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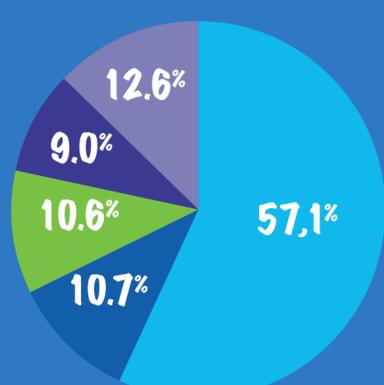


# MYTHS AND REALITIES ABOUT ECO-RESPONSIBLE PACKAGING

## THE CASE OF THE FOOD AND HOUSEHOLD PRODUCT SECTOR

### Quebecers are aware of the environmental efforts made by food and cleaning product manufacturers

Given the importance of food in our lives and the frequency with which we need to prepare and consume meals, it's not surprising that 70% of all packaging put on Quebec's market is generated by the food sector.

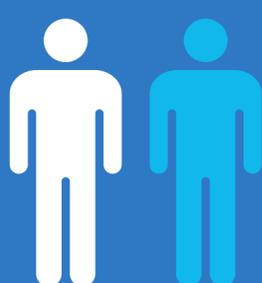


The food sector is the one in which citizens pay most attention to eco responsible packaging, far more than fast food, medication and household cleaning products.

- Food packaging - 57.1%
- Fast food - 10.7%
- Medication - 10.6%
- Household products - 9.0%
- Other - 12.6%

One out of two Quebecers recognize and appreciate the efforts the food industry makes to offer eco-responsible packaging to consumers.

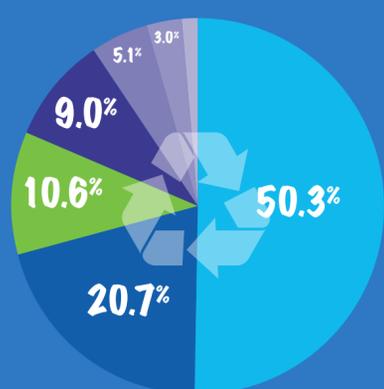
### Packaging is the main source of information on recyclability



If they aren't sure of a packaging item's recyclability, 1 out of 2 citizens (50.3%) look for that information directly on the packaging item.

If uncertain about packaging recyclability, close to 7 out of 10 persons will make the effort to find the information before deciding whether or not to place the item in the recycling bin - A smart approach!

**Did you know:** Sorting centres are only equipped to handle containers, packaging and printed matter. No other type of item should be placed in the recycling bin. Different solutions are available to give such items a second life.



#### When in doubt about a packaging item's recyclability:

- I look at what is indicated on the packaging - 50.3%
- I place the item in the recycling bin - 20.7%
- I look it up on the leaflet provided by my municipality - 10.6%
- I place the item in the trash can - 9.0%
- I look it up on the Internet - 5.1%
- I ask someone else's opinion - 3.0%
- Other - 1.3%

### Remember to sort



The clearer the instructions, the more likely they will be followed.

## Myths and realities about the functions of packaging

It is not always easy to tell the difference between over-packaging and packaging that is necessary to protect and extend the life of a product.

**Myth:** 68.3% of respondents think that secondary packaging is always over packaging.

**Reality:** Secondary packaging that groups together several individual items for multipack sales is not over-packaging. Examples include bags that hold three pouches of milk, cardboard sleeves that keep together individual portions of yoghurt and the plastic wrap around six boxes of facial tissues.

**Myth:** The most eco-responsible packaging is always the kind that uses the least materials.

**Reality:** Packaging considerations include product preservation, particularly in the case of such fresh foods as meat. In the case of perishable products, packaging is used to protect and extend the product's life, therefore avoiding waste. If optimized, packaging can limit the product's environmental impact and reduce product losses.

**?** **Did you know:** Manufacturing and transporting a product and all other stages of its life cycle require a significant quantity of energy and natural resources. It's not unusual for a product's environmental impact to be higher than that of its packaging.

