortunate" to have so many sustainable businesses.

"It's terrific to see that, increasingly, local stores and supermarkets are providing recyclable and refillable options," she said.

The councils involved in Buy Recycled are the City of Greater Geelong, the Borough of Queenscliffe and the shires of Surf Coast, Colac, Colac Otway, Southern Grampians, Moyne, Glenelg and Corangamite.

The campaign website buy-recycled.com.au includes an interactive map that highlights available recycled products, as well as the businesses stocking them.



Amanda Edgar and Rowan Smith own Dresden Vision, which has glasses made from recyclable materials. Top: Celeste Robertson at Natural Supply Co.

