

# FOOD PACKAGING TRENDS – GERMANY – 2021

Despite COVID-19, there is still culpability regarding unsustainable and excess packaging. Sustainability is, and remains, a key factor in food and drink packaging.



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# Report Content

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Key issues covered in this Report

- COVID-19's impact on food packaging trends and German consumer behaviour
- Mintel's perspective

### Impact of COVID-19 on food packaging trends

- Increased demand for packaging in food and drink due to COVID-19

### Market context

- Sustainability is becoming increasingly important
- Impact of COVID-19 on food packaging trends
  - Graph 1: selected behaviours regarding food packaging, December 2020

### Mintel predicts

- The focus is on sustainability
  - Graph 2: switched to brands with more sustainable food packaging in the last year, December 2020
- Number of single-person households is on the rise
  - Graph 3: number of one-person households, 1991-2031
- As the population ages, packaging requirements arise
  - Graph 4: population by age group, 2014-24

### What consumers want and why

- Consumers want: sustainable packaging materials
- Consumers want: packaging that keeps food fresh for longer
- Consumers want: smart technology connected to packaging
  - Graph 5: appeal of packaging innovations, April 2020

### Opportunities

- Sustainable packaging innovations and solutions are crucial
- Guide and encourage consumers when it comes to packaging disposal
- Introduce a rating system for packaging
- Quick download resources

## MARKET DRIVERS

- Ongoing lockdown
- The impact of COVID-19 on the German economy

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- Graph 6: key economic data, in real terms, 2019-2022
- Growing importance of sustainability
- Increasing number of single-person households
  - Graph 7: number of one-person households, 1991-2031
- Ageing population means certain demands for packaging
  - Graph 8: population by age group, 2014-24
- Brexit: some disruption for German trade will be inevitable

## WHAT CONSUMERS WANT AND WHY

### Impact of COVID-19 on consumer behaviour

- Hygiene will be important until the COVID-19 pandemic is over
  - Graph 9: selected behaviours regarding food packaging, December 2020
- Retailers trialling packaging-free aisles
- Spotlight on hygiene could reduce the interest in packaging-free aisles
- Consumers are reluctant to spend time in stores
  - Graph 10: changes in shopping habits since the start of the COVID-19, March 2021

### Most important factors regarding food packaging

- Recyclability is the most important factor regarding food packaging
  - Graph 11: most important factors regarding food packaging, December 2020
- Focus on recyclability
- More sustainable packaging will become the norm
- Uncertainties regarding compostable packaging
- Solve confusion about compostable packaging
- Ease of opening more important to older population
  - Graph 12: behaviours regarding food packaging – 'I often find food packaging hard to open', December 2020

### Attitudes towards food packaging

- Strong perception that a lot of packaging is unnecessary
  - Graph 13: attitudes towards food packaging, December 2020
- Packaging needs to keep food fresh for longer
- Explain the role of packaging for the safety and freshness of food and drink

### Behaviours regarding food packaging

- Fruit and vegetables a major focus for plastic reduction
  - Graph 14: behaviours regarding food packaging, December 2020
- Unpackaged foods and sustainable brands appeal
  - Graph 15: further behaviours regarding food and drink packaging, December 2020

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- Germans prefer to buy loose fruit/vegetables rather than packaged ones
- Sustainability is set to be a key driver in food and drink packaging
- Spell out the green packaging credentials
- Explain to consumers the efforts to improve packaging in terms of environmental friendliness
- 1 in 5 Germans are interested in smart technology connected to packaging
- Young consumers show significant interest in packaging technology innovations
  - Graph 16: appeal of packaging innovations, April 2020

## Factors most concerned about regarding food packaging

- Ocean plastic is people's biggest concern...
  - Graph 17: factors consumers are most concerned about regarding food packaging, December 2020
- Waste ending up in the sea
- Encourage consumers to dispose of packaging the right way
- CO2 emission is a great concern among younger consumers especially
  - Graph 18: concern about CO2 emission, by age, December 2020
- Brands highlight the carbon footprint of products
- CO2 emissions could be a basis for a rating system for packaging
  - Graph 19: interest in certain sustainability concepts, April 2020

## LAUNCH ACTIVITY AND INNOVATION

- Plastic still the dominant packaging material
  - Graph 20: launches of food and drink, by top 10 package material, 2016 vs 2020
- Environmentally friendly packaging claims on the rise
  - Graph 21: launches of food and drink products, by environmentally friendly packaging claims, 2016 vs 2020
- New packaging accounts for a quarter of launches in 2020
  - Graph 22: launches of food and drink, by type, 2016 vs 2020
- Sustainable ways to replace reliance on plastic
- Brands entering the compostable space
- On-pack carbon claims come in many forms
- Turn old plastic into new
- Reuse of packaging
- Convenience claims
- Give more guidance on ways to use the packaging
- Innovations – self-heating

## Advertising and marketing activity

- Enjoy longer and reduce food waste
- 100% CO2 neutral

## APPENDIX

### Appendix – products covered, abbreviations, consumer research methodology and language usage

- Abbreviations
- Consumer research methodology
- A note on language

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