

2024

Buying Green
Report

Refill and reuse: A Buying Green spotlight

TRIVIUM
PACKAGING



Rethinking recyclable packaging

The world has a waste problem.

To combat this waste, we must look for better ways to preserve our products promote our brands and protect our planet.

This includes understanding the properties of the materials we use for our packaging – and the reality of their recycling journey.

For example, despite the recyclability of some plastics, only a small amount actually gets recycled.¹

[View the 'Protect, Promote, Preserve' whitepaper](#)



Did you know?

In Europe, around half of all collected recyclable plastic is exported overseas due lack of capacity. The bulk of plastic ends up in landfill, incinerated, or leaking into the environment.¹

6.3bn

metric tonnes of plastic waste are currently in landfill¹

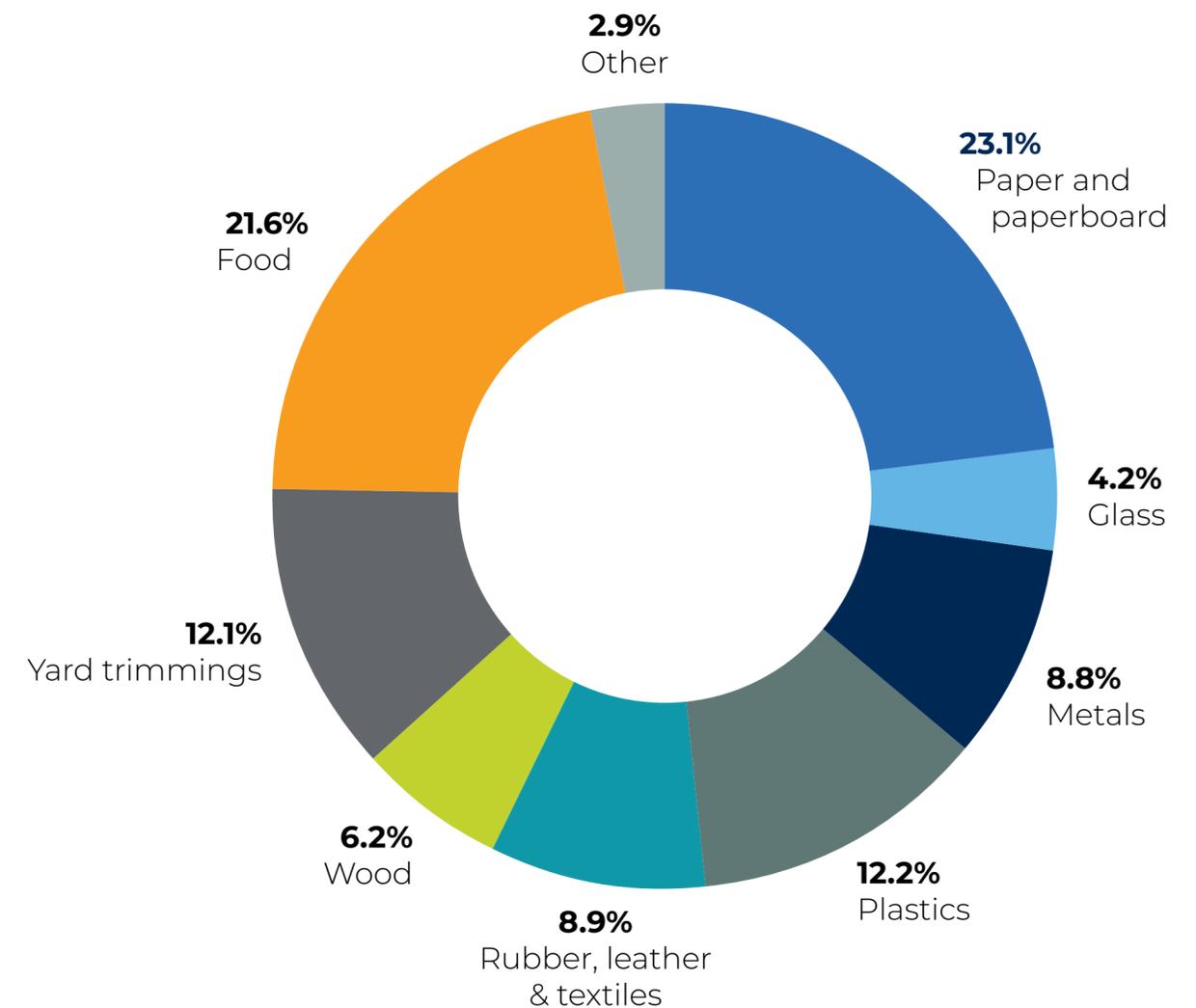
9%

of plastics have been recycled since the 1950s¹

50%

chance of plastics being recycled once disposed of¹

Total Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) generation by material (in the US).²



Recyclability vs Circularity

Plastic recycling has long posed challenges. Unlike glass and metal, plastic cannot be repeatedly recycled without degrading in quality.³

The total bottle recycling rate for 2020 was **27.2%**, down from **28.7%** in 2019. Every hour, **2.5 million** plastic bottles are thrown away in the U.S. Between **75** and **199 million** tons of plastic are currently in our oceans. Plastic bottles take upwards of **450 years** to degrade.³

Infinitely recyclable packaging is vital for achieving true circularity and preserving our planet. What's more, if packaging is designed to be refillable and reusable, it can be kept out of the recycling process for as long as possible. That's why the EU Commission's Waste Hierarchy shows reuse to be better than recycling.

[View the 'Waste Framework Directive'](#)

Two types of refill packaging:



1 A multi-use refillable container

This can be washed, refilled and reused repeatedly, until it's eventually presented for recycling.



2 A single-use package holding the refill product

This refills the original container and can thereafter be collected for recycling.



If both types of packaging are made out of infinitely recyclable materials, the materials can remain in the loop forever, even after it's first intended purpose.

“Recycling is good, refilling is better”

Those are the words embossed on Faith in Nature's 400ml bottles.

The sustainable beauty company – the first in the world to appoint Nature as a Director on its Board – has been championing refill products since it launched in the 1970s, recognising the ongoing challenges customers face:

“The same piece of packaging can be recycled in some locations but not in others. Currently – across the UK and the EU – it's very easy for the wrong material to end up in the wrong waste stream, contaminating that waste stream and making it harder to recycle. It's absolutely right that more companies are trying to find ways to design packaging with a circular economy in mind – making it easier to reuse, refill, mend or componentize for remanufacture.

The one thing that is common to all our customers is a shared mindset to live a more environmentally aware lifestyle.

Some are very 'dark green' for whom our naked solid products (which have a very low carbon footprint, low water content and no packaging) are perfect, others are 'light green' and might just be starting to learn about the benefits of natural toiletries to people and planet. We try to meet all of our customers wherever they are in their green journey, whilst always trying to move our lighter green customers into darker green territory.”

Laura Ford,
Sustainability Director, Faith In Nature

Consumers want to refill and reuse

Trivium's **Buying Green Report** shows that consumers are increasingly looking for packaging that can be refilled and reused.⁴

This growing trend marks a shift from a culture of disposability to one of sustainability. If sustainability matters to buyers, it should also matter to brands.

Consumer insights from around the world:

- Europe has the highest engagement with reusable practices: **77%**⁴
- Poland leads the way with **88%** adopting reusable activities⁴
- South America is the region that most aligns with values and behaviours around sustainable packaging. **85%** of consumers surveyed would be interested in buying refillable packaging.⁴



71%

of consumers engage in reusing activities, including the use of reusable shopping bags and refillable bottles and containers.⁴



80%

of consumers agree or strongly agree they would be interested in buying products that come in refillable packaging to reduce their environmental impact.⁴



Refillable/
Reusable

is the sustainability claim most likely to influence a buying decision – even more than 'recyclable'.⁴



79%

of consumers are actively looking for sustainable packaging.⁴



82%

of consumers would be willing to pay more for sustainable products (increasing to **90%** among younger consumers (18-24-year-olds)).⁴

“People know that single-use is bad and that packaging needs to be designed using circular materials. They want the opportunity to do something about it.”

