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**AMERICANS IN AGREEMENT: RECYCLING IS IMPORTANT AND SHOULD BE A PRIORITY**  
*New research reveals that consumers' positive attitudes toward recycling are at an all-time high*

**DENTON, Texas**—According to a new survey by the [Carton Council of North America](#), an overwhelming majority of consumers (94 percent) are supportive of recycling. Nearly three-fourths (74 percent) believe recycling is important and should be made a priority, and an additional 20 percent think it is somewhat important and people should do what they can to try to recycle. This is a significant increase from 61 percent reporting that recycling should be a priority when the survey was last conducted two years ago.

“It’s reassuring to see positive attitudes toward recycling growing,” said Jason Pelz, vice president of recycling projects for the Carton Council of North America and vice president, environment, for Tetra Pak Americas. “So many companies and organizations have been coming together to make recycling more convenient, efficient and simple in our country, and this affirms that it is having a strong impact.”

Americans don’t just think recycling should be a priority, they are acting on it. The survey asked respondents about their recycling behavior for common recyclables, and the results showed an overall increase in respondents reporting that they always recycle these items. Food and beverage cartons, such as those for milk, juice, broth and soy, are a newer recyclable material in the U.S. recycling stream, yet also showed a significant increase, with 61 percent of respondents saying they always recycle their food and beverage cartons, up from 50 percent when the survey was last conducted.

“It’s great for us to see consumers taking advantage of the growing availability of carton recycling,” said Pelz. “Today, more than 62 percent of American households have access to carton recycling, and we’re excited to continue working with governments, recyclers and many other stakeholders to ensure that every food and beverage carton ends up in a recycling bin and is turned into new, useful products.”

Environmental benefits and social responsibility drive recycling now more than ever. Ninety-four percent of respondents cited environmental or altruistic reasons for recycling, up from 73 percent in 2016.

Additionally, consumers have high expectations for the brands they purchase. Fifty-six percent said their loyalty to a food or beverage brand is impacted by the brand’s engagement with environmental causes. The survey also found that consumers overwhelmingly expect food and beverage brands to be committed to recycling. More than nine out of 10 (92 percent) said brands should take an active role in helping to increase the recycling of packages, up slightly from 2016.

The survey also reported recycling behaviors broken down by state in two categories:

- States that reported recycling of food and beverage cartons most often; and
- States that have the most supportive outlook of recycling.

Rhode Island ranked number one for both the number of residents who report recycling their cartons most often and for the most supportive views on recycling.

Top States That Report They Recycle Their Cartons Most Often	States That Have the Most Supportive Outlook of Recycling
1. Rhode Island	1. Rhode Island
2. New Hampshire	2. New Jersey
3. Connecticut	3. Wisconsin
4. Massachusetts	4. New Hampshire
5. Delaware	5. Pennsylvania

“Rhode Island was one of the first states to promote universal recycling access back in 1986 and we’re still leading the way,” said Jared Rhodes, Director of Policy and Programs at Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation. “We’re pleased our commitment to recycling education has resulted in positive outlooks and actions. We hope Rhode Islanders continue to recycle their cartons in high numbers, as well as the full suite of recyclables accepted in our [mixed recycling program](#).”

The Carton Council formed in 2009 to increase recycling of cartons used to package many food and beverage products, such as milk, juice, water, soups, broth, wine and beans. At that time, only 18 percent of households could recycle their cartons through local programs. Now, more than 62 percent of homes have access, representing 72.6 million households in 13,350 communities. Since achieving 60 percent access last year, cartons can carry the standard “Please Recycle” logo under the Federal Trade Commission’s green guidelines, reinforcing that they are a mainstream recyclable material.

#### **ABOUT THE SURVEY**

Findings from the research are based on a survey of 6,936 interviews conducted by Research+Data Insights. 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 percent or greater access to curbside carton recycling. Responses were collected online in December 2017.

For more information on the research findings, visit [CartonOpportunities.org/survey](http://CartonOpportunities.org/survey).

#### **ABOUT THE CARTON COUNCIL**

The Carton Council is composed of four leading carton manufacturers, Elopak, SIG Combibloc, Evergreen Packaging and Tetra Pak, as well as an associate member, Nippon Dynawave Packaging. Formed in 2009, the Carton Council works to deliver long-term collaborative solutions 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. For more information, visit [CartonOpportunities.org](http://CartonOpportunities.org).