Sustainable Food Month

in partnership with Too Good To Go

Sustainability

The Future Is In Our Hands



The eco opportunity
Industry icons weigh in

How to be sustainable
A step-by-step guide

Business evolution
Why to act now

abc specialityfoodmagazine.com

Sustainable Food Month

in partnership with Too Good To Go



SUSTAINABILITY: THE FUTURE IS IN OUR HANDS

"The move to more sustainable systems should be seen as an opportunity, not a chore"



HOLLY SHACKLETON
EDITOR OF SPECIALITY FOOD

'Sustainability' has been a buzzword for years now, but never before has the industry witnessed such noise around the movement. Businesses across the sector and beyond have been willed to make changes in the way they do things for a while now, and for me, 2021 is the milestone at which change needs to begin – for the sake of people, planet, and the health of the businesses themselves. It's time for the industry to see the move to sustainable systems as an opportunity, not a chore.

That's why *Speciality Food* has partnered with food waste pioneers Too Good To Go to launch Sustainable Food Month: a 31-day exploration of the opportunities that sustainability brings; an honest look at the challenges and how they can be overcome; and a chance to hear from sustainability champions and icons first-hand.

There's a wide range of steps that can be taken to improve your sustainability credentials, so there really is no excuse for not pushing for change. And you can do so knowing that there's a raft of successful businesses which have done just that; we'll be speaking to many throughout Sustainable Food Month to share their stories.

But the sustainability fight doesn't end once Sustainable Food Month has come to a close. I hope that you use this time to learn about the path ahead, decide how you will forge ahead, and explore new opportunities for collaboration and change, and take what you've learned into the future of the industry.



PASCHALIS LOUCAIDES
MANAGING DIRECTOR OF TOO GOOD TO GO UK

Sustainability is becoming increasingly important for grocery businesses. Globally one third of all food produced is wasted and this is having an astronomical impact on our planet. Food waste is responsible for a staggering eight to ten percent of greenhouse gas emissions, and climate experts have said that reducing food waste is one of the most impactful actions we can all take to address global warming. The reality is that no one likes throwing perfectly good food away. It's a waste of money, it's bad for the planet, it's bad for staff morale, and it feels very wrong. But for a long time, food waste has been an inevitability that all grocery stores have had to grapple with. The good news is that the data and insights we get from technology let us tackle the issue with a level of nuance – and on a scale – that was unprecedented until now. Grocery retailers are in need of friction-free solutions to reduce their food waste. They need solutions that don't require hours of training for staff or lengthy processes to be put in place. Apps like Too Good To Go provide an easy-to-implement platform for businesses with surplus food, providing a safety net for when they find themselves with unsold food at the end of the day. To put it simply, apps can make people think twice about food waste: a precious opportunity to shift all our behaviours.

"Reducing food waste is one of the most impactful actions to address global warming"



"Transparency with your customers is vital"



CLARE MARTIN
FOUNDER OF ECO MARKETING AGENCY BLUE CACTUS

Customers are definitely becoming more conscious about their impact on the environment and this means they're choosing to shop with businesses that care too. Being 'eco' doesn't have to be a core part of your comms strategy or your brand story, but it definitely should be a consideration behind the scenes, because younger generations are becoming way more savvy at looking into the source of products (particularly ingredients and raw materials), as well as ethical work practices and supply chains. People are prepared to pay extra for products that ticks all the boxes too, if they're able to, but there's still room for businesses to be innovative and offer the same quality and ethics to be more affordable, inclusive and mainstream.

Sustainability has lost its meaning as big brands try to jump on the bandwagon without actually considering their entire supply chain and product lineup. That approach is just not good enough, and consumers are starting to see through it, questioning about other aspects of the businesses around them with tools such as [ethical brand ratings app] Good On You. Some food brands are having huge success by tackling their impact, whether by reusing waste (such as Rubies in the Rubble, Oddbox and Dash Water), by educating consumers (The Ethical Butcher, for example) or by carefully considering their supply chain. When it comes to their food, consumers are happy to research the difference between organic and natural on food labels, just as they're used to looking at the traffic light system on food packaging. Ensuring you're transparent with every product or service you offer is vital.



