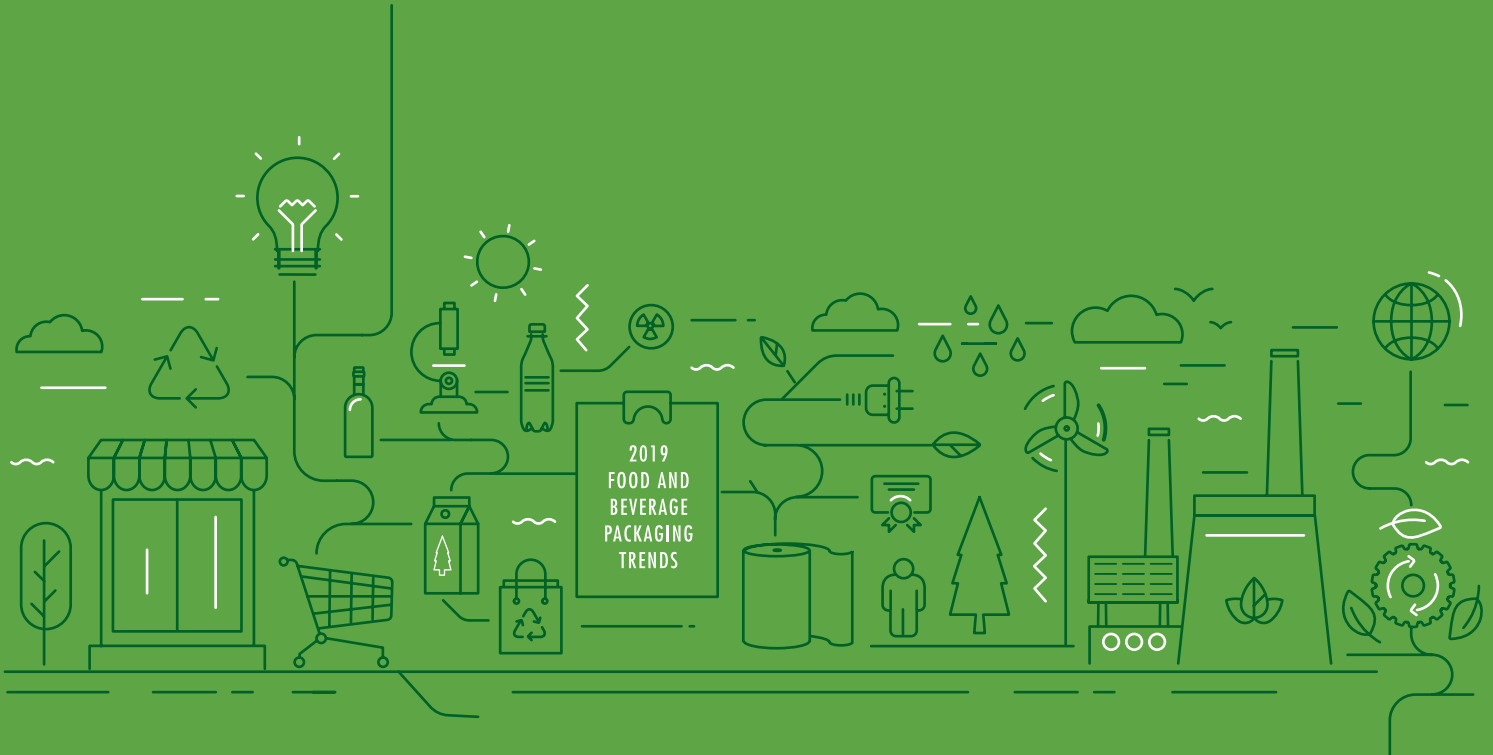


2019 FOOD AND BEVERAGE PACKAGING TRENDS

Based on results from the 2018 EcoFocus Trend Study*



offers opportunities for packaging to work harder for brands



For those brands who have responded to consumer demand for *clean label* and perhaps even *clean processing*, the next challenge is *clean packaging*. According to the 2018 EcoFocus Trend Study conducted by EcoFocus Worldwide, grocery shoppers in 2018 have greater expectations of packaging than ever before. That is especially true for healthy foods and beverages.

Consumer trends indicate a need for food and beverage companies to view packaging as an extension of the ingredients list. Increasingly, grocery shoppers will be looking at the total package – literally. Packaging is becoming as important as what is in the package for more grocery shoppers. Putting packaging at the forefront of the innovation pipeline creates new opportunities for differentiation among food and beverage brands.

In 2019, all forms of food and beverage packaging will be challenged to:



Work harder to protect freshness, taste and nutrients



Work harder to align with ingredients



Work harder to be responsible

Embracing these principles in innovation ultimately helps brands effectively pursue something that is a top goal for many:



Work harder to share consumer values

*The EcoFocus Trend Survey is an annual tracking study, conducted since 2010, examining wellness and sustainability trends impacting the food and beverage industry. The study is conducted online annually among 4,000 adults. The data is nationally projectable to the U.S. adult population ages 18 to 65 years with a margin of error of +/- 1.39 points in 2018.



Packaging should work harder to protect freshness, taste and nutrients

Grocery shoppers care about the freshness and taste of their food and beverages, and they have clear views of the role that packaging should play in delivering these attributes. Taste should not be compromised or altered because of the food or beverage's packaging.

TASTE

When shopping for healthy beverages, packaging that "doesn't impact the taste" is extremely or very important to 76% of grocery shoppers in 2018. Also, they have firm views already on what packaging "can change the taste of my beverage."



