



SEV-REND®



# THE 2025 SUSTAINABLE FOOD PACKAGING GUIDE FOR U.S. PACKERS

Flexible packaging for produce, steamables, frozen, pet, and beyond.



If you're in the food packing industry, it's likely that sustainability is part of your strategy for 2025. With retailer requirements and new legislation, the pressure is on to adapt packaging. Meeting these regulations without compromising productivity or your bottom line is easier said than done.

Many materials meant to address these challenges don't translate to production. You might find yourself asking:

*“Are there viable sustainable packaging solutions that meet the 2025 retailer requirements and regulations?”*

To help you navigate the changing packaging landscape and find materials that work for your commodity, we created this clear, practical guide.

## IN THIS GUIDE

### PART 1

2025 U.S. Retailer Guidelines and EPR Legislation

### PART 2

Available Materials — What's Available vs. What's Viable

### PART 3

Staying Ahead of the Curve with Strategic Partnerships



SEV-REND®

PART 1

# 2025 Retailer Guidelines and EPR Legislation



SEV-REND®

## U.S. Retailer Requirements

Retailers are the primary drivers of sustainability in packaging today. They set guidelines that packers must meet to maintain a spot on the shelves. These guidelines are focused on reducing environmental impact, which means incorporating higher percentages of recycled content and reducing the use of virgin plastics.

Retailers like Walmart and Loblaws have already set ambitious sustainability goals for their suppliers. Walmart, for example, aims to achieve 100% recyclable, reusable, or industrially compostable packaging by 2025.



### Most Major Retailers

- ☑ 20% PCR content
- ☑ 15% Reduction in virgin plastic
- ☑ Must be able to tell the end of life story

### Walmart

- ☑ 100% recyclable or industrially compostable packaging by 2025

20% Post-Consumer Recycled (PCR) Content: This means that at least 20% of the packaging materials must be sourced from recycled products. PCR content reduces the demand for virgin materials and helps close the recycling loop.

15% Reduction in Virgin Plastic: Manufacturers must reduce their use of new, non-recycled plastic by 15%. This reduction helps decrease the overall environmental footprint of packaging and encourages the use of recycled materials.

Clear End-of-Life Story: Packaging must have a defined end-of-life process. This could mean that the packaging is recyclable, compostable, or has a specific disposal method supported by existing infrastructure.

**These guidelines are not just about meeting retailer demands;** they are about positioning your brand as a leader in sustainability. Brands that can meet or exceed these requirements will have a competitive advantage in the marketplace.

