

Shoppers eager to support Sustainable Packaging

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A new report has found that sustainable packaging matters to most people and that sustainable packaging innovation can help to deliver genuine competitive advantage. IGD, a UK-based research organization compiled the report for the grocery sector. IGD was formerly known as the Institute of Grocery Distribution. The full report, **'Packaging and Recycling – Addressing Shopper Concerns'** can be purchased from the IGD web-site at:

<http://www.igd.com/index.asp?id=1&fid=1&sid=8&tid=0&folid=0&cid=216>

The three key findings of the report are that:

- **Sustainable packaging matters to most people and there's widespread eagerness to engage further with this when shopping.** Over half (54%) are already allowing some shopping decisions to be influenced by the perceived environmental impact of packaging. According to shoppers, the best way to encourage further engagement with packaging and recycling is to make it easier to find products with environmentally friendly packaging.
- Retailers and manufacturers can make more of current and future sustainable packaging initiatives by raising greater awareness of them in store and on pack.
- **However, there is considerable confusion among shoppers, limiting the effective recycling rate of households.** There is a high level of self-confessed uncertainty. Around six in ten (59%) admit to some uncertainty regarding recycling. In addition, many have clearly misunderstood what's recyclable at the kerbside. Many shoppers don't know or have misunderstood certain packaging terminology and commonly used symbols.
- There is a strong need for a mix of both industry-led and local authority-led solutions to reduce confusion and misunderstanding and therefore reduce household packaging waste.
- **Improving the prominence, clarity and consistency of on-pack information would significantly reduce packaging waste.** Recycling is hindered by frustrations with information sources and by misinterpretation of the rules. Improvements to on-pack information could significantly increase recycling rates.
- Efforts to increase the prominence, clarity and consistency of on-pack information, including those by WRAP, BRC and individual companies, should be encouraged.

Other key findings of the report are that:

- Improving local recycling schemes and consistency between schemes will also contribute to better packaging recovery rates.
- Many households are not complying with their recyclable waste collection instructions and are contributing significantly to contamination issues.
- Shoppers have clear priorities for making packaging more environmentally friendly even if these do not always match scientific assessment.
- Sustainable packaging innovation can help to deliver genuine competitive advantage.