FIND YOUR PURPOSE

The impacts of global warming are impossible to ignore, but fostering a new culture of sustainability in your shop, warehouse or production space brings benefits all around

The economic realities of retailing can be harsh. Turning a profit from your customers' demand while keeping on top of commercial rents, wage bills, business rates and your very many other overheads is a tough nut to crack. What's more, turn on your TV of an evening and you'll be bombarded with adverts from supermarkets shouting just how well they're doing at saving the planet. The reality? The indie food sector has always been the place to find local food, seasonal produce, organic ingredients and goods handmade by makers being paid an equitable wage for their work. When it comes to reducing packaging, cutting food miles and buying more traceable, higher-welfare food, farm shops, delis, butchers, bakers and the whole eco system of small food businesses are real winners.

HOW TO GET STARTED

- The B Corp Impact Assessment is a great place to start, even if you're not planning to become a certified B Corp, because it breaks everything down into chunks so you can analyse what you're doing now and how you can make small changes.
- *Although some people believe certifications are just a load of fluff, or an expense they're not willing to pay out for, they really can be a differentiator between you and a competitor winning business.*
- Even signing up to a service like Ecologi, where you can buy trees to offset your carbon emissions, is making an improvement and can be done for less than £5 a month!

And yet there is an opportunity to not only communicate this work better to customers, but to amplify your influence in the food chain. Take Cotswold Fayre, where chief executive Paul Hargreaves has been working to lessen his businesses impact. "Clearly our supply chain is where we have the biggest opportunity to leverage our influence as a force for good," says Paul "and we work in close partnership with our 400-plus suppliers, encouraging and supporting them on their journey towards sustainability. A significant role we play is simply bringing suppliers together to learn from one another on key issues."

"We do our best to eliminate food waste in our operations and donate any surplus to City Harvest, who redistribute it to vulnerable people across London," says Paul "We sell surplus food from our food hall and kitchen, Flourish, via Too Good To Go. Our kitchen at Flourish is equipped with Winnow AI that measures where and when food waste happens so we can learn and improve. We are collaborating with our retail clients to reduce packaging waste



> "We're committing to net zero by 2030 and have already taken action"
>
> **ZOE ARNOLD-BENNET OF SHED1 DISTILLERY**



and in partnership with UnpackagedAT have rolled out zero-waste retail stations in several stores. We took a big decision this year to offset all the plastic packaging used by our suppliers in the products we sell, partnering with rePurpose Global to remove an equivalent amount of ocean-bound plastic in Hyderabad, India, which is also providing local employment. Taking a lead on this issue has opened new conversations with our suppliers about reducing and eliminating plastic as we work to expand our plastic-free range." Reducing waste has an economic as well as moral dimension: it makes good business sense to minimise overbuying or overproduction. Finding innovative ways of reducing or repurposing packaging can reduce costly collections. In both cases, working collaboratively with your community to find a solution supercharges the benefits.

£9.7 BILLION

THE ESTIMATED VALUE OF FOOD AND DRINK SALES WITH ORGANIC, FAIRTRADE, RAINFOREST ALLIANCE OR MSC CERTIFICATIONS IN 2020, UP BY NEARLY 60% SINCE 2015

SOURCE: THE ETHICAL FOOD CONSUMER, UK - MINTEL, 2021

ONLINE RESOURCES

smeclimatehub.org - help for small and micro businesses from UN's Race to Zero campaign

fdf.org.uk – podcasts, case studies and reports to on increasing sustainability

wrap.org.uk – action plans and toolkits for reducing resources use and wastage

84%

84% OF **B CORP** SMES **CLAIM** THAT THEY HAVE INTRODUCED **NEW** OR SIGNIFICANTLY **IMPROVED** GOODS OR SERVICES IN THE LAST **THREE** YEARS, COMPARED TO **41%** OF ALL **SMES**

SOURCE: B LABS UK

BUILDING COMMUNITY PURPOSE

- It's important not to pose as a community asset when you're a business. Asking our customers about crowdfunding the consensus was 'we'd love to contribute to your vision but not the business.' The urban stonemill we've crowdfunded will amplify what we do but isn't connected to my income. It's important to be transparent.

- *We're lucky our bakery is within a social arts project. High rents are a form of commercial lock-in that can drive you to make decisions that might go against your values. Not getting into financial lock-in is one of my principles; I've never borrowed money (until Covid) to build the business. You sell some bread, you invest some of the money into the business. One loaf at a time.*

- The human element is so important; I'm quite anti-branding so we have very functional ways of communicating. I don't want to present anything false. I want it 'nuts and bolts' to avoid adding unnecessary cost to the food.

