

CONSCIOUS CONSUMERISM

Pt2.

THE PACKAGING PREDICAMENT

Plastic packaging is a hot topic at the front of many consumers minds. With consumer drive to reduce single use plastics and producers offering more sustainable alternatives, here the Procure4 Food and Beverage team look at both sides of the argument to consider the options available.

With 40% of plastic produced being for the food and beverage packaging industry, step changes are already beginning to be seen. The examples are plentiful with our previous clients, from KFC replacing the plastic lining within their buckets, to Waitrose extending their "Unpacked" trial for consumers to bring refillable containers to stores.

THE CURRENT SITUATION

Did you know?

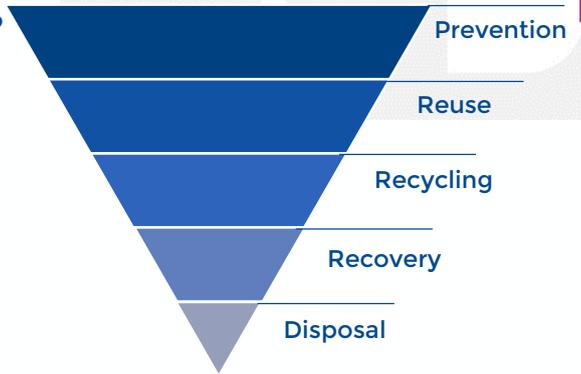
47% of UK adults cited plastic pollution as their most pressing environmental concern.

CLOSING THE LOOP

While many manufacturers claim to make their packaging 100% recyclable, in comparison, few actually produce their packaging from 100% recycled materials.

Favouring clear plastic milk and soft drink bottles and smaller labels maximise opportunities for recycling

UK Waste Hierarchy



Plastic does have its advantages when it comes to logistics. For 1 truck of plastic bags, it takes 7 trucks to deliver the equivalent number of paper bags.

Credit: RAN Encourage Plastic Bag Recycling

“With consumers already thinking that recyclable packaging is standard, brands have an opportunity to ride consumer awareness of recycling issues by being part of the solution and committing to using recycled material in new packaging”

Mintel Report - 2019

LOOKING FORWARD

BIOPLASTICS

Plastics made from plant starch uses less energy to manufacture and the materials used to make bioplastics grow back naturally every year. These are fully biodegradable and compostable

SUGARCANE BAGASSE

A sugarcane waste product requires no wax or plastic lining and is fully compostable and biodegradable. Sugarcane is an annually growing crop so the raw product is fully sustainable.

PALM LEAF

Made from fallen palm leaves which are cleaned in spring water the leaves are heat pressed then cut into shape. They are fully compostable and biodegradable.

Credit: www.packagingenvironmental.co.uk

“If plastic is recyclable, and clearly labelled as such, we stand a far greater chance of keeping that plastic in the economy and out of the natural environment.”

Peter Maddox, director of Wrap UK

KEY TRENDS:

- **Connected Packaging** – connecting physical packaging to the virtual world – i.e. QR codes
- **Closing the Loop** – pushing the recycling story
- **Reinventing the Box** – ecommerce packaging options
- **Plastic Free** – as the drive to reduce single use plastics rises, how can brands differentiate themselves?

Source: foodanddrinktechnology.com

3 POINTERS FOR F&B PROCUREMENT

1. Move away from single use plastics to sustainable materials
2. Work with suppliers towards a new packaging policy with guidance on allowable packaging and labelling to help improve recycling rates
3. Follow supplier packaging forums to keep abreast of new products and solutions

Caroline Gurney, Procure4 F&B expert

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