

**PACKAGED  
SUSTAINABLE™**

# **Sustainable Packaging Overview 2024**

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# **We all want to** **Protect the Planet**

**But running enthusiastically in the wrong direction  
is never a good idea!**

You may want to protect the planet, but if you choose the wrong “sustainable” packaging option, then you may actually be doing harm.

*It could even **backfire** and upset the very consumers you want to appeal to.*

# In this presentation, we will discuss:

- 1 What is sustainable packaging?
  - 2 What are the 5 categories of sustainable packaging?
  - 3 The danger of greenwashing and how to avoid it
  - 4 How to decide if a sustainable packaging option is right for you
- ✓ We will end with some specific packaging recommendations for your business!

Let's begin!

# What is Sustainable Packaging?

- ✓ This can be a hard question to answer
- ✓ Sustainability can be **subjective**
- ✓ There are *many* environmental challenges in the world today
- ✓ **Truth:** Each sustainable packaging solution has its pros and cons. Yet packaging sales people often will tell you why their product is perfect and the others are flawed. This lack of objectivity can make it hard to know what or who to believe.
- ✓ You will want to decide which environmental problems are most important to you (ie. Climate change, plastic pollution, etc.)
- ✓ Based on that answer, you can decide which option to choose (I can help you through that process)



# A few definitions of Sustainable Packaging:

“Sustainable packaging is packaging that produces the most negligible impact on the natural environment. Which is to say, sustainable packaging materials are those that make the least amount of pollution in regards to manufacturing, production, shipping, and disposal or recycling.” (Industrial Packaging)

“Sustainable packaging is the development and use of packaging which results in improved sustainability.” (Wikipedia)

“Sustainable packaging both uses content that would otherwise be landfilled and avoids producing more waste.” (Green Seal)



# Do those book definitions leave you feeling unsure on **what your options are?**

**GET EXCITED!**

**5**

That is why we created the **5 categories** of sustainable packaging



1



Recyclable

3



Compostable or  
"Biodegradable"

2



Made with  
Recycled  
Content

4



Reusable

## The 5 categories are our 5 ways to look at Sustainable Packaging

Each has its pros and cons and we will objectively review those with you. They are in no particular order and multiple can apply to one solution..

5



Reduction of Other  
Environmental  
Stressors

# Recyclable

## DEFINED AS

Packaging that is able to be collected, ground up, and turned into new products.



Examples include PET water bottle, aluminium can, and clear glass bottle



### Pros include



- Keeps products out of the landfill
- Allows existing packaging to be used again in a productive way

### Cons include



- Just because something is recyclable does not mean it will be recycled
- Recycling infrastructure and capabilities varies by location



# Made with Recycled content

## DEFINED AS

Packaging that is made from material that was collected and ground up.



✓ Examples include PET water bottle with 100% PCR or a folding carton is 50% PCR

### Pros include

- Making use of recycled material, otherwise, all recycling would be pointless



### Cons include

- Material quality (clarity, structure) can suffer at time
- If plastic, even a 100% PCR water bottle can be polluted and end up in the ocean





# Compostable or “Biodegradable”

## DEFINED AS

packaging that has been tested and shows 90% of the material breaks down into very small pieces within 180 days with no toxins or heavy metals left behind

“Biodegradable” is a greenwashed term with no definition



- ✓ Examples include a cup made from a bio resin or a kraft board box

### Pros include



- Very earth friendly if composted

### Cons include



- Composting not always available
- Can contaminate recyclables if not recyclable (ie. bio resin cup)



# Reusable

## DEFINED AS

packaging that is able to be reused multiple times (usually after being sanitized)



Examples include a 6-oz water jug or a glass milk bottle

### Pros include



- Not using new raw materials
- Not spending the energy to recycle

### Cons include



- Add energy to collect and sanitize



# Reduction of other environmental stressors

## DEFINED AS

looking at other environmental impacts besides the material and end of life, often through conducting a life cycle analysis.



Examples include greenhouse gas emissions, water consumption, or choosing a packaging format that ships efficiently

### Pros include



- Considering the big picture and all factors

### Cons include



- Pulled in multiple directions and possible indecision.