72% OF THE **UK** POPULATION BELIEVE **BUSINESSES** SHOULD HAVE A LEGAL **RESPONSIBILITY** TO THE **PLANET** AND **PEOPLE** ALONGSIDE **MAXIMISING** PROFITS

SOURCE: RESEARCH COMMISSIONED BY B LAB UK

"Build the business you never want



KIM BELL
FOUNDER OF SMALL FOOD BAKERY, NOTTINGHAM

There's a great quote from David Hieatt [co-founder of Hiut Jeans]: "Build the business you never want to sell." There's huge societal pressure to grow your business; it's seen as a simple metric of success. Working in my bakery is my life's vocation, so everything about it has to be pleasurable and fit within my own value system for me to want to turn up each day and work as hard as I do. So, I don't want to grow my bakery, but I do want to grow movement.

From my perspective it's about creating lateral growth in community around small food networks. I've spent eight years trying to prove it's possible to localise our food and manufacture food on a really small scale for a community of people (which is what a bakery does) working within a moral code that reflects our challenges around climate change and food justice. Small Food Bakery has been a huge experiment, but what I have believed since the beginning is that staying small is the key to good work. I find it hard to imagine how I could make the bakery any bigger without completely compromising on the values that it's build upon. That's basically because it's built on relationships and you can only manage so many successful relationships in your work. The moment you try to scale up and add layers of management systems it becomes dehumanised. At that point you make compromises to the quality of what you do.

AMID THE **PANDEMIC**, GLOBALLY **51%** BELIEVE **ENVIRONMENTAL** ISSUES REMAIN **IMPORTANT**; AND **23%** SAY THEY'RE MORE **CRITICAL** THAN EVER

SOURCE: KANTAR'S COVID-19 BAROMETER

65%

65% OF ALL **FARM** BUSINESSES IN **ENGLAND** OPERATE ANOTHER **ENTERPRISE** (SUCH AS A **FARM SHOP**, **CAMP SITE** OR **WEDDING VENUE**), CONTRIBUTING SOCIAL **VALUE** AS WELL AS **ECONOMIC** TO RURAL **COMMUNITIES**

SOURCE: NFU AND ONWARD

"It's no surprise that people are starting to reconsider what they eat"



LOUISE DAVIES
INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE VEGAN SOCIETY

The UK buys a third of all the plant-based alternatives sold in Europe, and the nation's purchase and consumption rate of plant milk, meat and fish alternatives, vegan butter, vegan cheese and vegan ready meals/food to go are the highest in Europe – maybe even the world. In research we conducted in April 2021, we found 25% of people in Britain had actively cut back on their consumption of animal products since the start of the pandemic. Of these "reducers", a huge number of them were trying vegan products for the first time and said they would continue to purchase them in the future. With a huge weight of scientific evidence making the case that animal agriculture is a key contributor to the climate crisis, it's no surprise that people are starting to reconsider what they eat.

In the UK, there are no signs that the market is plateauing or shrinking. Between 2018 and 2020, sales volume of plant-based food grew 67% in the UK, and with more brands and manufacturers getting involved each day, we believe this growth will continue. The vegan food and drinks industry is flourishing, and with more exciting innovation happening every day – even product categories that are established and developed – there has never been a better time to be involved.



CHANGE FOR GOOD

If the pandemic sharpened consumers' appetite for convenience it's also awakened people to the fragility of global food chains and the need to use local producers

Retail isn't always plain sailing, but there can have been few times as tumultuous as the last 18 months of trading. And as we try to shake off the vestiges of the pandemic, with its often surreal challenges and opportunities, we emerge into a very different retail landscape.

£92k TONNES

OF SURPLUS FOOD (WORTH £280M) WAS REDISTRIBUTED BY WRAP IN 2020, A TRIPLING ON 2015 FIGURES. SOURCE - WRAP 50% OF CONSUMERS WILL BE 'ECO ACTIVES' (THAT'S HIGHLY ENVIRONMENTALLY CONSCIOUS) BY THE END OF THE DECADE. AN ESTIMATED 22% OF THE POPULATION ARE ALREADY THERE

SOURCE: KANTAR

Recent YouGov polling shows our 40% of our Covid-buffeted population is now 'fairly frightened' of the impact climate change may have (15% count themselves 'very frightened') and more than half are more concerned about this long-term threat than coronavirus. That has huge ramifications for the way people shop and how they spend their money.

