

France will ban plastic packaging for nearly all fruit and vegetables from January 2022 in a bid to reduce plastic waste, the environment ministry said on Monday.

Implementing a February 2020 law, the government published a list of about 30 fruits and vegetables that will have to be sold without plastic packaging from Jan. 1. The list includes leeks, aubergines and round tomatoes as well as apples, bananas and oranges, [Reuters](#) reports.

"We use an outrageous amount of single-use plastic in our daily lives. The circular economy law aims at cutting back the use of throwaway plastic and boost its substitution by other materials or reusable and recyclable packaging," the ministry said in a statement.

It estimated that 37% of fruit and vegetables are sold with packaging and expects that the measure will prevent more than one billion useless plastic packaging items per year.

French fruit sellers federation president Francois Roch said switching to cardboard will be difficult in such a short time.

"Also, selling loose produce is complicated as many customers touch the fruit and people do not want their fruit to be touched by other customers," she said.

The packaging ban is part of a multi-year government program to phase out plastic. From 2021, France banned plastic straws, cups and cutlery, as well as styrofoam takeaway boxes.

Cut fruits and a limited number of delicate fruits and vegetables can still be sold with plastic packaging for now but that will be phased out by end June 2026.

Plastic packaging will be banned by end June 2023 for cherry tomatoes, green beans and peaches, and by end 2024 for endives, asparagus, mushrooms, some salads and herbs as well as cherries.

End June 2026, raspberries, strawberries and other delicate berries must be sold without plastic.