

What's Driving Food Packaging Innovation?

Inline Plastics shares how changing consumer expectations are leading to fresh takes on packaging.



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WHAT ARE SOME TOP-OF-MIND TRENDS YOU'RE SEEING IN THE WORLD OF FOOD PACKAGING?

There has been an increased emphasis on sustainability, such as reducing the carbon footprint and environmental impacts of packaging, leading to a high demand for reusable and recyclable packaging. To address these trends, companies in the industry have been developing new formulas to create recyclable and reusable packing. At Inline Plastics, the PET material used is third party certified as made with 10% post-consumer content.

Another trend we have been seeing is that as third-party delivery services continue to become more popular, tamper-protection technology and leak-resistant seals have become essential, as products are being transferred between more hands.

CAN YOU SHARE AN OVERALL SENSE OF HOW THE INCREASE IN DELIVERY IS CHANGING PACKAGING?

The rise in food delivery services motivated Inline Plastics to continue with innovation in the tamper protection field. With more people handling the food, consumers want to know that their food stays protected and safe from any contamination.

Inline Plastics packaging includes a tamper-evident and tamper-resistant tear strip so that consumers can be sure that, as long as the tear strip has not been torn, they are the first ones to open their food.

At the same time, delivery drivers want to keep their vehicles clean, so leak-resistant seals are more important than ever. Inline Plastics' leak-resistant shield is designed so that no excess liquids will escape the packaging.

Also, since food cools down during travel, many consumers will want to reheat their food once it arrives. With Inline Plastics Safe-T-Chef® products, which are designed for hot foods and are microwave-safe, consumers can reheat their food as much as they want with the option of resealing their package and saving the food for later.

IN WHAT OTHER WAYS ARE CONSUMER EXPECTATIONS AROUND FOOD PACKAGING CHANGING?

Consumer expectations around food packaging are changing every day, and Inline Plastics is continuously finding new innovations to meet those expectations. Rather than battling with plastic wrap, consumers look for convenience in packaging to save time, avoid a mess and have the ability to reseal for storage and transportation. Inline Plastics is consistently meeting these expectations by testing all products in their quality level of production

prior to release, ensuring the products are leak resistant, user-friendly for all and can hold their ideal weight.

Consumers like to buy with their eyes, so we also aim to meet consumer expectations with the packaging's appearance. With Inline Plastics' smooth walls and all-clear design, consumers do not have to guess what they are getting or take the time reading the labels, rather they can look at the packaging and know what is inside within seconds.

WHAT ARE SOME C-STORE TRENDS THAT HAVE INFLUENCED YOUR PACKAGING DESIGNS?

C-stores provide convenience to customers, and the further development of food packaging demonstrates that. Food packaging is evolving to make convenience even more convenient.

For example, Inline Plastics' recent additions to their Flip n' Mix trays offer consumers enhanced options of contents to go with their salads. Additionally, the various size and shape selections with the option of compartments provides consumers with both single-sized and family-sized portions, granting them the option to share (or to not!).

The trends that led to the creation of Inline's Safe-T-Fresh 7" round package are centered around consumer preferences and industry demands for convenience and variety.

Following the initial launch of our Safe-T-Fresh 4" round package, there was high demand for a range of sizes. Retailers and consumers alike enjoy uniformity for two reasons: It looks better when the packaging is consistent, and packages are better able to stack when they are the same shape and build. By having a family with size options, retailers can expand their use of Inline Plastic products for different contents to make their packaging more efficient. **C**