



**NEW ZEALAND**

## **Plastics industry in New Zealand**

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### **Overview**

New Zealand companies in the plastics industry have collectively doubled their export sales in the last five years, and increased overall turnover by 50 percent. This has been achieved through:

- developing international niche markets
- innovation, e.g. world-leading in multi-layered co-extruded films and technical injection
- meeting or exceeding customers' expectation in areas such as quality, delivery, lead times and prices.

Plastics companies in New Zealand are very strong in packaging solutions. Many are also active in construction and agricultural products.

A significant amount of plastic packaging is manufactured for export products, particularly for the dairy, meat, and horticultural industries. Plastic components also feature in home appliance and electrical product exports.

Designing and manufacturing complex packaging solutions for the IT industry is of growing importance.

With a strong international focus, New Zealand plastics processing companies have invested strongly in new plant and technology in the past decade. This has created a highly competitive industry.

New Zealand's plastics industry is unlike similar industries overseas because it is a processing industry. There is comparatively more packaging manufacturing in the industry, compared to other developed nations.

New Zealand's plastics manufacturers are recognised for the high quality of craftsmanship and the ability to engineer small production runs at short notice. Toolmakers are in demand for their innovative designs and accurate workmanship.



## **NEW ZEALAND**

### **Major markets**

The total value of direct exports is in excess of NZ\$500 million per year. The same amount again is being exported “indirectly” as packaging or components for other export industries.

Processed plastic products exports have increased significantly over recent years. A significant proportion of direct exports go to Australia.

### **Industry facts**

- Annual industry sales turnover is NZ\$2.2 billion.
- New Zealand imports 257,000 tonnes of polymer resins each year.
- New Zealand’s plastics industry produces 113,000 tonnes of packaging, 60 percent of its total plastics processing. This comparatively high ratio of packaging production is connected with primary sector exporting (meat, dairy, and horticultural). New Zealand also imports plastic products where the small size of the New Zealand market does not justify local production.
- No polymer resins are manufactured in New Zealand, making it primarily a processing industry. However, this sector is a highly successful exporter, mainly because it has taken on quality niche markets and applied innovation in its product engineering.

### **Significant products**

The plastics industry’s products range from special multi-layer films for packaging, to automotive and electrical parts, whiteware, agricultural equipment, electrical switchgear, bathroom fittings and plumbers’ supplies, computer components, and painters’ equipment, among other items.

### **Innovation**

New Zealand companies in the plastics industry have collectively doubled their export sales in the last five years and increased overall turnover by 50 percent through innovation and meeting or exceeding customers’ expectations in areas such as quality, delivery, lead times, and price.

Growth in this competitive and highly technical industry is being driven globally by the increasing substitution of plastics for other, less versatile, more expensive materials. The key to keeping up with the world growth is innovation in process, design and customer service. The New Zealand industry’s prosperity and growth is proof that it has those qualities.

A recent government investment has resulted in establishing a Plastics Research Centre at the University of Auckland Tamaki Campus, highlighting increased industry/university collaborations.

The New Zealand plastics industry has led the world in areas such as multi-layered coextruded films and technical injection.

This information was prepared by New Zealand Trade and Enterprise. Visit [newzealand.com/business](http://newzealand.com/business) for more information about New Zealand and its export industries.



### **Plasticsnz website**

The plastics industry has its own e-procurement website – [www.plasticsnz.com](http://www.plasticsnz.com). This has proved highly successful in allowing prospective buyers from anywhere in the world to address enquiries to New Zealand industry sectors.

The industry estimates that more than NZ\$30 million of business is secured through the website each year. The speed and quality of the responses received has impressed overseas buyers.

### **Industry sector structure**

The plastics sector in New Zealand is made up of more than 400 companies employing more than 8,000 people.

At least 11 plastics processing companies in New Zealand employ more than 100 people each.

The industry organisation, Plastics New Zealand, has a membership of about 200 companies – principally plastics products manufacturers and suppliers of materials to the industry.

Plastics New Zealand's membership is estimated to cover approximately 75-80 percent of total industry turnover.

### **Industry contacts**

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### **Websites**

For general information:

[www.plastics.org.nz](http://www.plastics.org.nz)

For enquiries about commercial quantities of plastic products:

[www.plasticsnz.com](http://www.plasticsnz.com)