



Product packaging

Worldwide, the packaging share of household waste is growing (176 kg / person / year in the EU), due mainly to the success of prepackaged food, smaller households and the role of packaging in international trade.



– 16,000 plastic bags are distributed each second worldwide. A plastic bag takes 1 second to manufacture, is used an average of 20 minutes, and takes 100-400 years to degrade.

+ Producing an aluminium can from recycled material takes only 5% of the energy it would take to produce it from bauxite (raw material). Recycling 1 can also saves over 250 g of GHGs, 950 g of bauxite and 425 g of chemicals.

What can you do?

Reduce waste by avoiding unnecessary packaging and re-use or recycle the rest!

For example:

- always carry your own reusable bag in your pocket or handbag to use instead of discardable plastic bags
- use as little aluminium as you can
- in general, avoid buying products with a lot of packaging.

The majority of packaging materials can be recycled (glass, cardboard, metals, etc), which diminishes the amount of GHG emissions, but also saves water, energy and raw materials.

Note that growing and preparing the food is about 90% of the energy associated with final food product, while packaging is only 10%. So food waste has an even larger carbon footprint than packaging waste and is often up to 10% or more of household waste...

Regions of the world

Packaging in a Swiss household is 28% of a rubbish bag's weight, while in a Japanese household it is 26% (Neyagawa).

Did you know?

Somewhere in the North Pacific Ocean, there is a floating continent of trash. Called the "Great Pacific Garbage Patch", it consists mainly of plastic waste and covers more than 800,000 km².