FRESHNESS

Because the taste and nutrients in foods and beverages can be adversely impacted by light and air, packaging can enable products to stay fresh without the need of preservatives. When shopping for healthy beverages, packaging that "keeps the beverage fresh without preservatives" is extremely or very important to 70% of grocery shoppers in 2018. Definitive "contains no preservatives" language on the label can play a strong role when consumers choose which product to purchase.

66% of grocery shoppers in 2018 say "contains no preservatives" plays a strong role in telling them the beverage is fresh.

64% of grocery shoppers in 2018 say "no preservatives" is extremely or very important on food and beverage labels.

NUTRIENTS

When shopping for healthy beverages:

70% of grocery shoppers in 2018 feel it is extremely or very important that packaging "protects the nutrients in the beverage."

60% of grocery shoppers in 2018 say "packaging that protects the contents from light" plays a strong role in telling them the beverage is fresh.

55% of grocery shoppers strongly agree or agree that "I try to buy products in packaging that protects the contents from light."



Packaging should work harder to align with ingredients

While healthy ingredients have been important for years, now grocery shoppers are increasingly looking at additional attributes, such as where ingredients come from and how they are processed. Recently packaging materials are having an increased impact on purchasing decisions. This creates innovation opportunities as brands seek to meet evolving consumer demands.

71% of grocery shoppers in 2018 strongly agree or agree “foods and beverages with healthier ingredient lists should use packaging materials that are healthier too.”

61% of grocery shoppers in 2018 strongly agree or agree “natural and organic products need to do a better job of packaging their products with recyclable materials.” *(up 6 points since 2014)*

65% of grocery shoppers in 2018 strongly agree or agree “healthy beverage brands need to do a better job of providing alternatives to plastic packaging.”

Grocery shoppers have already come to some of their own conclusions about which packaging best aligns with healthy beverages.

Grocery shoppers in 2018 are most likely to say glass bottles (71%) and refrigerated cartons (59%) “fit extremely or very well with how you [they] think about healthy beverages.”

Steel cans (33%) or plastic bottles (38%) show much lower scores for “fit extremely well” with healthy beverages.



Packaging should work harder to be responsible

How much packaging? Is the packaging recyclable? Is the packaging made with renewable materials? Are the packaging materials plant based? Each of these issues can impact grocery shoppers as they decide on a food or beverage purchase.

68% of grocery shoppers say it is extremely or very important “to choose foods or beverages that are packaged responsibly.” *(up 5 points since 2014)*

51% of grocery shoppers strongly agree or agree “I have changed what I buy due to the type or amount of packaging.” *(up 5 points since 2014)*

68% of grocery shoppers strongly agree or agree “I try to buy products in packaging that is recyclable.” *(up 5 points since 2014)*

61% of grocery shoppers strongly agree or agree “I try to buy beverages that use less plastic in their packaging.” *(up 4 points since 2014)*

Retailers and manufacturers need to offer responsible packaging and explain all aspects of what makes it responsible, on the label and in the store.

- 57%** of grocery shoppers identify “made with renewable materials” as extremely or very important when shopping for healthy beverages.
- 48%** of grocery shoppers strongly agree or agree “I try to buy products in packaging that is mostly made of paper.”
- 46%** of grocery shoppers strongly agree or agree “I try to buy products in packaging that is made with plant-based materials.”
- 62%** of grocery shoppers want to learn more about “plant-based food or beverage packaging.”



Brands and retailers should work harder to share consumer values

Not only is the package itself and the information on the label increasingly important to many grocery shoppers, but their environmental responsibility interests go much deeper. Many grocery shoppers are expecting more out of brands and retailers in terms of environmentally friendly products and packaging and the social responsibility of the companies involved. A focus on authentic values and shared values is reshaping expectations.

- 67%** of grocery shoppers in 2018 strongly agree or agree “retailers should choose what products they put on their shelves based on how environmentally friendly the **product** is.”
- 67%** of grocery shoppers in 2018 strongly agree or agree “retailers should choose what products they put on their shelves based on how environmentally friendly the product **packaging** is.”
- 51%** of grocery shoppers in 2018 strongly agree or agree “I have avoided purchasing products from companies when I learned that they did not have socially responsible practices.” *(up 4 points since 2014)*
- 49%** of grocery shoppers in 2018 strongly agree or agree “I have avoided purchasing products from companies when I learned that they did not have environmentally responsible practices.” *(up 5 points since 2014)*

Brands and retailers can earn consumer trust by sharing their values:

- 73%** of grocery shoppers in 2018 say corporate commitments to “using renewable resources” are extremely or very influential to their choice of brands, products and services.
- 57%** of grocery shoppers say whether a grocery retailer “makes it easy for me to make eco-friendly choices” is extremely or very important when choosing where to shop. *(up 6 points since 2014)*

These trends in grocery shoppers’ expectations mean increased demand for packaging that works harder for their health and the health of the environment. From delivering freshness without preservatives, to better nutrition and taste, packaging can deliver benefits for brands. For the combined advantage of both recyclability and renewability, responsibly sourced plant-based packaging offers innovation solutions. Brands that embrace these benefits and values are moving packaging to the forefront of their innovation planning in recognition that packaging is increasingly important to consumers.

Evergreen Packaging makes and supplies paper and paperboard products globally, including gable top cartons. Fiber used in Evergreen Packaging products comes from forests in the US where responsible forestry practices are used and where overall growth exceeds harvest. Evergreen Packaging cartons contain protective layers of plastic (including cap & spout). The data presented here is not intended to suggest that Evergreen Packaging products have all attributes discussed in this piece. This publication presents data on consumer perceptions because consumer perceptions matter when shoppers choose which products to purchase.

