When food is produced but spoils before reaching the consumer, all the resources that went into creating that food are lost – from production to harvest to processing - as well as all the associated impacts of labour, packaging, and transportation. Food production is one of the most significant contributors to global greenhouse gas emissions, which is why SEALED AIR® commits so much time and effort developing packaging designed to protect food, thus reducing food waste.

When considering material alternatives for packaging fresh proteins, the most sustainable choice you can make is the material that’s engineered to protect the food, first. At SEALED AIR®, we answer a lot of questions about the impact of alternative materials on sustainability. Here are a few frequently asked questions to help keep you informed.

**WHAT ARE THE PROS AND CONS OF SELECTING ALTERNATIVE PACKAGING OVER MULTI-LAYER BARRIER PLASTIC?**

Alternative packaging, such as paper and fibreboard are commonly recycled making them attractive to some customers. However, these products that aren’t treated have little or no gas and moisture barrier properties, reducing their effectiveness in maintaining food quality and safety and reducing food waste. In order to protect food from contamination, paper and board packaging for foods needs to be coated and lined. While consumers want products that can be recycled, when paper and board packaging are coated or lined, they lose their recyclable properties thus defeating the point of using alternative packaging.

**WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MONOPLASTICS AND MULTI-LAYER BARRIER PLASTICS? WHY IS A MULTI-LAYER BARRIER PLASTIC BETTER AT PROTECTING FOOD THAN A MONOPLASTIC?**

Monoplastics provide a single layer of plastic that can protect food from either moisture or gas penetration that can cause food deterioration. Multi-layer plastics are better at protecting food because they offer more comprehensive barrier protection while also providing toughness, puncture resistance, ease of opening, and secure sealing. When compared to monoplastics, multi-layer plastic food packaging helps extend shelf-life longer and offers multiple barrier properties, which better mitigates risk of contamination and spoilage throughout the supply chain.
WHAT SHOULD A PROCESSOR OR RETAILER CONSIDER WHEN SELECTING A FLEXIBLE PACKAGING SOLUTION AND MAINTAINING A POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH THEIR CUSTOMER?

Some consumers do state a preference for packaging that can be recycled, but research shows that most are not willing to sacrifice food safety, food waste, or an increased price for the trade-off. While it’s important to take consumer preferences into consideration, the recycling system is highly complex, so it’s equally important to ensure consumers are properly informed about their choices. The strongest message you could provide to your customers is one that lets them know with certainty that the food they purchase is safe, and because it’s well protected, won’t waste food or the resources it took to get it to their table.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF FLEXIBLE PACKAGING SOLUTIONS LIKE CRYOVAC® BRAND FOOD PACKAGING?

CRYOVAC® brand food packaging solutions feature multi-layer, barrier plastics that offer the highest levels of food safety and pack integrity but with reduced thickness and plastic weight. These materials help extend shelf life and reduce food waste for all types of foods that include fresh red meat, seafood, poultry, and cheese. We also offer a range of CRYOVAC® brand food packaging equipment that can help automate the packaging process, providing consistency as well as further mitigating food safety risk by reducing manual product handling.

HOW CRYOVAC® BRAND PACKAGING SOLUTIONS BETTER PROTECT FOOD, YOUR CUSTOMERS, AND THE PLANET?

CRYOVAC® BRAND DARFRESH® VACUUM SKIN PACKAGING
- Extends shelf life of poultry 4X when compared to PVC stretch
- Doubles shelf-life of fresh proteins vs. tray/lid modified atmosphere packaging (MAP),
- Maintains colour of fresh meats which can reduce food waste by 50%
- Eliminates cross contamination during transport or on-shelf with leakproof seals.

CRYOVAC® BRAND OPTIDURE® BAGS
- Reduces plastic weight vs. thermoformable materials by up to 57%
- Improves food safety by hermetic sealing and barrier properties that prevent microbiological growth
- Improves pack appearance with excellent gloss, brightness, and transparency.

CRYOVAC® BRAND BDF® FILM
- Reduces plastic weight vs. standard market laminates by up to 60%
- 3X thinner and 1/3 lighter than alternative HFFS materials
- Highly flexible, printable film, strong enough not to need tray or any other support.

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