

SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING

THE BEGINNING OF A LONG DISCUSSION

The Pros and Cons of Alternatives

Regional School District No. 18

November 2019

CURRENT PROGRAM

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

- Re-usable hard, plastic trays for daily service
- Polystyrene (not Styrofoam) Foam trays in emergencies
- Plastic utensils
- Paper Napkins
- Plastic straws are available upon request

SECONDARY SCHOOLS

- Waxed paper “Boats” for entrees and side dishes
- Plastic utensils
- Paper Napkins
- Plastic straws are available upon request

*Question – what happens to any item once it is discarded?
Is it incinerated? Recycled? Composted? Buried in a landfill?*

SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING

WHAT ARE THE ALTERNATIVES?

Food and beverage packaging alternatives

- Polystyrene – non foamed products
- Paper and molded fiber products
- Bio-based, compostable plastics
- Aluminum Products
- Glass
- Re-usable ceramic, glass and plastic items

There is no easy answer!

HOW TO ASSESS THE ALTERNATIVES?

WHAT IS THE PROBLEM WE ARE TRYING TO SOLVE?

- Preference not to use any “Styrene” products?
- Overall Litter and marine debris?
- Increase recycling?
- Increase diversion?
- Protect public health?
- **Reduce Environmental Impacts?** *Acidification, carcinogens, ecotoxicity, eutrophication, global warming, other pollutants, ozone depletion, respiratory effects, smog, fossil fuel depletion, Global Water Footprint or Reduce Carbon Footprint*
- **Promote Green Design?** *Waste prevention, material efficiency, avoid hazardous material, maximize energy efficiency, use renewable resources, design for recycle or to use local resources*

QUICK ENVIRONMENTAL QUIZ

How many cups of water
does it take to brew a single
cup of coffee?

QUICK ENVIRONMENTAL QUIZ

How many cups of water
does it take to brew a single
cup of coffee?

Answer: Over 240 cups of water

- From irrigation on the coffee plantation to processing the beans and then brewing your single cup of morning coffee
- Now consider the fertilizers and pesticides used...
- Now consider the type of cup you are using: paper, ceramic or foam?
- Now consider how far that coffee bean traveled using fossil fuels...
- Now consider the electricity used to roast the bean and then brew this single cup of coffee.

SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING DEFINITIONS

- Is beneficial, safe and healthy for individuals & communities throughout its life cycle;
- Meets market criteria for performance and cost;
- Is capable of being produced indefinitely by the planet;
- Is sourced, manufactured, transported and recycled using renewable energy;
- Maximizes the use of renewable or recycle source materials;
- Is manufactured using clean production technologies and best practices;
- Is made from material healthy in all probably end of life scenarios;
- Is physically designed to optimize materials and energy;
- Is effectively recovered and utilized in biological and/or industrial cradle to cradle cycles

ARE YOU CONFUSED?



Huh? Just tell me which package is better!

WE RECOMMEND A FOCUS GROUP

A focus group can review all categories of sustainable alternatives and develop the preferred program.