

PACKAGING GUIDE  
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**2020**

**DAGSAM**

**PACKAGING GUIDE**



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# The purpose of this guide

The packaging guide is produced by a working group under DagSam – the Grocery Industry's Cooperation Committee. The working group has been attended by representatives from: MLDK Mærkevareleverandørerne, ALDI, Coop, Dagrofa, REMA 1000, Salling Group, Arla Foods, Unilever and Reckitt Benckiser.

The purpose of this packaging guide is to provide primarily the suppliers, who supply goods to the Danish grocery retailer, with an overall overview of which packaging materials and designs the retailers ideally prefer. The guide is thus a statement of intent from the entire Danish grocery industry.

The guide outlines the desired direction from the industry in relation to the choice and design of packaging, but it is not a fact list.

The focus is on shelf-ready packaging (primary packaging) for both food and non-food.

The choice of packaging and design should always be based on a specific assessment of the individual product's packaging needs compared to the environmental impact and cost of the packaging solution.

The guide is purposely kept at a general level. If you would like a more in-depth understanding, reference can be made to more industry-specific guidelines such as Plastindustriens with respect to plastic packaging.

It is also possible to find individual guides prepared by members of DagSam. Those guides will all adhere to the guidelines mentioned in this guide. Adherence to this guide is a necessity, but not sufficient to be accepted in all retail chains.



# The purpose of packaging

## THE PRIMARY AIM OF PACKAGING

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The primary function of packaging is to protect the product.

The right packaging helps to minimize food and product waste. For example, through a design that makes the packaging easy to empty.

Packaging plays an important role in relation to product security as the packaging constitutes a barrier to the product, and as the packaging reveals whether the product has been opened or not.

The packaging also serves to maintain the quality of the product throughout the life of the products.

Finally, the packaging also serves the purpose to contain statutory information, markings, traceability, sorting instructions, instructions for use and other information.

## CONSIDERATION MUST BE GIVEN

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Some products are deliberately packaged in very large packages to prevent shoplifting. This can be a useful solution, but it should be considered whether it is possible to minimize shoplifting in other ways.

It is important when choosing a packaging solution that emphasis is also placed on ensuring optimal handling of the production in the value chain.





# Packaging guidelines

1

The packaging must be **minimized**

2

The packaging must be **designed to be recycled or reused**

3

The packaging must be made of **recycled material** when possible

4

The **total environmental impact** of the packaging must be reduced as much as possible

# 1

## The packaging must be **minimized**

**FIRSTLY, IT MUST BE CONSIDERED WHETHER THERE IS A NEED FOR PACKAGING AT ALL FOR THE GIVEN PRODUCT. THIS SEEN FROM A PRINCIPLE OF USING LESS PACKAGING AS POSSIBLE. HOWEVER, A MINIMUM OF PACKAGING MUST NEVER COMPROMISE PRODUCT SAFETY, SHELF LIFE OR QUALITY.**

### **PACKAGING IS NECESSARY WHEN:**

- The shelf life of the products is significantly extended.
- There is a need to protect the product.
- Legislation and product safety require it.

### **WHEN PACKAGING IS NECESSARY YOU MUST CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:**

- Are some parts of the packaging expendable?
- Can the weight of the packaging be reduced and/ or can the degree of filling be increased?
- Packaging must be minimized with regards to the total environmental impact including food and product waste.
- The design of the product must be considered so that the packaging is minimized, e.g. through concentration of the product.





# 2

## The packaging must be designed to be recycled or reused

**AS POINT OF DEPARTURE PACKAGING MUST BE DESIGNED FOR THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY. THEREFORE, ALL FUTURE PACKAGING MUST BE DESIGNED TO BE RECYCLED OR REUSED. AIM TO DESIGN PACKAGING THAT COULD BE REUSED OR RECYCLED FOR THE SAME TYPE OF PRODUCT.**

- Consider whether the product is suitable for a packaging recycling solution (refill, industrial washing and reuse of packaging).
- Use mono-materials as much as possible so that the packaging is kept in clean fractions.
- Where mono-materials are not possible to use, easy separation of the packaging must be ensured so that the materials can be divided into pure fractions.
- When designing a label, you must consider the material, glue, size, print and the possibility of separation at the consumer or at the recycling depot.
- Minimize the use of print and coloring. The less color the more recyclable the materials (particularly essential for plastic).
- When plastic is used for packaging, the types should as far as possible be limited to PET, PE and PP.
- Design the packaging so that it is easy for the consumer to empty the packaging.
- Guide the consumer on how the given packaging should be sorted for recycling or submitted for reuse.

Today, a number of packaging types are used for groceries which, based on a desire for all packaging to be recyclable, are not optimal. It can be different laminates or laminated cardboard packaging used to ensure environmental considerations and barrier properties, but where it is not possible with current reprocessing technologies or collection systems to ensure recycling. It should still be possible to use those types of packaging, but it is important to seek technological solutions that in a future system can enable recycling.



# 4

## The total environmental impact of the packaging must be reduced as much as possible

- The production and disposal of packaging materials is a source of environmental impact and particularly of greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, you should choose those packaging solutions that cause the least environmental impact and greenhouse gas emissions. LCA-calculations are a good indicator of the right solutions.
- Bio-based materials may be the solution if they can be included in an established waste stream for reuse. Examples are cardboard, paper, wood or bio-based plastic variants of PET, PE and PP.
- Bio-based materials bind greenhouse gas during cultivation, but are dependent on resources such as land, water and fertilizer. A resource-efficient source must be used for the packaging material and ensure that it is manufactured according to recognized certifications for responsible sourcing.
- At present, biodegradable plastic cannot be included in an existing waste stream and will not be accepted. Biodegradable plastic can only be introduced when it can be included in an existing national waste stream.
- Fossil-made virgin materials may in some cases be the only alternatives.





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