As with the Covid-19 pandemic, small retailers have a crucial role to play in helping people in their community feel safe, positive about the challenges ahead and empowered to make a difference. Just as '20 and '21 required flexible approaches to home delivery, customer orders, infection control measures, stock categories and pricing, so the next few years will require SMEs to help customers solve their next set of problems. So what are these?

What matters to customers?

As Alice Baker, senior research analyst analyst at Mintel, pointed out in its recent report The Ethical Food Consumer, "Animal welfare and environmental concerns are neck and neck as top reasons for buying ethically certified food and drink. Further demonstrating the importance of animal welfare to consumers, 48% of adults see

this issue as one of the top three priorities for food and drink companies. However, some certifications with strong credentials on animal welfare, such as organic, appear to be 'missing' potential users, suggesting that highlighting these aspects stands to expand their appeal." Interestingly research by The Humane League suggests most supermarkets are behind the curve on chicken welfare, while food service businesses are much more likely to be making and meeting pledges on standards.

Packaging is another area with huge potential for improvement. It was recently announced that Spain is to entirely ban the sale of fruit and veg in plastic wrapping by '23, while here in the UK a new plastic tax will be introduced on April 1st 2022 (though some details are still unclear about how it will work). Of course, the Government plans to phase out all 'avoidable' plastic waste by the end of 2024 – and is currently consulting on banning single waste polystyrene plates and cups, and plastic cups much sooner – but savvy consumer-facing businesses are already well ahead of that curve. "Some tangible environmental attributes such as sustainable packaging are also widely rated as top priorities for the food and drink sector," confirms Alice Baker. "However, some other attributes such as soil health attract little attention, suggesting a need for driving public awareness of these concepts." You and your staff are ideally placed to have these conversations, and cater to those customers who are already only too aware of the impact their choices can have on farming methods.



Greening your site can create low-maintenance zones reflecting a kinder approach to wildlife. Green roofs and bee hives (a la Adnams) are great, but low-mow areas and pollinator-friendly window boxes are a start. [envelope motif] Got a niché product? Subscription services are gaining real traction (sales have grown more than 300% over the last seven years) with consumers able to shop according to ethics without compromising on convenience.*

***Source: BusinessWire**

"Are you greenwashing?"



ALICE BAKER
SENIOR RESEARCH ANALYST AT MINTEL

"Increased consumer awareness of environmental issues, stoked by media coverage of the pandemic, offers considerable growth potential for ethical food and drink. However, widespread consumer doubts over whether their actions make a difference, and uncertainty over what the different certifications stand for, pose considerable barriers to encouraging more ethical shopping habits. It's therefore imperative for companies to give consumers tangible evidence that they can effect positive change through their food and drink choices."

IMPLEMENTING CHANGE

"It's both difficult and a huge opportunity," says Patrick Holden of the food security crisis. "Small retailers and small food companies generally can be much more fleet-of-foot than these 'supertanker' globalised food companies. They've got real problems 'cos all their systems are so highly centralised: any supermarket will use one slaughterhouse for a species; one pack house for all their carrots. For them to change is a massive investment, and they don't even know how to start that, let alone complete it. Whereas a small retailer can make a commitment to source as sustainably as possible from local producers, and act on it the next day."

"Something's going on; interests are changing"



PATRICK HOLDEN
SUSTAINABLE FOOD TRUST

Sustainable Food Trust Recent news on food security has been alarming but fascinating: who knew there were only two fertiliser plants producing the CO2 that's so critical for slaughtering all our industrial pigs and chickens and ensuring long-shelf-life meat? Being 'nine meals from anarchy', as the saying goes, seems like a crazy idea, but there was Ian Wright from the FDF on my radio saying we were ten days from severe shortages. What was put in place is a sticking plaster. We have to move away from this insecure, centralised, just-in-time food chain where everyone is umbilically dependent on a series of external factors completely outside of our control. We can say to ourselves 'Why don't we build local, resilient food systems?' We are SO far from there today. So far. Go into a supermarket, where we buy 90% of our food, and look for any food with a local story who might farm somewhere near you, and try to find out some information about that product...you'll find that hard.