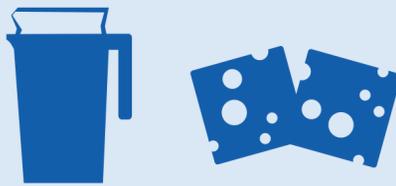


**?** **Did you know:** Vacuum packing helps extend the freshness of meat by several days. The same is true for modified-atmosphere packaging, which consists in changing the internal atmosphere composition of packaging in order to extend the product's life. This technique is generally used for foodstuffs, but may also apply to medication packaging.

### Encouraging findings

When various types of packaged products are presented, 1 out of 2 consumers (53.3%) can tell the difference between useful packaging and over-packaging.

**?** **Did you know:** The plastic wrap around English cucumbers extends their freshness by up to 14 days? Without the wrap, these cucumbers would have an in-store shelf life of about three days.



**?** **Did you know:** Resealable packaging (cheese, cold cuts, fruits and vegetables) is an innovation that keeps food fresh for a longer period, therefore resulting in less food waste. It is also a way to adapt packaging to our lifestyles.

## Highlights of the household product sector

To no one's surprise, Quebecers mainly choose their laundry detergent based on price and performance.

That said, environmental aspects are also important when they make their selection, much more so than such marketing criteria as scent, brand and packaging appearance. Businesses should therefore promote their products' environmental characteristics in their ads and messages.

A quarter of respondents usually opt for products that don't contain phosphates or ingredients potentially harmful to the environment and human health, or for a format that helps avoid waste.

### Environmental considerations when choosing laundry detergent

#### Consume less and more efficiently

In the case of household products, packaging should be designed to help consumers use the correct dose of product.



**Solid detergent in capsules** is practical and avoids spills and mistakes in quantities used for a given purpose.



**Concentrated detergent packaged with a dosing mechanism** helps consumers effortlessly measure the correct quantity in a single step.



**Liquid detergent with a graduated cap** allows for measuring the exact amount needed.

In any event, it is preferable to choose concentrated products that, despite their small size, contain the same quantity of active ingredients as traditional types, which simply contain more water.



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The web survey was conducted by MBA Recherche between September 10 and 22, 2015, and asked a representative panel of 34,000 Quebec consumers to provide their opinion. The sample was weighted according to Statistics Canada data (sex, age and place of residence) to reflect demographic trends. As it consisted of a panel of consumers, the margin of error calculation does not apply. A total of 1,006 persons responded to the survey.

OptimEco's kit is intended for managers and decision-makers interested in applying an ecodesign approach to their containers and printed matter and in reaping its significant benefits.

OptimEco's kit contains essential tools: solid arguments to mobilize your teams and partners as well as practical tips for getting everyone on board, right from the start.



## What is ecodesign?

Ecodesign constitutes real strategic leverage for applying production best practices and creating value!

### OPTIMIZATION IN A NUTSHELL

There are many ways to optimize the development of your packaging and printed matter. From reducing packaging weight and volume to the choice of materials as well as end-of-life management: improving processes and leveraging their associated opportunities are now a must to integrate to your business tactics!

### ECODESIGN IN A NUTSHELL

An improvement initiative aimed at reducing a packaging environmental footprint throughout its entire life cycle, i.e. from first concept to the end of its useful life. It considers environmental criteria such as reducing the quantity of raw materials required, introducing recycled materials and improving potential recyclability.



## What are the benefits?

Ecodesign is a win-win-win: the company that applies the process, the consumer who wishes to make responsible choices and society as a whole. A wise choice from every standpoint because it yields positive and practical results!

### ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Ecodesign is a cost-effective approach that can increase your profit margins by as much as 12% compared to conventional packaged products<sup>1</sup>.

MORE THAN **12%**

- Lower** raw material procurement costs
- Lower** transportation and distribution costs
- Lower** end-of-life management costs
- Fewer** product losses
- Lower** energy costs

### COMPETITIVE AND REPUTATIONAL BENEFITS

People around the world like ecological packaging, with consumers consistently selecting this option as one of the top two features they would be most likely to pay extra for<sup>2</sup>.