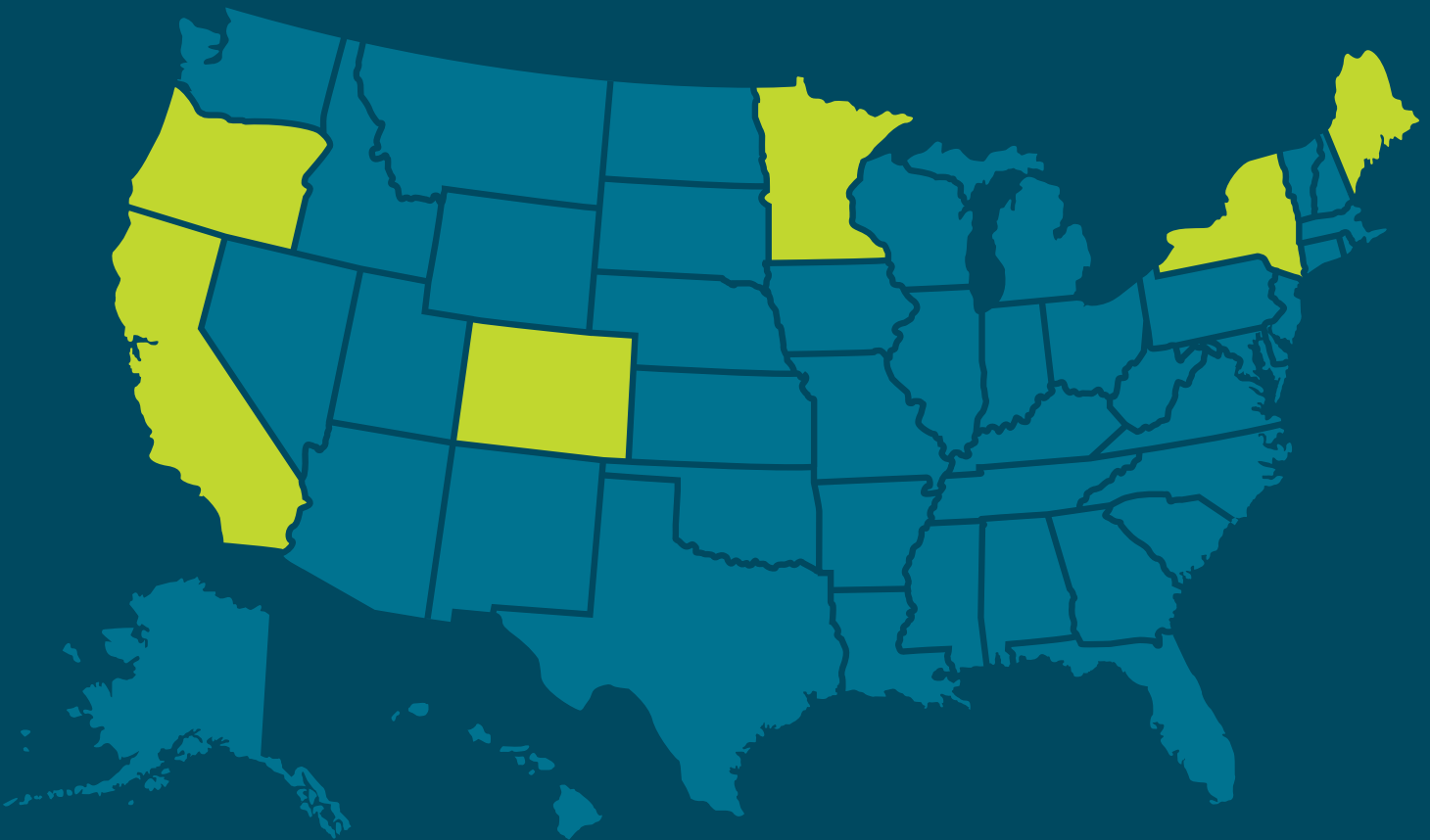


## EPR Legislation

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) is a policy approach that makes producers responsible for the entire lifecycle of their products, including post-consumer waste management. This means that manufacturers must design their products with the end of life in mind, ensuring they can be easily recycled, composted, or otherwise sustainably disposed of.

States with EPR bills mandate that producers or retailers pay into a Producer Responsibility Organization (a PRO) to build the infrastructure that's required for higher recycling rates and improved outcomes in landfills.

## States with EPR Bills



To learn more, check out this video on [EPR legislation](#).



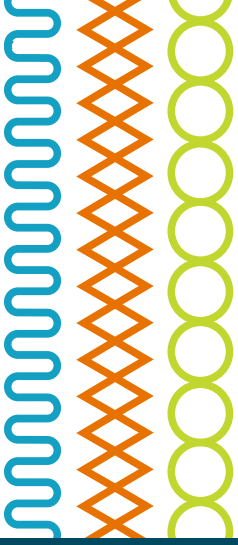
SEV-REND®

## PART 2

# Available Materials: What's Available vs. What's Viable



SEV-REND®



## Finding The Business Case for Sustainable Packaging

Beyond regulatory compliance, sustainability has significant value to companies. It's a practice that many are starting to use to demonstrate commitment and to build brand loyalty among younger consumers.

It's important to look at your material options through a critical lens. There are many materials that have a good end of life result but aren't getting implemented. The cost to adopt, packing speeds in current equipment, and availability all are part of the business case that needs to be met.

### Top Questions to Help Find Viable Packaging Materials for Your Commodity






- **Can the material be sourced quickly and in high enough quantities for my operation?**  
Limited supply and distant locations create supply chain risks and challenges to scale. It's essential that packaging is consistent and repeatable which starts with the materials.
- **Does the cost of the packaging add more than 3% to the wholesale cost of the filled pack?**  
Our data shows that consumers are only willing to pay a 3% increase for packaging-related sustainability. If the packaging exceeds that 3% threshold, your company needs to be prepared to absorb that cost.
- **Is the packaging drop-in ready?**  
The #1 challenge packers run into when implementing new packaging is that it slows down production. Testing the new material in your operation before purchasing is important.
- **Is there existing end-of-life infrastructure?**  
Of the 5000 U.S. compost facilities accepting yard trimmings and food waste, less than 15% accept compostable packaging. EPR regulations will soon require more funding to build composting infrastructure from the ground up with targets for increased rates by 2032.
- **Does it meet or exceed 2025 requirements for major retailers?**  
If you don't reduce your use of virgin plastic by at least 15%, you risk losing your spot on the shelf to someone who does. This requirement applies to all the major retailers such as Walmart, Lolbaws, and beyond.

