

PACKR8 RESOURCE GUIDE

Single-use packaging bans under PPWR Annex V.

What is banned, what is restricted, and the practical packaging redesign implications, format by format.

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01 / Why Annex V hits before 2030.

Most of PPWR's headline obligations apply from 2030. Annex V is the exception. The single-use packaging bans listed in Annex V take effect from 2026 for most formats, with a few extensions to 2027 or 2028 for hygiene and medical exceptions. The reasoning is straightforward: these are formats with no defensible function that justifies the waste, and the alternatives already exist.

Producers shipping any format on the Annex V list need to redesign now. The lead time for tooling, supplier qualification, and shelf-life testing is the binding constraint, not the regulation date.

02 / What is banned in 2026.

The Annex V list as adopted bans the following formats outright from January 2026, with limited exemptions noted in the next section.

- Single-use plastic carrier bags below 15 micron film thickness (lightweight plastic bags).
- Single-use plastic packaging for unprocessed fresh fruit and vegetables, where the produce is sold in quantities below 1.5 kg.
- Single-use sachet-style packaging for condiments, sauces, sugar, milk, and similar single-portion food and beverage extras served in HoReCa.
- Single-use plastic and aluminium beverage cups and food containers used in cafes and restaurants for on-premises consumption.
- Single-use plastic miniatures (under 50 ml) for shampoo, conditioner, body wash, and similar amenities provided in hotels and similar accommodation.
- Single-use plastic packaging for fruit and vegetables in retail, except where the packaging is necessary to preserve the product (for example, certain berries, lettuces, or precut produce with a hygiene rationale).

03 / What is restricted but not banned.

Restrictions short of bans cover formats where some single-use is allowed but with conditions. Lightweight bags for unwrapped foods at retail are allowed but must be priced (no free-of-charge). Plastic shrink-wrap on multi-unit grouped packaging in B2B is restricted to specific use cases. Single-use plastic films covering produce in retail must be replaced with non-plastic alternatives where commercially feasible.

Member states retain limited flexibility to add formats to the restriction list within their territory, particularly for grouped packaging in retail. Producers operating across multiple countries should expect localised additions during the implementation period.

04 / Exemptions and edge cases.

Exemptions exist for hygiene and medical use. Single-use packaging that is necessary to maintain sterility for medical devices, pharmaceuticals, and certain food categories (precut salad with a hygiene rationale, vacuum-packed proteins beyond a specific shelf-life threshold) is permitted with documentation.

The 1.5 kg threshold for fruit and vegetable packaging is sized so that bulk and B2B sales remain viable. Buying tomatoes by the case for a kitchen continues; buying six tomatoes in a clamshell at retail does not.

05 / Format-by-format redesign paths.

Each banned format has a redesign path that producers running PPWR-readiness programmes are already working through.

- Lightweight plastic bags: switch to paper or to plastic above 30 micron with a defensible reuse case.
- Sachets (HoReCa): bulk dispensers for condiments, refillable mini-jars, on-table cruets.
- Hotel miniatures: refillable wall-mounted dispensers, opt-in larger refillable formats.
- On-premises cups and containers: reusable systems with deposit, washable ceramic for dine-in, certified compostable only where municipal collection is in place.
- Produce packaging: paper-based mesh, loose sale at scale weighing, pulp-based clamshells for higher-risk produce.

Lead-time arithmetic. A pack redesign typically runs 12 to 18 months from concept to first shipment, plus three to six months of safety stock burndown for the old format. Producers with redesigns starting in 2025 ship the new format in 2026. Producers waiting until late 2025 ship under non-compliance fines through the first half of 2026.

06 / Frequently asked questions.

Are all single-use plastics banned under PPWR?

No. Annex V bans specific formats. Other single-use plastic packaging remains legal but subject to recyclability, recycled content, and substance restrictions.

What is the threshold for fruit and vegetable packaging?

Single-use plastic packaging for unprocessed fruit and vegetables is banned below 1.5 kg, with exemptions for hygiene and shelf-life critical applications.

Does the ban cover B2B transport packaging?

Annex V focuses on consumer-facing formats. B2B transport packaging is governed primarily by the reuse and reduction targets in Articles 25 to 29.

Can member states add to the Annex V list?

Member states have limited flexibility to add restrictions within their territory, particularly for retail grouped packaging. Expect localised additions during implementation.

07 / About PackR8.

PackR8 is the packaging compliance platform for European producers preparing for PPWR and EPR. One source of truth for packaging data, with PPWR Declarations of Conformity, EPR filings, and audit evidence generated automatically from your records.

We started PackR8 because the same data problem was breaking the same teams every year. Smart sustainability leads with real strategies, stalled by packaging data that lived in eleven tabs of a spreadsheet maintained by someone in another country.

PackR8 fixes that. One packaging record per SKU. Full version history. Evidence pinned to every claim. Role-aware views for sustainability, packaging, and compliance teams. From that foundation, Declarations of Conformity, EPR filings, and audit responses become outputs rather than annual fire drills.

Talk to us.

The person you book a demo with is one of the team that built the platform. No SDR. No discovery calls. No funnel. Just a thirty-minute conversation about your packaging programme, and an emailed quote afterwards if it makes sense to keep going.

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