



Tetra Pak announces second AI investment site to enhance sorting of food and beverage cartons

Cumbria Waste Management has installed AI-powered optical sorter technology designed by British start-up Recycleye to more effectively sort food and beverage cartons for recycling

London, UK, 3 July 2025: Tetra Pak has announced a further round of investment to upgrade food and beverage carton sorting capabilities in the UK, including the installation of AI-powered optical sorting technology for the first time in the UK.

Tetra Pak financed the production and installation of innovative AI-powered optical sorting technology at Cumbria Waste Management's materials recycling facility (MRF) in Carlisle, in collaboration with British technology start-up, Recycleye. The technology, known as Recycleye QuantiSort®, uses AI and cameras to detect beverage cartons within the mixed materials waste stream, and pneumatic valves are then used to eject them so that they can be sent on to be recycled. The system can more easily be trained to sort cartons than traditional sorting methods, and is achieving over 98% purity of carton output.

This upgrade will enable Cumbria Waste Management to increase the sorting of food and beverage cartons for recycling. The company serves a large area across North West England, including Cumberland Council and Westmorland & Furness Council, alongside many parts of Scotland.

A further two UK MRFs have received funding to upgrade their food and beverage carton sorting technology, bringing Tetra Pak's total investment in UK sorting infrastructure in 2025 to £1.4 million. In May it was announced that J&B Recycling in Hartlepool had been the first site to be upgraded with the addition of two new robotic sorting arms, a different technology that is also produced by Recycleye. A third and final site will be confirmed later this year.

The investment site marks a milestone in Tetra Pak's long-standing work in collaboration with legislators and local authorities to improve the collection, sorting and recycling of food and beverage cartons in the UK.

This work in the UK is part of Tetra Pak's wider annual commitment of over £34 million per year to expand food and beverage carton collection, sorting and recycling infrastructure globally, in collaboration with stakeholders across the value chain. Of this, £2.4 million from Tetra Pak has been ringfenced specifically for infrastructure to sort food and beverage cartons in the UK.

This investment comes ahead of the introduction of the government's Simpler Recycling policy for households in March 2026. Tetra Pak has assisted the government in the development of the policy which will mean that everyone in England will be able to dispose of their cartons from kerbside for recycling. Rules were also launched for businesses in England in March of this year requiring premises to recycle specific materials in separate bins. This policy is expected to substantially increase the collection of food and beverage cartons at kerbside, making effective sorting infrastructure for recycling cartons even more necessary.

Awantika Chadha, Sustainability Manager, Tetra Pak UK, said: “This announcement of another upgrade to a UK MRF demonstrates our commitment to improving the UK’s recycling infrastructure and transforming the UK’s circular economy. We are particularly pleased to be helping to implement AI-powered optical sorter technology in the UK for the first time. We hope this collaboration with Cumbria Waste Management and Recycleye will act as a blueprint for the upgrade of food and beverage carton sorting capabilities across the UK.”

Victor Dewulf, Co-founder and CEO of Recycleye, said: “We are proud to collaborate with Tetra Pak and Cumbria Waste to deliver Recycleye QuantiSort® for bulk recovery of food and beverage cartons, using a cutting-edge AI optical sorter innovation. This project demonstrates the capability of AI to detect and recover items such as food and beverage cartons, offering MRFs a flexible technology to adapt to changing material streams.”

Andy Chant, CEO of Cumbria Waste Group said: “We are delighted to have fitted the Recycleye kit to our container processing line at Carlisle. We process material from all over the North of England and Scotland and even though our Council customers are not yet actively targeting Tetra Pak it is surprising how much we are already recovering with the system working seamlessly with the rest of our plant.”

Mandy Kelly, Chief Executive of ACE UK said: “As we move closer to the rollout of Simpler Recycling - which will require all councils in England to collect cartons at the kerbside - we’re proud to support another landmark investment in advanced sorting technology. The installation at Cumbria Waste marks the latest step in a wider programme of upgrades at key MRFs across the UK, significantly increasing the volume of cartons being sorted and sent for reprocessing. At ACE UK, we remain committed to working with both industry and local authorities to make carton recycling an even greater success.”

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Notes to Editors

Media Contact

Naomi Everhart
Brands2Life, on behalf of Tetra Pak UK and Ireland
+44 20 7592 1200
tetrapak@brands2life.com

Background on Tetra Pak’s UK Recycling Commitment

This work in the UK is part of Tetra Pak’s wider annual commitment of over £34 million per year to expand food and beverage carton collection, sorting and recycling infrastructure globally, in collaboration with stakeholders across the value chain. Of this, £2.4 million from Tetra Pak has been ringfenced specifically for infrastructure to sort food and beverage cartons in the UK, in addition to £24 million from the Alliance for Beverage Cartons and the Environment (ACE UK). This investment has been used to bolster the wider recycling value chain, including collection points and bring banks, and upgrades to sorting facilities.

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About Tetra Pak

Tetra Pak is a world-leading food processing and packaging solutions company. Working with our customers and suppliers, we provide access to safe, nutritious food for hundreds of millions of people in more than 160 countries every day.

With over 24,000 employees worldwide, we commit to making food safe and available everywhere, and we promise to protect what's good: food, people, and the planet.

More information about Tetra Pak is available at www.tetrapak.com

About Recycleye

Recycleye designs and manufactures AI-powered sorting equipment and analytics to lower costs and increase profitability for the waste management industry. Combining pioneering robotic and optical sorters with a solid understanding of waste, Recycleye is forging new revenue streams for material recovery businesses across Europe and the USA.

For more information, visit: www.recycleye.com

About Cumbria Waste Management

Cumbria Waste Group (CWG) is the largest provider of bespoke waste collection, waste disposal and recycling services in Cumbria with over 4,000 customers across the North of England and Southern Scotland.

We offer Commercial Waste Management solutions for businesses across Cumbria, Lancashire and the North East. Visit: www.cumbriawaste.co.uk