**The 5 categories are the levers you can pull to be more sustainable!**



Helpful?



Questions?



# What is greenwashing?

Greenwashing is the process of conveying a false impression or misleading information about how a company's products are environmentally sound. Greenwashing involves making an unsubstantiated claim to deceive consumers into believing that a company's products are environmentally friendly or have a greater positive environmental impact than they actually do. (Investopedia)

# Some Examples of Greenwashing



**Tinting plastics green or brown**

Greenwashing because:  
That doesn't make it any less harmful!



**Using chasing arrows along with #7 plastics**

Greenwashing because: Those  
plastics are not recyclable!



**Calling packaging "biodegradable"**

Greenwashing because: Everything is  
biodegradable, that means nothing!

# Lawsuit related to Greenwashing

“Greenpeace alleges that Walmart employed unlawful and unfair business practices by labeling private label throwaway plastic products and packaging as "recyclable" without any substantiation to support that claim.”

## Greenpeace will continue to pursue its lawsuit against Walmart

May 2, 2022



Greenpeace on Friday submitted its opposition to the motion filed by Walmart to dismiss its lawsuit. Greenpeace alleges that Walmart employed unlawful and unfair business practices by labeling private label throwaway plastic products and packaging as "recyclable" without any substantiation to support that claim. The lawsuit was originally filed against the company in California Superior Court and then removed to federal court by Walmart.

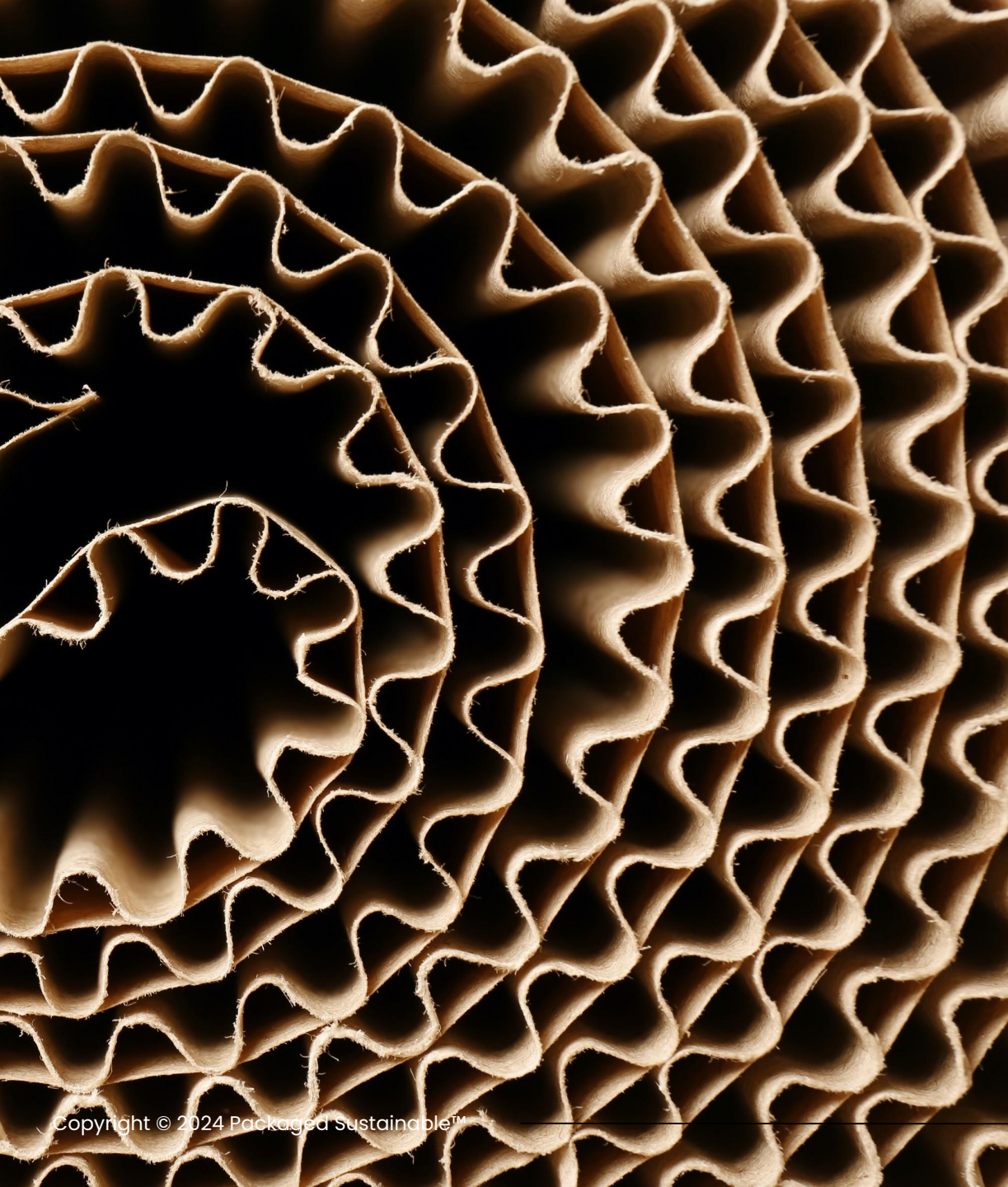
# How to avoid the trap of greenwashing?

