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CONSUMERS REMAIN OVERWHELMINGLY POSITIVE TOWARDS RECYCLING

DENTON, Texas – The recycling industry has faced many challenges over the last few years, yet consumers are still overwhelmingly (95%) supportive of recycling. According to [research](#) commissioned by [the Carton Council of North America](#), 74% think recycling is important and people should make it a priority. This represents a 13% increase from 2015 when 61% said they were supportive of recycling. An additional 21% said people should do what they can to try to recycle.

Not bad considering that since 2015, the American recycling system has struggled through restrictions and bans from China, leading to changes in some programs, negative media coverage and often confusion for consumers surrounding what is recyclable. Add to that the havoc caused by COVID-19, which caused some recycling programs to temporarily pause. The take away is that consumers believe recycling is important and increasingly the right thing to do.

“When asked why they recycle their [aseptic and gable top food and beverage cartons](#), overwhelmingly consumers mention environmental benefits. The top reasons included ‘it’s good for the planet,’ ‘to create a better world for future generations’ and ‘to reduce pollution and my carbon footprint,’” said Carla Fantoni, vice president of communications for the Carton Council and for Tetra Pak Americas.

While this presents a rosy outlook, unfortunately what consumers report and what they actually recycle varies greatly, as anyone working in the recycling industry knows. For example, the most recent average national recycling rate according to the EPA is just 34%. However, while the nation experiences an increased focus on climate change and the environment, led by the new Administration, the timing has never been better to educate and motivate consumers to recycle.

Fifty-eight percent of consumers said the circumstances of 2020 and the Pandemic have made them feel it’s more important now to recycle than before. Additionally, knowing what products are created from the materials recycled overwhelmingly inspires consumers to recycle more (70%).

“This tells us the timing to educate is ideal. Consumers are open to being reminded to recycle when shown the benefits,” said Fantoni. “When it comes to cartons specifically, 77% said knowing that recycled food and beverage cartons are used to make paper products, such as toilet paper and paper towels, makes them more likely to recycle them.”

For more information about carton recycling, the general public can visit: [RecycleCartons.com](#). For more information about the research and Carton Council efforts, recycling stakeholders should visit: [CartonOpportunities.org](#).

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ABOUT THE SURVEY

Findings from the research are based on a survey of 7,627 interviews conducted by the Logit Group. The survey included a nationally representative sample of Americans who reported access to curbside recycling programs in their area. Recruitment was conducted for those in each state with 30% or greater access to curbside carton recycling. Responses were collected online in December 2020.

ABOUT THE CARTON COUNCIL

The Carton Council is composed of four leading carton manufacturers, Elopak, Evergreen Packaging, SIG Combibloc, and Tetra Pak. Formed in 2009, the Carton Council works to deliver long-term collaborative solutions in order to divert valuable cartons from the landfill. Through a united effort, the Carton Council is committed to building a sustainable infrastructure for carton recycling nationwide and works toward their continual goal of adding access to carton recycling throughout the U.S.