

KEY TAKEAWAYS

THE PACKAGING PARADOX DURING COVID-19

Presented by PAC, Dalhousie Agri-Food Lab and SLD

DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE

Agri-Food Analytics Lab



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- 01 COVID-19 has accelerated pre-existing trends and created new trends.** For example, it rapidly accelerated the already growing online shopping space, and galvanized emerging retail channels, such as 'BOPIS' - buy online, pick-up in-store. With restaurant restrictions we see a considerable shift to home cooking and demand for new recipes, as well as an increase in take-out/delivery.
- 02 There is a 'democratization' of the supply chain,** with stakeholders across the food chain increasing and/or changing their access to the consumer. For example, one sees a well-known private label brand providing meal kits to consumers via established restaurants, or another brand operating a ghost kitchen to supply take-out service in reusable containers.
- 03 COVID-19 has driven consumers to try new brands,** particularly when products have been out of stock. Consumers have gravitated to category leading brands or to experiment with indie/local or private label brands -- leaving brands in the middle struggling to maintain their position.
- 04 Research shows two 'faces' of COVID -- a smaller, younger cohort which is more optimistic compared with a larger group of older (45+) consumers.** Consumers value a company's demonstration of empathy and compassion, toward their employees and toward the community in general. In terms of communication, there is a thirst for optimism and a 'ray of sunshine' to put people's minds at ease.
- 05 Consumers want more social and environmental responsibility but the economic pressures of COVID-19 are impacting their ability to pay for it.** Even pre-COVID-19, over the last decade, the food inflation rate had outpaced general inflation by over 20%, and it will remain high for the foreseeable future. Read the [Food Price Report Forecast](#).
- 06 A recent survey showed consumers only willing to pay 2% more for 'eco-friendly' packaging.** Regardless, industry research and development in this area shows no signs of slowing down. In part this may be due to companies' realization that consumers tend to negatively associate litter in our parks and beaches with the brand rather than with consumer behaviour.
- 07 A recent survey by Dalhousie University shows that people are still concerned about the virus in relation to food and packaging,** and that 52% of Canadians want the government to wait to make changes. At the same time the federal government recently announced plans to ban and/or restrict six plastic packaging products, with regulation coming by the end of 2021.

OVERVIEW

This webinar discusses the effect coronavirus has had on the packaging industry - from consumer behaviour, supply chain implications, balancing an increased demand for packaging with environmental and safety concerns to how brands and retailers are adapting to stay relevant and meaningful in a drastically different retail landscape.

Presented on October 30, 2020 by Dr. Sylvain Charlebois and Jean-Pierre Lacroix

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LEARN MORE:

SLD Covid Retail Industry Studies

View detailed reports specific to the Canadian and US retail industry and the impacts of Covid-19.

[View Reports](#)

Canada's Food Price Report 2020

Forecasts of the Canadian food prices released by Dalhousie University Agri-Food Analytics Lab.

[Read Forecast](#)

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