- ✓ Request proof or documentation to back-up any claim such as compostable
- ✓ Have an attitude of respecting the consumer
  - Don't try to mislead or cut corners
  - Think it through and set yourself up for success!

Is this actually better at the beginning of life than what I'm doing now?

Is this actually better at the end of life than what I'm doing?

Use FREE Sustainable Packaging Worksheet



# Moral of the story: Don't greenwash!

With that being said, there is a difference between greenwashing and having a difference of opinion on how to approach sustainability. For example, someone who is anti-plastic may call using recycled plastic "greenwashing" when really they have chosen a different way of going sustainable. They aren't misleading anyone.



Helpful?



Questions?



# Is this option *right for me?*



## **3 Criteria**

These 3 criteria should be considered every time you make the move to sustainable packaging



## **Saves you time**

Help narrow down which options are viable for your specific situation.



## **Letter P**

They all start with the letter "P"



# Price

- ✓ What is an amount that you are comfortable spending per unit?
- ✓ Especially relevant if your product has a low retail price point
- ✓ Certain sustainable packaging options are more expensive than others and your budget can eliminate certain options
- ✓ This can help eliminate options that are not feasible, narrow your search, and save everyone time.

# Performance

- ✓ Packaging is not just about branding, it's about performance too!
- ✓ Do you have certain shelf life expectations for your product?
- ✓ Is your product delicate and the packaging needs to protect it?
- ✓ Often, sustainable alternatives perform differently and you want to avoid choosing an option that will not meet the needs of your product



Which of the 5 categories resonates with you most?



Recyclable



Made with Recycled Content



Compostable or "Biodegradable"



Reusable



Reduction of Other Environmental Stressors



# Preference

What is your preferences?



Is there a certain environmental problem that is near and dear to your heart?



Material Preference: Do you love glass? Are you anti-plastic?



Packaging Type: Do you love bags? No bags whatsoever?

# Let's make some recommendations!

Begin with one of your products and let's run through the 3 P's (Price/Performance/Preference)  
Then, I can make some recommendations for you.  
We can do more as time allows!



**Helpful?**



**Questions?**

# That's all for **today!**

## If you would like, we have a paid consultation:

- Review all your current packaging
- Make specific sustainable recommendations for each product based on Price, Performance, and Preference
- Review recommendations with you on a live call
- Gather formal pricing of any options you are interested in
- Serve as a trusted and **objective** consultant through the process.

**Cost: Only \$250 (5 hour block) or \$350 (10 hour block)**

**Credit you back this fee when you place an order of \$10,000 with our Vetted Partners.**

Alternatively, work directly with founder and CEO Michael Markarian, sustainable packaging expert: \$3,500 for 10 hour block (Limited Slots Each Month)

Note: MOQ is typically 10,000 or more with our Vetted Partners.