- Meet consumer expectations
- Adapt in the face of regulatory requirements
- Strengthen the company's competitive position
- Develop team culture and retain personnel
- Promote innovation and continuous improvement
- Differentiate your packaging and printed matter
- Improve your capacity to meet environmental requirements
- Improve supplier relationships

### ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

Britain's Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) has provided companies with ecodesign guidance that resulted in a 6.6 million tonne reduction in greenhouse gases (equal to 2.2 million fewer vehicles on the road for 1 year) and avoided the production of 12.6 million tonnes of residual materials<sup>3</sup>.

**12,6 MILLION TONNES**  
OF RESIDUAL MATERIALS AVOIDED

- Reduce** the quantity of materials used
- Reduce** energy requirements
- Reduce** impacts on human health and eco-systems
- Increase** packaging recyclability and reduce quantities sent to landfills
- Extend** the product's life
- Reduce** impacts by including recycled materials during packaging production



# How can you take action?

Implementing an ecodesign initiative in your company is easier than you think. What's most important is to understand the steps to follow!

## WHAT THE MANAGER NEEDS TO CONSIDER

### EFFORTS REQUIRED

Packaging ecodesign requires the involvement of several operational units in the company, as well as the support and direction from management. The units that could be closely or tangentially involved throughout product development include: management, marketing, R&D, production and procurement. Large companies may assign one or more managers to lead responsible innovation and ecodesign initiatives. Most often, the initiative is carried out by existing product development teams who integrate environmental criteria in the design process. External specialists may be called upon to fill gaps in expertise that is unavailable internally.

### INVESTMENT REQUIRED

Many assistance programs are available to help companies implement their ecodesign initiative, including subsidies, training and coaching programs as well as specialized projects and tools designed for companies.

### TIME REQUIRED

When embarking on its first initiatives in which environmental factors and stakeholder expectations are taken into consideration, a company will need to conduct a situation analysis, identify avenues for improvement and determine potential solutions. Time needs to be invested in laying the groundwork, determining procedures and gathering information, while outside expertise may be sought to help in launching the initiative. While implementing the initiative will not require a top-to-bottom review of your business practices, you will need to establish a structured foundation based on a clear vision. If a company masters the ecodesign mindset, implementing an initiative is not likely to slow down the product development process. Ecodesign can stimulate innovation, and a solid process will improve product quality, limit late-process changes and thus speed up product marketing. Integrating ecodesign in basic innovation management practices will be the key to making it part of the company's fabric and advancing its continuous improvement process.

### BEGIN YOUR ECODESIGN JOURNEY

Packaging and printed matter optimization is the objective. Ecodesign provides the means to achieve it.

## 1 EVALUATE your initial situation

First, take the time to review your current situation in terms of your objectives, your business sector or a specific packaged product and/or printed matter.

## 2 IDENTIFY which ecodesign strategies are right for you

Ecodesign is made up of four strategies to improve the product at each step of the process. The strategies will enable you to not only optimize procurement, design and recyclability, but also effectively communicate the benefits of the initiative!

### STRATEGY 1 - Adopt responsible procurement criteria

Get your suppliers involved in your efforts to find eco-responsible solutions.



Select materials carefully



Select recycled materials

### STRATEGY 2 - Optimize design

Use the right quantity of materials to protect your products, including primary, secondary and tertiary packaging.



Rethink packaging



Design packaging for logistics and transportation



Reduce energy consumption impacts



Enhance consumer experience

### STRATEGY 3 - Improve end-of-life management

Another important objective is to minimize or even avoid the environmental impacts of packaging and printed matter at the end of their life.



Plan for packaging reuse



Better recyclability

### STRATEGY 4 - Communicate your approach

Communicating your experience is a key aspect of completing the ecodesign process.



Disseminate information internally



Communicate with consumers



Discuss options with suppliers

## 3 DEVELOP a new packaging design

You don't have to look very far to improve your packaging. Simple changes can sometimes make a significant difference! For example, take the opportunity when reviewing or developing a product line to apply an ecodesign initiative and generate new ideas!

## 4 COMMUNICATE the improvements you made and set yourself apart

It's time to introduce the new packaging and printed matter that you redesigned according to selected strategies. To promote your improved packaging, put the spotlight on the initiatives and related benefits to inform customers and build loyalty.