



How2Recycle

Georgia Recycling Coalition August 19, 2014

Anne Bedarf

How2Recycle is an on-package recycling label developed by the **Sustainable Packaging Coalition**, a project of the non-profit **GreenBlue**.



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How2Recycle

GreenBlue[®] is a nonprofit that equips business with the science and resources to make products more sustainable.



The Sustainable Packaging Coalition

An industry working group dedicated to creating a robust environmental vision for packaging...



...consisting of approx. 200 member companies, educational institutions, and government agencies involved with the packaging **supply chain**.



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The Problem

1. **Unclear labels** confuse, greenwashing is common
2. No consistent labeling system exists across **all material types or components**
3. **Legal guidance is** ignored or inaccurately interpreted
4. Consumers desire **transparency** and proactive sustainability efforts from companies, but remain skeptical



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<http://www.greenblue.org/publications/labeling-for-package-recovery/>



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Problem: The “Recycling Numbers”



The “plastic numbers”, or Resin Identification Codes (RICs—formerly known as SPI codes), are not recycling labels. They only indicate the material type. RICs were never intended to be a consumer communication tool or to make recyclability claims, though the requirement remains for their inclusion on certain packaging in over 30 states.



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Solution: How2Recycle

An on-package recycling label program and website that follows Federal Trade Commission **guidelines**, labels each packaging type and format, conveys sustainability **leadership**, and contributes to larger and cleaner **recycling streams**.



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Timeline

- **2008:** SPC members initiated; design exercise provided label options
- **2009/2010:** Qualitative consumer testing; designs refined; Extensive FTC consultation
- **2011:** Quantitative consumer testing provided by outside research firm
- **2012:** Soft Launch
- **2013:** Full Launch, Continued FTC Consultation;
- **2014:** Continued growth; Access to recycling project; Canada mini-soft launch



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What Does FTC Say?

1. If a material is recyclable by at least 60% of the US population, a recyclability claim can be made. Access can be at curbside or drop-off facilities.
2. Any recycling claim for a material under 60% access must be qualified. The lower the access rate, the greater the qualification required.
3. If a material is, or contains, a known contaminant to the recycling stream, a recyclability claim cannot be made.
4. New in 2014: Is the material actually getting recycled?



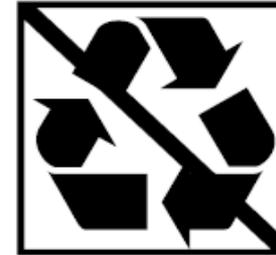
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What does How2Recycle Say?



*Not recycled in all communities

Widely Recycled

At least 60% of the U.S. population has access to recycling this package type at curbside or drop-off locations.

Limited Recycling

Between 20 – 60% percent of the U.S. population has access to recycling this package type at curbside or drop-off locations.

Not Yet Recycled

Less than 20% of the U.S. population has access to recycling this package type at curbside or drop-off locations OR

This material is a known contaminant to recycling systems.



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Access to Recycling Data

Each packaging component is labeled based on actual access to recycling data. **The SPC is currently leading a project to develop a consistent methodology that fills data gaps for these studies.** The following resources were used to determine access rates.

Access to Recycling Studies

- American Forest & Paper Association
(R.W. Beck/SAIC—12/10)
- American Beverage Association
(R.W. Beck/SAIC—2009)
- American Chemistry Council (rigid and film plastics)
(Moore Recycling - 4/11; 4/12; update 3/13)

Secondary Filter is Technical Recyclability: labels and special messaging adjusted for known problem materials or contaminants in the recycling stream



