

Finnish Packaging Industry – Circular and Sustainable

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Suggested Topics:

1. Building a Sustainable Circular Economy for Materials & Products
2. Design for Remanufacturing & Recycling for the Circular Economy

Abstract

Finland, committed to carbon neutrality by 2035, is the first country to create a *National Road Map to a Circular Economy* (2016–2025). For Finland, a circular bioeconomy is a tool for achieving sustainable development, combatting climate change, saving natural resources, and improving the state of the environment, while generating economic growth and jobs. The circular economy is estimated to contribute annually at least three billion Euros to the Finnish economy by 2030. The government passed a new resolution (2021), a *Circular Economy Programme*, setting targets to curb overconsumption of natural resources. The *Programme* will decrease use of non-renewable natural resources, increase sustainable use of renewable natural resources, double resource productivity and circular material rate with goals for 2035 uses not to exceed 2015 levels.

As part of the *Programme*, key ministries develop economic incentives that promote the sparing use of natural resources, reduction of carbon dioxide emissions, and wider adoption of circular economy service models. Examples include an increase in the waste tax on landfilled waste of 70 to EUR 80 per tonne, an earmarked 110 million EUR for Research, Development and Innovation in the industry's recycling and reuse development, and the development of a national network of expertise that supports the work of corporate, municipal, and regional ecosystems promoting a circular economy society.

Finland's packaging industry is integral to achieving the goals of the *Programme* and is creating sustainable packaging designed for traceability and recyclability. Their cutting-edge technology uses non-fossil fuel-based materials, renewable and recycled materials, digital markings for traceability, and designs that ensure recyclability of packaging and compostability, and is powered with 50% and more of renewable energy.

Cajo Technologies and Huhtamaki are two companies that exemplify how Finnish packaging firms practice circularity, sustainability, and production efficiency, moving the industry forward in Finland and worldwide. Cajo Technologies' laser technology reduces the carbon footprint by 90% for industrial packaging, providing full traceability throughout the entire supply chain and eliminating the need for additives and chemicals, printing device and labels. Huhtamaki, manufacturing a vast line of sustainable fiber-based packaging across multiple industries, also produces a line of cups, plates and bowls made from 50% recycled plastic, are BPI-Certified and TUV HOME compostable. In this presentation we will explore the ecosystem in Finland that promotes the development and best practices of sustainable packaging and its positive influence on the worldwide industry.