But I am heartened; there's a massive sea change going on, for example Nestlé switching their whole sourcing to regenerative farming. That's huge! Our initiative – the Global Farm Metric – is a common language for food sustainability. That will help hold the Nestlés and others to account. Another great example: this year Morrisons' annual customer survey had biodiversity and climate change in their customers' top three concerns for the first time ever. Something's going on; interests are changing.

> "Intention to reduce the use of single-use plastics is set to increase, with 54% saying that they will be even more focused on this issue post-pandemic"
>
> **ETHICAL CONSUMER MARKETS REPORT 2020**

"What does a sustainable fish counter look like?"



RICK STAFFORD
PROFESSOR OF MARINE BIOLOGY AND CONSERVATION AT BOURNEMOUTH UNIVERSITY

There's a huge problem with the concept of 'sustainable' fishing. Seaspiracy [Netflix's controversial documentary] was wrong to state it couldn't be defined; it's simply fishing at a rate where the population will grow to match the amount taken out each year. However, sustainability is an economic term about maximising extraction of a resource over a long period of time. It doesn't mean it's environmentally friendly. To fish at Maximum Sustainable Yield a stock of fish needs to be reduced in size to around 30% of its original size: this has a huge effect on marine ecosystems, and potentially on the ability of the ocean to absorb carbon dioxide.

MSC-certified fish is definitely better than nothing, and despite lots of criticism from both fishers and NGOs, they do try and do a good job. There's no doubt that some species are over exploited. Swordfish, blue fin tuna and any sort of shark (perhaps other than dogfish) are very much over fished as a species, and should be avoided. Other than that, a species approach isn't always helpful, as different stocks (species, but in different locations) can have different levels of exploitation. The Marine Conservation Society produces a Good Fish Guide to explain both species and stocks which you are likely to encounter and which should be avoided.

More farmers, growers and suppliers than ever are sharing their work regenerating soils, digging out ponds and fostering habitats that encourage biodiversity. Amplifying your suppliers' posts via your platforms efforts is an easy win.

> "There's a real opportunity to source seafood locally and demonstrate how it can be cooked"
>
> **PROFESSOR RICK STAFFORD, STAFFORD UNIVERSITY**

A REGENERATIVE APPROACH

A fast-changing climate requires fresh thinking from all of us, but some radical solutions are producing quite extraordinary food

Extreme weather is here, threatening life and limb in catastrophic weather events but also triggering price spikes and ingredient shortages as crops suffer. Only this month there are reports of 90% increases in the price of durum wheat as Canada, the world's leading producer, has seen its harvest hit by extreme hit and scarce rainfall. And whilst shoppers' baskets have been hit hard by all kind of unprecedented supply chain complications – Brexit, the haulage crisis, a CO_2 shortage and of course the global pandemic – climate change looks set to outlive these passing problems as a long-term challenge to food security. The Farmers' Guardian reports that the 2018 heatwave caused yields of onions, carrots and potatoes to drop by up to 40%, and the Global Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warns such events are an inescapable part of our future. However bold solutions are already shaping the food that makes it on to your shelves, and look set to play an increasingly important role in your future stock.

SOURCING CONSCIOUSLY

- I've been advocating a move from 'offshore' fishing to 'inshore' fishing. Smaller boats use less destructive methods, and fish nearer to shore. These fisheries employ more than 70% of UK fishers, but account for a tiny amount of quota and profit, which is largely in the hands of big companies.
- *We largely don't eat the seafood we catch in the UK so there's a real opportunity to source locally and demonstrate how it can be cooked, providing variety and be a good selling point.*
- Some fish can be farmed well too: freshwater tilapia can be grown alongside agriculture, and farmed oysters and mussels often providing major environmental benefits. Farmed molluscs have the lowest carbon footprint of any food, including a vegan diet.

Regenerative agriculture – or #regenag as social media has it – is having quite a moment right now as some interesting projects really hit their stride. For example there's Wakelyns, a farm in Suffolk where the pioneering pursuit of agroforestry (diverse wheat crops are grown on tree-lined strips on land to encourage crop-supporting biodiversity) has matured into a real horticultural hub with an organic veg share scheme, a thriving bakery (which uses homegrown wheat and fruit) and a cookery school. Or its collaborator Hodmedods, which champions forgotten crops that add to the diversity and resilience of British farming. Its new Botanical Blend #2 (developed with Vanessa Kimbell of The Sourdough School) is a 'meadow flour' that blends 14 grains, seeds, pulses and flowers found in an agricultural field that supports biodiversity.