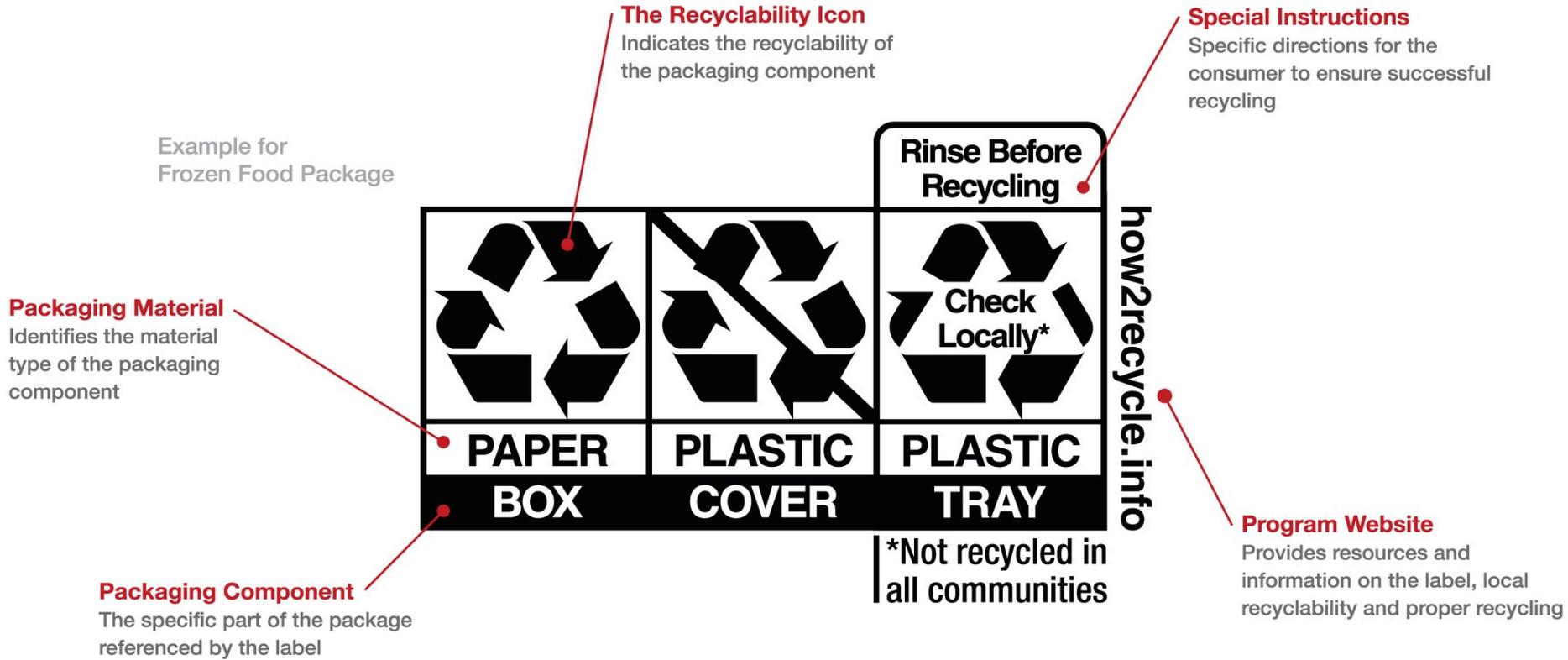
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How2Recycle

How2Recycle Label Design



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Plastic Bags, Films, and Wraps

- “Clean and dry” messaging for HDPE (#2) and LDPE (#4) flexibles
- Access at retail drop-off bins
- Partner ACC’s Flexible Film Recycling Group supports the plasticfilmrecycling.org website and related materials
- Poster for retail use
- Additional partnership with the State of Wisconsin includes consumer education campaign: WRAP
- **Sponsorship funding available for use on-package**



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how2recycle.info



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**RETURN
To Sender**

(Don't trash it!)

Bags recycled at Wegmans
are transformed
into new Wegmans bags.

This bag is made from
40% Recycled
Material



Little steps – today, tomorrow, together.



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Recycle here!

Clean, dry, flexible plastic.

We use this material
to make new Wegmans plastic bags.

ACCEPTABLE (#2 and #4)



- Bread bags
- Bath tissue wrap
- Produce bags
- Plastic outer wraps
- Newspaper bags
- Dry cleaning bags
- Shipping pillows
- Food storage bags
- Cereal box liners
- Grocery bags

NOT ACCEPTABLE



- Salad mix bags
- Frozen food bags
- Reusable bags
- Degradable bags
- Garbage
- Drink cups



Look for this label on plastic
and film products like those
shown above. Learn more at
plasticfilmrecycling.org

