

Research insights of **consumer perceptions** of the **role of packaging** in **minimising food waste**

WHAT IS THE FOOD WASTE PROBLEM?

THE BASELINE



34%
of all food waste in Australia is consumer food waste

THE IMPACT



92%
of this waste ends up in landfill

We present what we know so far from the consolidation of insights from a baseline industry report, journey mapping food decision making with 39 households, and an online survey of existing perceptions of packaging with 1000 consumers.

CAUSES OF FOOD WASTE IN THE HOUSEHOLD



poor purchasing habits



package sizes do not match consumer needs



confusion over labels



58%
of consumers understand the term 'best before' or 'use by'



poor storage



limited storage space in refrigerators and freezers



inappropriate storage



confusion over best storage option once package is opened

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE CONSUMER?

There are examples that consumer perceptions can change rapidly amidst shifting social views such as increased environmental awareness and a desire to make a meaningful impact.



different portion sizes for different households



singles on the rise

Consumer top 4 food issues



price of food



quality of food



taste of food



shelf life of fresh food

Food waste is a lower priority. Focusing upon top consumer priorities provide packaging opportunities.

While shopping



40%
'purchase foods in packaging that suits my needs' on most trips



32%
'look for packaging that is recyclable' on most trips

HOW DO CONSUMERS PERCEIVE PACKAGING?



packaging a "necessary evil" necessity for protection, assistance of handling and communication



53% are 'extremely' and 'very concerned' about the general amount of packaging



72% are concerned about food packaging waste



55% are 'extremely' and 'very concerned' about the amount of plastic packaging material



64% agree with the statement "packaging is not required for fresh food"



42% agree with the statement "packaging helps reduce food waste"

INCONSISTENCIES

Consumers have a varied understanding of the relationship between food waste and packaging, as well as varied values and opinions when it comes to packaging on food. Intuitive packaging design can reduce food waste simply by removing the ambiguity and decision making from the customer shopping experience.

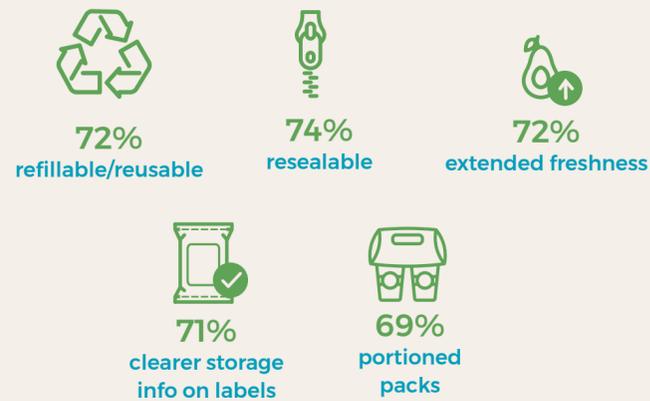
- Food waste is recognised as an issue, but consumers also do not think they waste food

- The **cost of food** is the #1 priority of consumers but also **82% are currently not active** in promoting of strategizing ways to reduce their household food waste

- Those **anti-plastic consumers** commonly purchased fruit and vegetables in plastic packaging

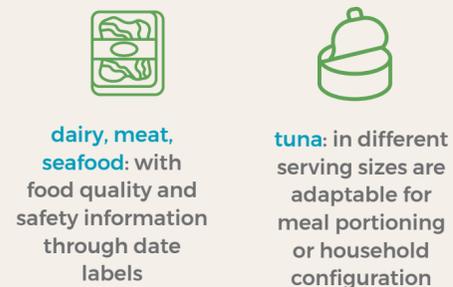
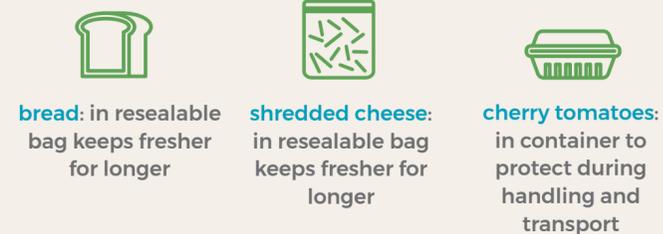
- **58% prefer to eat the freshest food possible** so they don't eat leftovers

PACKAGING FEATURES IDENTIFIED BY CONSUMERS TO REDUCE FOOD WASTE



Packaging examples

Examples of packaging deemed necessary by consumers

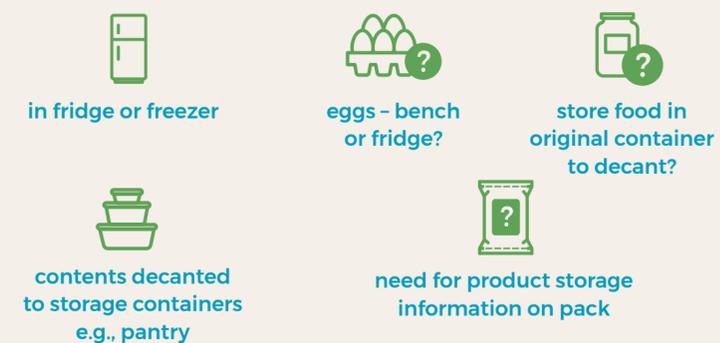


CONSIDERATIONS FOR PACKAGING DESIGN

What consumers do with packaged food?



FOOD STORAGE CONSIDERATIONS



OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDUSTRY TO MEET CUSTOMER NEEDS

- **Understand** household demographics and needs and align serving sizes of packaging and product combinations

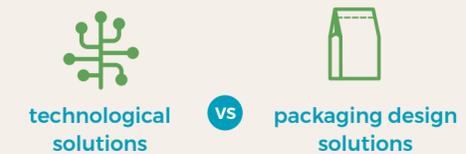
- **Understand** how packaging is actually used by consumers
- **Ensure** appropriate packaging design functions are included

- **Increase** on-pack communication and consumer knowledge about how long various foods last and how to store correctly

- **Adapt** packaging design for home storage with trade off between price, quality and durability of packaging

Intuitive packaging design

ON-PACK COMMUNICATION



SAVE FOOD PACKAGING SOLUTIONS

- 1 packaging protects food and prolongs shelf life
- 2 portion sizes for different household sizes
- 3 communicates the best way to use and store food
- 4 date labels for best management
- 5 slows the degradation of minimally processed fruits and vegetables

COLLECTIVE RESPONSE



There is a need for practical solutions, supporting policy and consumer education about the role of packaging in reducing food waste, which should be undertaken as a partnership between researchers, industry, and government, drawing together the expertise of these different stakeholders.