The game-changing rewilding project

"THE OVERARCHING QUESTION UK CONSUMERS, CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS, INDUSTRIES AND GOVERNMENTS SHOULD BE ASKING IS: **WHAT WOULD IT TAKE TO ENSURE FOOD SYSTEMS BECOME ROBUST, SECURE AND RESILIENT?** THE ANSWER ALMOST CERTAINLY SHOULD BE: **MAKE THEM MORE DIVERSE – ECONOMICALLY, ENVIRONMENTALLY, REGIONALLY AND BIOLOGICALLY – AND DON'T CONTINUE TO REDUCE HOME FOOD PRODUCTION**"

SOURCE: FOOD RESEARCH COLLABORATION POLICY SUMMARY, JULY '21



at Sussex's Knepp Estate (beautifully charted in farmer Isabella Tree's bestselling book Wilding), which already supplies the estate's wild meat shop, is blossoming into a bigger space in 2022 with a farm shop and café due to open in spring. A new project – Knepp Regenerative Farms – is contributing to the growing exploration of regenerative agricultureas a means to feed the nation whilst renewing soils, habitats and wildlife. The awakening passion for new solutions is witnessed by Colin Tudge (see column, right) as "the tremendous interest in the Oxford Real Farming Conference, at which we discuss all aspects of food and farming, including the need for a different economy and politics (including the concept of food sovereignty and the pressing need for land reform) and the need to cultivate a more ecocentric attitude to nature and issues of morality – as well as the basics and fine details of agroecological farming and food. As one of our regular supporters commented, 'Ten years ago you would not have attracted such attention with such an agenda!"

"Cut-price farming designed for short-term profit is a disaster"



COLIN TUDGE
DIRECTOR OF THE CAMPAIGN FOR REAL FARMING

What good is going on right now? Increasing interest in organic food and farming, local markets and community-supported agriculture; of the natural world; the rise of movements such as Extinction Rebellion, which now seems to find favour with people at large, if not with the government. Agroecological farming could feed the world several times over and yet be sustainable. It needs to become the norm. Yes, properly produced food would indeed be dearer in the immediate term. Industrialised, globalised farming is expressly designed to minimise the sale price. But it does this by cutting corners – with scant or zero respect for human societies; for animal welfare); and the biosphere (industrial agriculture is the prime cause of mass extinction and a major contributor to global warming). In short, cut-price farming designed for short-term profit is a disaster. If we are serious then we need to change direction as soon as possible.

Colin is author of The Great Rethink: A 21st Century Renaissance

> "Dimbleby is right that our current food system no longer serves the planet or human health"
>
> **SUSTAINABLE FOOD TRUST REACTING TO NATIONAL FOOD STRATEGY**

"Collaboration helps us to reduce our impact"



PAUL HARGREAVES
CHIEF EXECUTIVE AT COTSWOLD FAYRE

One thing I love about our industry, given its large environmental footprint, is there's so much potential to drive significant sustainable change. Behind every big challenge we face as food businesses lies a big opportunity. But too often today food businesses are trying to tackle these issues independently and from within siloes.

As a wholesaler at the heart of the journey that food takes from producers to consumers, I know collaboration is crucial – so from day one we've invested time and energy in building trusted relationships. But as a smaller business hoping to tackle the systemic challenges we face as an industry, we also recognised that we needed to look outward and far beyond our own business. Together with others we could dream bigger and work towards greater goals. So, in 2015 Cotswold Fayre certified as one of the first B Corps in the UK, joining a wider community of businesses with a shared desire and commitment to being a force for good.

Collaboration is helping us to reduce our impact within and beyond our communities. We recently defined our Climate Action strategy around three key pillars: carbon, food waste and plastics. Meanwhile, our business and team has grown significantly over the past year. Our B Corp status is attracting a team who want to benefit people and planet through their work. We work hard and have fun getting it done. And most of all, we hope to leave the world in a better place than we found it.



SUSTAINABILITY IN COLD CHAIN SOLUTIONS

Curbside recyclable WrapPak® cold chain solutions provide thermal protection for up to 48 hours for e-commerce food delivery

Looking for a better cold chain solution for shipping of food products? Consider paper-based cold chain packing materials to reduce or eliminate plastic packaging that is hard to recycle, made from fossil fuels and takes hundreds of years to biodegrade. This is ncreasingly less acceptable to consumers. You may be surprised to learn how effective paper-based thermal protection products are whilst at the same time offering many cost ad sustainability advantages.