Stuart Chidley,
Co-founder of Beauty Kitchen & RePosit

Reap the rewards of metal

Metal packaging is a great option for refillable and reusable packaging:

- **Strong, shatterproof and lightweight** – perfect for reusing multiple times
- **Premium look and feel** – matching the slightly higher price point (but reuse saves money in the long-run)
- **Protects against light and oxidation** – suitable for all kinds of perishable products, significantly cutting down on waste
- **Takes direct printing** – impactful design and no need for hard-to-recycle labelling

When it's time to dispose of the container, aluminium is:

- **Infinitely recyclable** – when discarded, it can be recycled endlessly, ensuring circularity with no loss of quality.
- **Easily recycled** – unlike plastic, metal has well-established recycling channels. It has one of the highest recycling rates with a global average of 60%–70%.⁵

What challenges does metal pose?

Steel and aluminium production is an emissions-heavy industry. But there has been significant progress in this area. Companies are exploring a range of low and carbon-neutral solutions, with up to 100% PCR (Post Consumer Recycled) aluminium and green aluminium now available.⁶

What do consumers think about metal packaging?

89% like the material of reusable aluminium⁷

84% agree metal looks 'high end'⁷

86% would switch to buying preferred laundry detergent in metal packaging if available⁷



Did you know?

Unlike plastic, metal does not degrade. Up to 80% of all metals ever produced are still available or in use today.⁸



How does it work in the real world?

There are a variety of ways for consumers to engage with reusable activities:



Refill-at-home:

Consumers keep the original container at home and buy refill products to top it up with.



Refill-on-the-go:

Consumers bring the original container back in-store to refill it from a refill station.



Subscribe-to-refill:

Consumers subscribe to a 'replenishment schedule', automatically receiving refill products on a regular basis.



Return-for-reuse:

Consumers return empty containers (either in-store or from home) for companies to collect, clean and reuse.

Pioneering the returnable model

Beauty Kitchen is a B Corp-certified company on a mission to shake up the status quo. Through its own Reposit scheme, it encourages customers to return their used packaging – facilitating its reuse for future products. As an added incentive, consumers are rewarded with a discount off their next purchase.

The Reposit scheme has been rolled out to numerous brands and retailers across the UK, demonstrating the scalability of the returnable model across diverse product categories.

By gamifying the experience for shoppers, Beauty Kitchen has developed a successful approach to circularity – one that shares the responsibility along the supply chain.



Case studies

Bubble Tree™

Playtime that's good for the planet

The Bubble Tree™ kit, from US toy company American Bubble is a first-of-its-kind bubble system that uses Trivium's refillable aluminium bottles. With ergonomic grip, cap-attached wand, and colourful designs, the bottles are made to be reused again and again during countless hours of playtime.

By turning a wasteful activity into a more sustainable one, Bubble Tree is helping to instil good habits in children in a fun and effective way. Bubbles may be fleeting, but these bottles can be endlessly and easily refilled – and then recycled forever.



O.U.i Eau de Parfum

A sophisticated and sustainable refill solution

Grupo Boticario's O.U.i. is the first fragrance brand in Brazil to offer aluminium threaded bottle refills. The lightweight bottles by Trivium have a pouring spout that allows O.U.i's distinct glass container to be continuously refilled – and retained for longer.

Since the O.U.i release, Boticario also produced ARBO, a refillable men's cologne which has won multiple awards.

Aluminium is the perfect choice for refill-holding packaging because once it's discarded it recycles forever. It also has a premium look and feel, befitting a luxury perfume brand.



Recognising the opportunity for business

There is currently a **gap** between consumer interest in sustainable products and consumer buying behaviours.⁴

Brands – across all product categories – have a critical role in bridging this gap. They can achieve this by:

- Investing in infinitely recyclable materials like metal
- Embracing circular processes like reuse, refill and return
- Working collaboratively with all key players in the supply chain, including retailers
- Clearly communicating to consumers how to reuse and dispose of packaging
- Incentivising reusable activities through reward schemes and discounts

