

## Reducing Packaging Waste

### Why we care

Grabbing a pre-packaged lunch can be a time-saver, but what about the packaging? Almost one-third of solid waste in the US is made up of packaging, and the packaging industry continues to grow. Much of this waste is single-use plastic, which is likely to remain in the environment longer than we do. Or if it becomes litter, it could be carried by the wind to waterways and make its way to the ocean contributing to a mass of plastic debris. Many food items now come in mixed materials like resin-impregnated paper (deli boxes and frozen-food cartons) or plastic-aluminum (candy, snack bars, and chips).

### Simple, positive steps

- Reduce packaging.
  - Buy in bulk and bring your own containers.
  - Avoid foods in single-serving packages, like yogurt and applesauce.
  - Avoid over packaged items, such as lunchables and snack packs.
  - Carry your own [containers](#) and [utensils](#) for take-out meals or use [Go Box](#).
  - Purchase from local brick-and-mortar store rather than on-line.
- Choose only recyclable packaging.
  - Shop at stores where you can avoid non-recyclable plastic, such as clam shells, boxes, blister packs, foam meat trays, and frozen food bags.
  - Avoid mixed-material packages, such as potato chip bags, juice pouches, and frozen food boxes.
- Recycle the rest.
  - Plastic jugs, bottles, tubs, buckets, and plant pots go into your curbside container—no other plastics!
  - Take acceptable [plastic bags](#) to a [participating grocery store](#).
  - Take foam peanuts to a mail service store and block foam to [Agilyx](#) or [Flair Plastics](#).

**Questions or feedback? Contact Jeanne Roy at [jeanne@earthleaders.org](mailto:jeanne@earthleaders.org).**