## Viable Materials for Today's Business Needs

**Cellulose Compostables** —————> These materials have yet to produce a strong business case because of the high cost, seal challenges, and run speeds.

**Some Degradables Partial PCR** —————> Transitional materials offer improvement over conventional packaging at a price that consumers will repeat buy. The best materials are drop-in ready and maintain current production speeds.

## The Full Packaging Breakdown

	Available Materials				
	Conventional	PCR	Laser Branding	Compostable	Biodegradable/Degradable
<b>Examples</b>	PET/CPET LDPE HDPE (100% virgin)	pcr-ABLE PET/CPET LDPE HDPE (20-100% recycled content)	Eliminates packaging	Specialty cellulose Recycled food waste	bio-ABLE PLA Starch-based plastics
<b>Cost</b>	\$	\$\$	\$\$	\$\$\$	\$\$\$
<b>Compatibility</b>	Produce Steamables Frozen Pet	Produce Steamables Frozen Pet	Limited to thick-skinned fruits	Produce	Produce Steamables
<b>Requires Special Equipment</b>	No	No	Yes	Sometimes (depends on the packaging manufacturer)	Sometimes (depends on the packaging manufacturer)
<b>Is it drop-in ready?</b>	Yes	Yes	No	Sometimes (depends on the packaging manufacturer)	Sometimes (depends on the packaging manufacturer)
<b>End-of-Life Infrastructure</b>	Like material laminants recyclable	Like material laminants recyclable	n/a	Limited commercial recycling infrastructure in place	n/a
<b>Environmental Friendliness</b>					
<b>Meets 2025 Retail Requirements</b>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	
<b>Considerations</b>	Cheap, and only getting cheaper	Least additional cost of sustainable solutions	Still in an early concept with limited applications.	Wide variety of materials on the market. To limit supply chain risk, look for one that can be readily sourced from North America.	Clarity Oxo-degradable plastics like PLA are banned in the EU

## Finally, Some Real Sustainable Options

At Sev-Rend, we don't just make sustainable products; we create real packaging solutions that work for business. Our produce bags and films are made with readily sourced and reasonably priced materials to help produce distributors meet retailers' sustainability requirements. With each product, we offer the choice of two materials — pcr-ABLE™ and bio-ABLE™.

### Product Types



Net Bag



Pouch Bag



Lidding Film

### Material Options



Contains up to 60% post consumer recycled material to meet 2025 retailer minimums in recycled packaging materials.



Material that begins breaking down into zero microplastics within 24 months after disposal.

[Learn more about bio-ABLE.](#)

### Retailer Sustainability Goals We Meet

We're continuously innovating to help you meet the changing requirements of the retailers you supply.



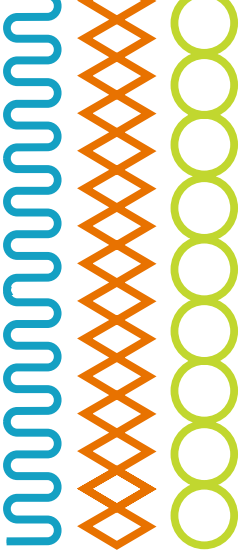


**PART 3**

# Staying Ahead of the Sustainability Curve



SEV-REND®



## Rising to the Sustainability Challenge

The biggest challenge among producers and packers today is multifaceted. Companies that are able to quickly adapt in today's landscape will ultimately rise to the top. This requires:

- ☑ The ability to navigate current sustainability regulations;
- ☑ Anticipate and prepare for new requirements coming down the pipeline;
- ☑ Find packaging solutions that meet these requirements without sacrificing the company's bottom line

## The Importance of Strategic Partnerships

Navigating the complexities of sustainable packaging requires collaboration. Partnering with the right packaging providers, material suppliers, and recycling companies is crucial. Look for partners who share your commitment to sustainability and can provide innovative solutions that meet your needs help you remain adaptable in the sustainability landscape.

## Beyond the Packaging

When you partner with Sev-Rend, we go beyond innovative packaging to help become a leading voice in your category. We work with companies of all sizes to create sustainability roadmaps and deliver a high-value sustainability narrative to retailers and end consumers through data and marketing.



### More About Sev-Rend

Learn more about our sustainable packaging.  
[sev-rend.com/sustainability](https://sev-rend.com/sustainability)

### Test Our Packaging on Your Equipment for Free

Request pcr-ABLE or bio-ABLE packaging samples—available in net, pouch, and film.  
[sev-rend.com/try-us](https://sev-rend.com/try-us)