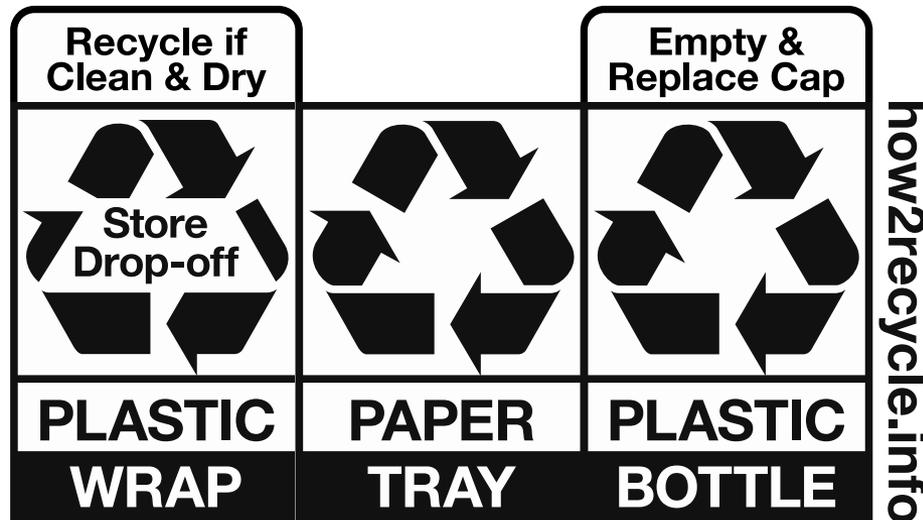


Sustainability
at *Wegmans*

Little steps – today, tomorrow, together.

Example: Case of Plastic Bottles

The How2Recycle Label can be used on the outside package to label all packaging components or each component can be labeled individually.



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Examples in the Market



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Examples in the Market

“McDonald’s is committed to reducing waste. Labeling our packaging with SPC’s How2Recycle label provides an opportunity to extend the behind-the-counter recycling efforts at the restaurant by helping consumers to determine how to recycle some McDonald’s packaging at home.”

- Susan Forsell, VP, Sustainability for McDonald’s USA



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Strategic Partnerships

- Keep America Beautiful (KAB) – KAB has endorsed How2Recycle. Ongoing coordination on programs.
- State and Local Governments – Working with a variety of governments to provide outreach, education, and congruency with local recycling programs.
- Industry Associations- Collaboration with groups collecting access to recycling data or with interest in recycling labeling (ACC, APR, GMA).
- Retailers - Providing outreach to retailers directly and through trade groups (FMI).
- Endorsements – Including Keep America Beautiful, New York City Department of Sanitation, State of North Carolina, StopWaste, and New York State Association for Reduction, Reuse, & Recycling



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MEASURING SUCCESS



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Measuring Success

- Company uptake
- Feedback from participating brands, local governments
- Media impressions
- Web visits
- Bale audits (in conjunction with ACC)
- Consumer feedback survey

Annual Report available for download at www.how2recycle.info



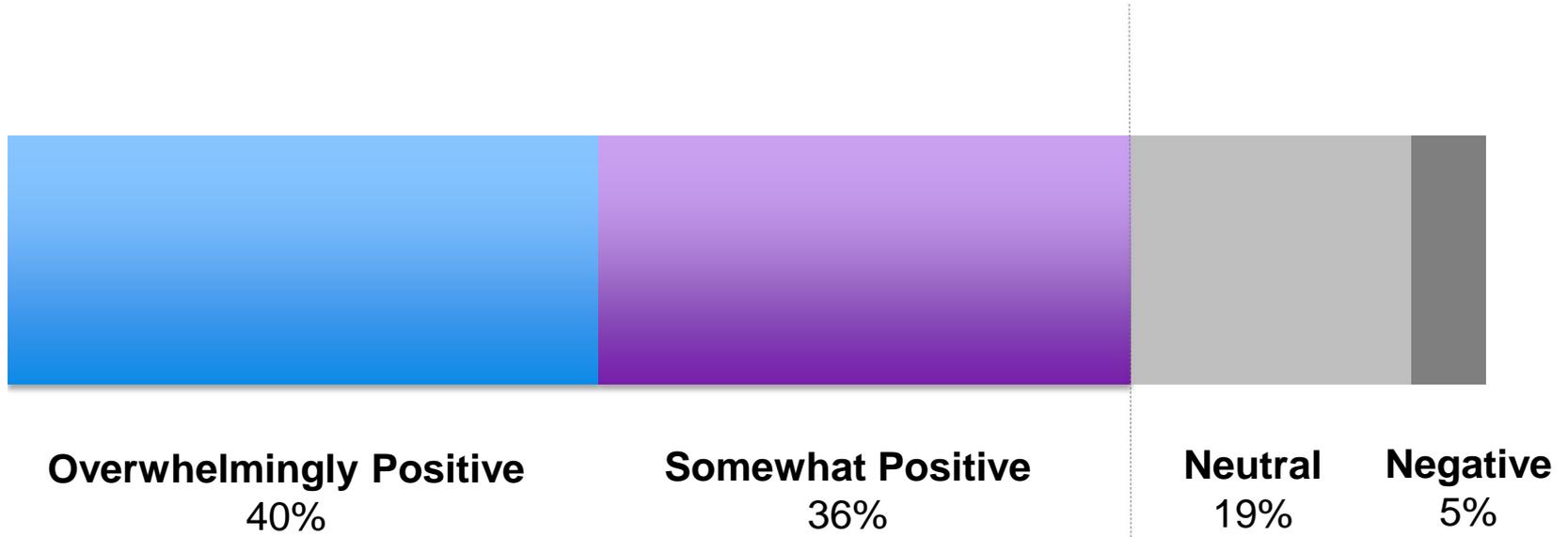
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How would you describe your experience with the How2Recycle label?