Do you have a warehouse full of existing thermal protection solutions like EPS boxes? While EPS boxes and other plastic-based thermal protection solutions, or even wool- or cotton-based solutions or denim liners, are certainly an effective thermal protection approach, they also take up a great deal of space, both in your warehouse and in the product shipping process. Plus, their end-of-life disposal comes with many sustainability issues. In this article, we explain why paper-based thermal protection is a better choice for products requiring thermal protection for up to 48 hours. We also discuss how easy it is to convert your operation to this more sustainable and cost-effective choice with an on-demand system that produces paper pads on request.

The market for cold chain packaging is expected to grow by 19.4% from 2020 to 2027. To meet this growing demand, Ranpak is providing customers with a range of paper-based thermal protection solutions that are cost-efficient and sustainable. The Ranpak WrapPak® Protector solution is ideal for food companies shipping products requiring sustained frozen, chilled, and ambient temperature ranges. Ranpak paper-based packing solutions are curbside recyclable and a more sustainable and cost-effective solution than packing using traditional EPS boxes and other plastic-based materials.

"The e-commerce market for food and beverages in Europe has seen a dramatic increase as consumers experienced the convenience of online food ordering during the pandemic," said Anne de Rouw, Business Development Manager Cold Chain Europe for Ranpak. "This includes meal kits, grocery deliveries, and specialty foods. In fact, 21% of the total food & beverages market is expected to be ordered through e-commerce by 2025. At the same time, consumers are looking for sustainable packing solutions and have a less-than-positive unboxing experience when they open a box full of plastic packing materials. That's why Ranpak has placed significant focus on the WrapPak® Protector, our paper-based cold chain packing solution, which uses waved paper pads as thermal liners."

In addition to the functionality and sustainability advantages of Ranpak cold chain solutions, food companies benefit from less space required in the warehouse. One pallet of WrapPak® paper packs as much product as up to 24 pallets of EPS cold chain boxes! Ranpak provides both the WrapPak® Protector liner paper and the converter equipment required to generate the waved paper pads, enabling end-users to produce the packing material on demand.

How it works

Ranpak's thermal packaging specialists work in partnership with customers to determine ideal configurations for packing specific products, whether they are ambient, chilled or frozen.. This includes determining optimal sizes of corrugated boxes to best fit WrapPak® Protector waved paper pads; additionally, Ranpak can recommend sustainable cool packs such as Recycold phase change material. (PCM) if required.



Ranpak's Packaging Engineering specialists conduct thermal tests in a controlled climate chamber, enabling them to develop customized solutions for customers. WrapPak® paper is uncoated Kraft paper, 100% recyclable, renewable and biodegradable, and moisture resistant. As with all Ranpak paper-based packing solutions, WrapPak® Protector liner is manufactured from FSC®-certified materials.

WrapPak® Protector solutions are ideal for products such as chocolate and candy that require a temperature-controlled environment as well as products like meat, seafood, dairy, juices, and desserts that require storage in chilled conditions, and lastly, frozen products that must be maintained at maximum 0 degrees Celsius. Meat in the Box is a UK-based company that delivers fresh meat with next day deliveries. "WrapPak gives us confidence that our fresh meat will arrive to our customers chilled and ready to cook. The machine is simple to operate and gives us complete flexibility with our insulation needs, reducing storage space used. As an added bonus, the biodegradable/recyclable nature of the product helps us to keep our carbon footprint down and is an attractive marketing point. WrapPak really is a first-class solution to our unique requirements," said Matthew Whitehouse, Managing Director at Meat in the Box.

Ranpak makes installation and setup easy, providing customers with the required WrapPak® Protector converter along with pallets of WrapPak® Protector paper liner materials.

For more information about Ranpak cold chain solutions and other paper-based packing solutions from Ranpak, please visit: www.ranpak.com/uk/keep-it-cool

THE PACKING PROCESS

- Select the right double or triple-wall corrugated box
- *Select the correct pad length on the WrapPak® converter which is then placed into the box*
- Products are inserted into the lined box with cooling elements added
- *Optional void fill can be used if there are empty spaces in the packed box*
- Close the box with tape, and it's ready to ship!

Sustainable
Food Month

in partnership with Too Good To Go