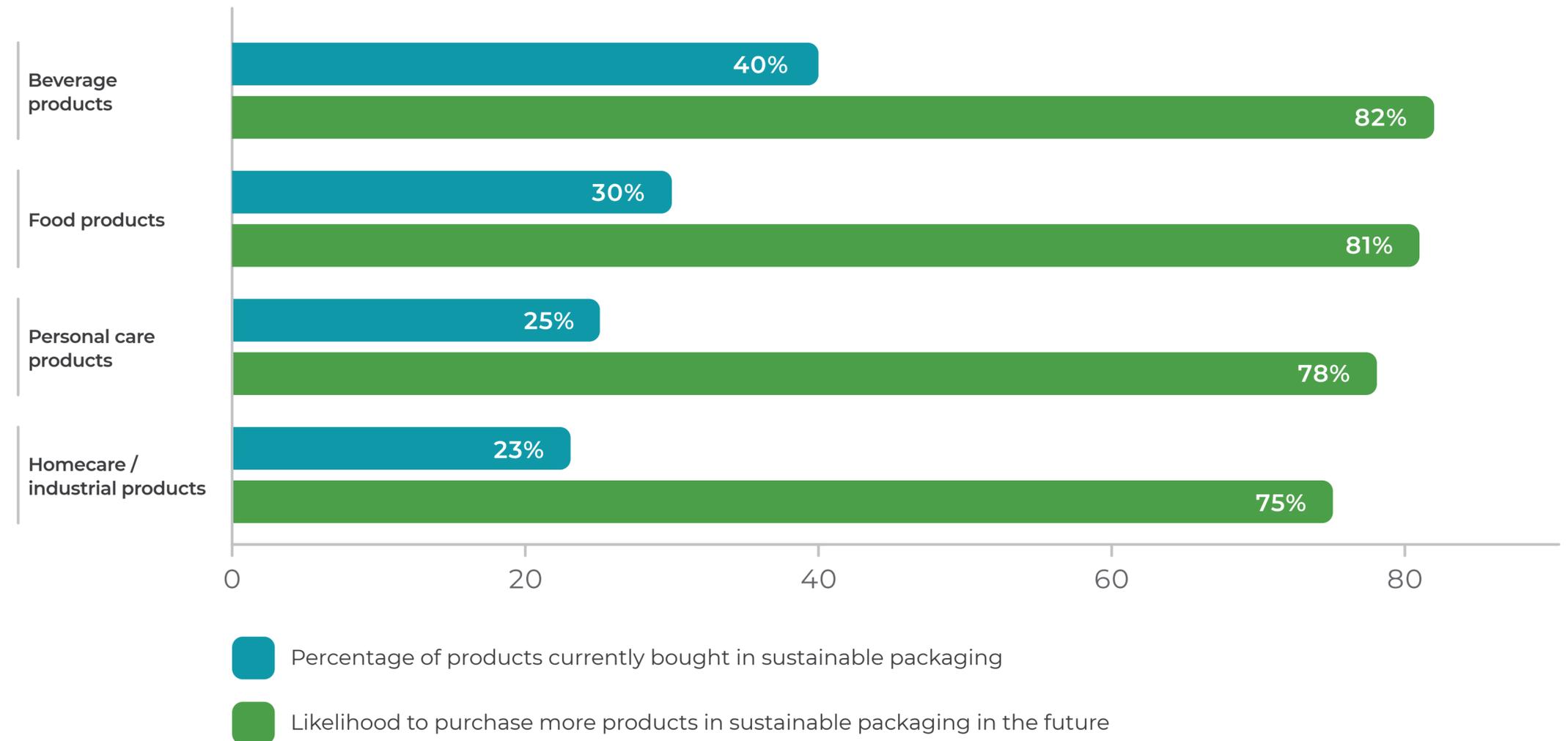
By shifting the focus towards circularity versus recyclability, we are one step closer to ensuring a sustainable future for our planet.



Did you know?

Under the EU's proposed Packaging and Packaging Waste regulation, more than 80% of cold and hot takeaway beverages filled at the point of sale should be in reusable vessels.⁹

% of consumers who perceive their current purchases across categories to be in sustainable packaging versus likelihood of purchasing more products in sustainable packaging in the future.⁴





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your packaging?

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www.triviumpackaging.com

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