Somewhat to Overwhelmingly Positive = 76%

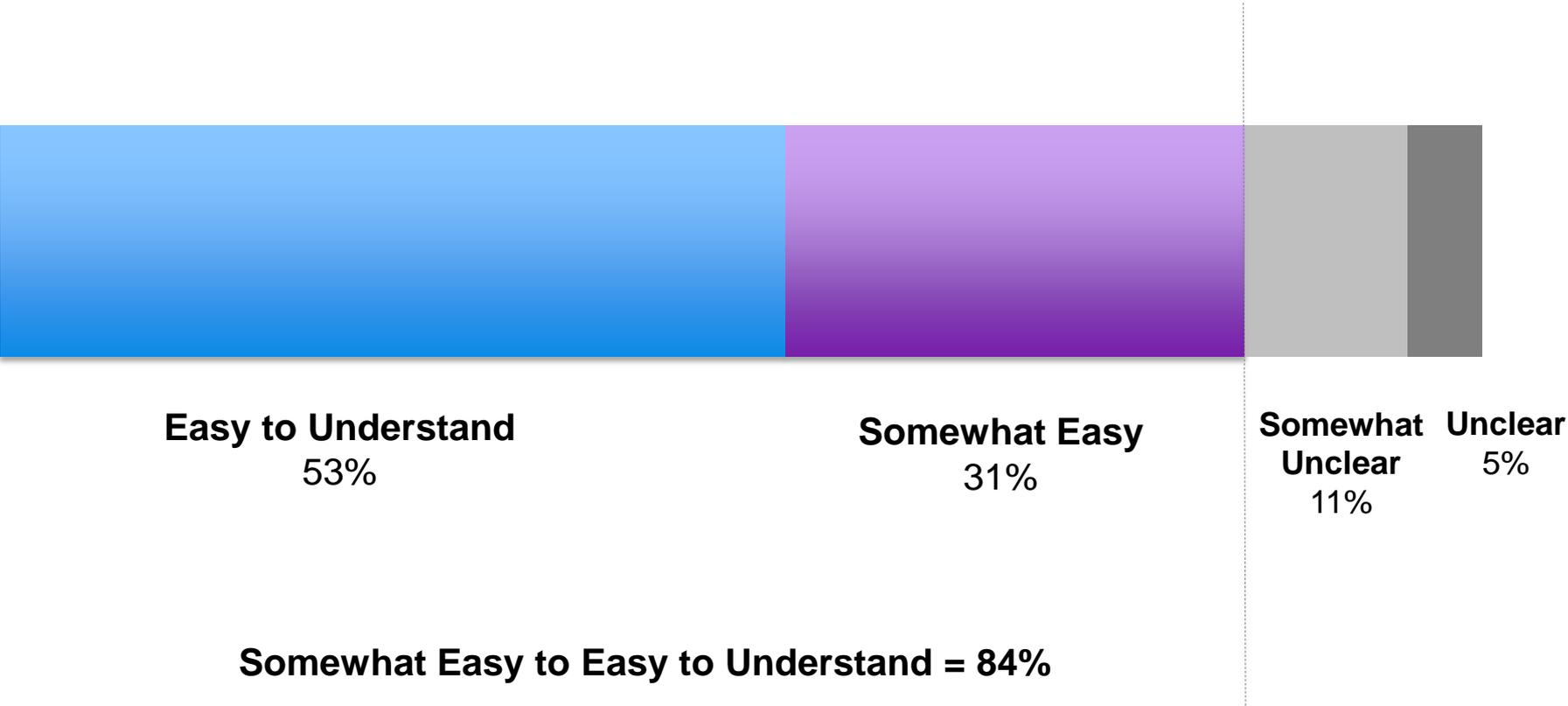


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N=660
Total Population

Is How2Recycle easy to understand?

