

SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING



Cosmo Films: Goals of Sustainable Packaging

Sustainability is a concern for governments, businesses and people worldwide. According to studies conducted by global business houses, 39% of consumers check for beverage packaging's environmental information before buying, and 66% of consumers avoid a certain brand/product due to environmental concern. With the packaging industry's dependency on the use of plastics, the questions of sustainability are now hovering around. As a result, the industry has seen a major shift to sustainable packaging by embarking upon the three R's (Reduce, Reuse and Recycle). Packaging manufacturers are now conducting intensive R&D to come out with solutions that require reduced raw material, allow reuse of packages, and ease of recyclability.

Constant efforts are made, and products like BOPP films have already been introduced to facilitate easy recycling. Here are a few points that truly define the goals of sustainable packaging.

Increasing energy & water efficiency

Packaging experts need to aim at bringing down the use of energy and water in the manufacturing process. This can be achieved by substituting the packaging material used with better and efficient substances or by changing the process. The shift from rigid packaging like glass to flexible packaging is one of the greatest examples. By reducing the amount of energy and water used in the manufacturing process, we bring down the greenhouse gas emission and resource exploitation.

Minimizing raw material

Reducing the primary material used in packaging production is the key to maintaining sustainability. This can be done by reaching an optimal blend of primary, secondary & tertiary materials that can be recycled together. However, one cannot completely avoid the use of primary material as it prevents damage and wastage. The World Packaging Organization argues that no packaging can result in far more wastage by spoiled products. Thus, it is only wise to use it judiciously by focusing on the right size and the right strength required.

Using recycled materials

The use of recycled materials for packaging can help reduce the industry's environmental footprint drastically. Recycled materials not only help in reducing waste production but also require less energy as compared to virgin materials.

Designing renewable & reusable packaging

Packaging designers need to maximize the use of renewable materials for manufacturing packaging products. This saves energy, natural resources, and helps achieve sustainability efficiently. Also, packaging can be designed to facilitate reuse. For instance, use of zip-locked bags for packaging allows consumers to reuse the bag further. However, it's extremely rare and that's why recovery for recycling is a more promising solution.

Facilitating an efficient use of transport

Packaging design should be transport friendly. This means that it should be bearing in mind factors like reducing weight, maximizing space usage and utilizing bulk packaging where possible. These small steps facilitate efficient use of transport and help reduce energy consumption. Packaging that is designed keeping in mind bulk transport and not just single item appearance helps in cubing out (filling shipping containers effectively) for shipping. People have also started to source products from local dealers to reduce the environmental damage caused by transportation.

Creating consumer awareness

Statistics mentioned in the beginning tell us a lot about consumer inclination towards eco-friendly packaging. People are increasingly becoming aware of environmental concerns, however many still share the use & throw attitude. Packaging designers should make sure that through their design they increase awareness amongst consumers by providing information like material used and disposal guidelines that enable recycling.

Conclusion

Sustainable packaging that is aimed at reducing the carbon footprint at every stage, from manufacturing to disposal, is the need of the hour. Responsible packaging producers like Cosmo Films, a speciality films manufacturer, have been continuously involved in aggressive R&D to come up with economical and recyclable packaging solutions. Their portfolio already boasts of a range of films that make recycling a possibility and facilitate a circular economy.