



Mr Ken Tan, founder of DOCO by Fish Sh-nack which sells fish-skin snacks at International Plaza, jumped on the bring-your-own-container bandwagon this year. Customers with their own jars get a discount. ST PHOTO: LIM YAOHUI

## BYOC – that’s bring your own container

The number of plastic containers left after all the cookies are eaten each Chinese New Year so frustrated Ms Coco Oan, 21, that she decided to do something about it.

In late 2016, she started collecting containers to donate to people, such as bakers. The Yale-NUS undergraduate collected about 660 containers the first year.

The number grew more than five times last year to over 3,500. But she realised her efforts to get people to re-use the containers did little to curb the number of them in circulation. So she decided to take a different tack.

Under an initiative called Circular CNY, she asked businesses if they would give discounts to customers who brought their own containers. Only seven signed up.

This year, there are 14. They in-



Ms Levine Thio (left), who sells vegan bakes, has joined Ms Coco Oan in her venture to reduce plastic waste by giving a discount to customers who bring their own containers.



clude home bakeries and physical stores, and are listed on her Instagram account @projectbecome.

Said Ms Oan: “The increased talk on waste issues among the public has made businesses more aware of what they need to do more of now.”

Mr Ken Tan, 30, joined the initiative this year. Those who bring

their own containers to his store DOCO by Fish Sh-nack in Tanjong Pagar can buy 100g of fish skin snacks for \$5. A 120g pre-packed bag usually costs \$7.

“I see going green as a long-term effect for the environment. Profits can be made back by other means, but the degree of damage to the environment is irreversible,” he said.

Ms Levine Thio, 22, owner of Gratus Bakery, a home business selling vegan bakes, has also joined the programme. Those with their own containers get \$1 off for a jar of cookies, which is about \$14.90.

Ms Oan said businesses can help scale up individual action into a movement with a greater impact. “When businesses promote a system, all their customers will get to know about it,” she said.

### Audrey Tan

- DOCO by Fish Sh-nack is at #01-16 International Plaza. Gratus Bakery is on Facebook and Instagram at @gratus.sg