

Milk and Juice Carton Recycling

Milk and juice cartons are made from a material called liquid paperboard (LPB), which is constructed from cardboard with layers of plastic, and in the case of long-life products, a thin layer of aluminium foil. Cardboard makes up the largest proportion of these materials - about 88% of a Tetra Pak 1 litre fresh milk carton for example.

For more than 40 years LPB has been used to package a wide range of foods including milk, juices, cream, custard, sauces and soups.

Reducing waste

Milk and juice cartons are one of the few forms of packaging that have a high content of renewable raw material – cardboard. Cardboard is recyclable, biodegradable and made from a renewable resource. Cartons are also very resource efficient as a 1 litre container uses less than 30 grams of cardboard, and can contain many times its own weight in food. The most important thing with cartons, being made from recyclable and valuable resources, is that they don't end up in landfill.

Different types of cartons

Gable top cartons are made from a layer of cardboard sandwiched between two layers of very thin plastic. Some gable top cartons used for packaging fruit juice have an additional layer of foil and a third layer of plastic. These extra layers improve the shelf life and retain flavours.

Aseptic packages (Ultra High Temperature or long life packs) are a newer type of carton. They are made from five layers: three of plastic, one of foil and one of cardboard. The products in these cartons are heat treated before being packaged and, as the cartons fully seal the contents, they do not need to be refrigerated before use. This results in savings in energy during storage and transport.

Why recycle cartons?

When the cardboard inside cartons breaks down in landfill it creates methane, a greenhouse gas with a global warming



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Factsheet

There are two types of milk and juice cartons

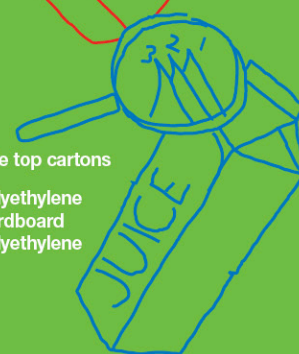
Aseptic bricks

- 1 Polyethylene
- 2 Aluminium foil
- 3 Polyethylene
- 4 Cardboard
- 5 Polyethylene



Gable top cartons

- 1 Polyethylene
- 2 Cardboard
- 3 Polyethylene



How do you recycle computers, corks, cartridges and cans?

For information on council services and drop-off locations in your area... visit



RecyclingNearYou
.com.au

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or call



RECYCLING HOTLINE
1300 733 712

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capacity 21 times more powerful than carbon dioxide. Recycling one kilogram of cardboard can save up to one kilogram of greenhouse gases from being created. The high quality wood fibres in milk and juice cartons are recycled into a wide range of products, including tissues, writing paper, and cardboard. Manufacturing cardboard products from recycled material, rather than virgin fibre, saves trees, reduces water (up to 99% less) and energy use (up to 50% less) and minimises chemical wastes by up to 90%.

How to recycle cartons

Although Australians use over 1 billion cartons each year, only about 1 in 5 get recycled at the moment despite recycling options being widely available. Most councils around the country now collect LPB products for recycling.

If your council doesn't collect LPB through your kerbside recycling service, it may be recyclable through your local Waste Transfer Station (tip) or through a local cardboard recycler. For more information about council services and drop-off locations in your local area, visit RecyclingNearYou.com.au or call the National Recycling Hotline (1300 733 712).

What happens to the cartons?

The most common way of recycling post-consumer LPB is by repulping in paper mills. Cartons are swirled around inside a vat of water, which helps to separate the cardboard from the plastic and aluminium.

The cardboard fibres absorb the water, making a thick slurry, while the plastic and aluminium components are then picked, scraped or sieved out of the mixture. From beginning to end, the process takes about 30 minutes, and most of the cardboard fibre is recovered.

More information

Tetra Pak (www.tetrapak.com/au/)

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