

the truth about packaging with recycled content

did you know?

1 Choosing packaging based on its recycled content isn't a reliable way to know if it's better for the environment.

All materials are not created equally. There are many different variables such as the source substances, amount of materials used, energy and processing that contribute to environmental impacts. Due to these differences, recycled content should not be used as a generic indicator of environmental goodness, and should never be used as a gauge of the relative “greenness” of competing materials.

2 Increasing the recycled content of a package once the material is selected almost always reduces overall environmental impacts.

When the material to be used is known, such as glass, increasing its recycled content improves its overall environmental impact profile.

3 The amount of recycled content in a package isn't helpful when choosing packaging made from different materials.

All materials are different in terms of what they are made from and how they are manufactured. Just because a package contains higher levels of recycled content (on a weight or percentage basis) does not indicate that it has lower negative impacts. Different materials have substantially different production burdens.

4 Recycling done right is good for the environment.

Recycling provides usable materials for industry and reduces overall environmental impacts. But the act of recycling also has impacts and contamination is a real problem. You can help by knowing what your local recycling program accepts, and recycle right!

Tips

- Change your default to reusable
- Refuse unnecessary food service ware
- Buy durable when possible



In 2018, Oregon DEQ released a series of reports that answered the question:
"How well do popular packaging attributes correlate with net environmental benefit?"
You can find the reports at <https://www.oregon.gov/deq/mm/production/Pages/Materials-Attributes.aspx>

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