



RECYCLABLE ALTERNATIVES TO WAXED CORRUGATED SHIPPING CONTAINERS

New Study Reveals:


- A significant increase in the use of corrugated wax alternatives
- More alternatives available to increase retailer revenue




Corrugated leads all packaging materials in recycling with a current recovery rate over 80 percent. Supermarkets are the leaders in this effort, recovering more than 90 percent of their used corrugated to generate substantial revenue and improve store profitability.



Supermarkets could increase revenues by recycling even more of their used corrugated by requesting recyclable alternatives to waxed containers. Wax has traditionally been used as a moisture barrier to preserve the strength of a box for iced- or wet-shipped products such as fresh fruits and vegetables, meat, poultry and seafood. Waxed corrugated accounts for 5.2 percent of the total case volume produced annually.




Wax coatings cannot easily be recycled because they do not dissolve in water, so they can create problems in the repulping process. The industry has worked diligently to develop recyclable alternatives, many of which are now commercially available.



The corrugated industry developed a recyclability standard in 2005, that allows these alternatives to be tested, proven and certified recyclable if they pass the required protocol. Certified materials should be marked with one of these symbols:



or



When you see either of these symbols, you know the container bearing it can be successfully recycled. A poster is available for retailers to remind workers to watch for the recyclable symbol and separate boxes that can be recycled from those that cannot.



Recent progress.

Recently commercialized alternative coatings have yielded promising results:

- In 2008, the corrugated industry shipped 2,683 million square feet of boxes using recyclable wax alternative coatings. That's over 105% more than the 1,309 million square feet shipped in 2002, increasing the volume of containers that could be recycled.
- Progress has been made in replacing all types of wax treated boxes (cascaded, impregnated, curtain-coated) with recyclable treated boxes.
- Twenty-one recyclable wax alternatives have passed certification testing and have been registered with the FBA as of August, 2009, each replacing a wax cascaded, impregnated or surface coating application.
- Several companies participating in a recent FBA survey reported they expect significant progress in the use of recyclable treatments in 2009, based on shipments made and trials in progress.

Recyclable wax alternatives.

Recyclable wax alternatives have so far been successfully developed and used for packaging the following commodities:

- Lettuce
- Tree fruit (peaches, nectarines, cherries)
- Row crops
- Seafood
- Poultry (ice-packed, chill-packed, frozen)
- Melons
- Beans
- Berries (strawberries, blueberries, raspberries)
- Avocados
- Grapes
- Mushrooms
- Frozen snacks

For more information, or for a recycling poster, please contact the Corrugated Packaging Alliance at 800.886.5255 or visit <http://www.corrugated.org/WaxAlternatives>.

The Corrugated Packaging Alliance (www.corrugated.org) is a corrugated industry initiative jointly sponsored by the American Forest & Paper Association (AF&PA) (www.afandpa.org), the Association of Independent Corrugated Converters (AICC) (www.aiccbbox.org) and the Fibre Box Association (FBA) (www.fibrebox.org).