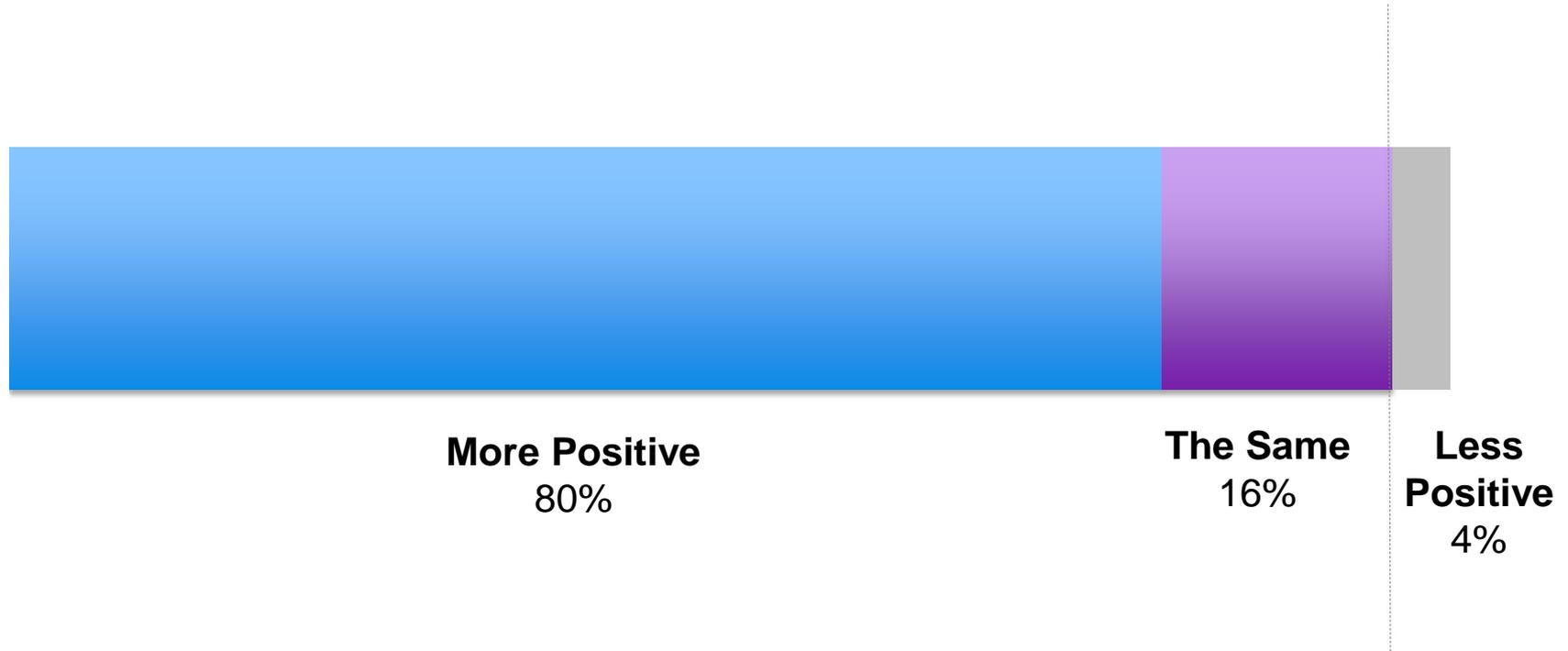


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N=667
Total Population

If you saw the label on a product, what is your impression of the company that makes the product?



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N=639
Total Population

Consumer Anecdotes

“[I] applaud companies that care enough to make recycling easier.”

“Any company that cares to do their best for the environment matters to me, and I will support them.”

“I value their effort to care for the environment.”

More products should do this!! It takes away the "guessing game" of recycling.

“I really appreciate the extra info and hope that soon all products will carry them! Thank you!!!”

“I do find it challenging to reduce waste and find the information needed to recycle... I appreciate your making more information available through this program and website... Thanks!”



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Some Confusion Around the RICs

“I understand the basics of the different plastics 1-7, and I understand that they are different, and generally can't be recycled together, but I don't understand why we can't recycle all 7 types of plastic consistently throughout the whole USA. Also, it gets confusing thinking of styrofoam, foam, pvc, etc as a type of plastic.”

“#1 & #2 are the most valuable to the recyclers. The rest in very high percentages end up being bundled and shipped to China in a nitrous oxide spewing ship. Might as well send it to a local landfill.”



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Survey Conclusions

- Consumers generally have a positive experience with the label at first exposure.
- The *Store Drop-off* Label for plastic film recycling in particular has driven behavioral change.
- While there is always a learning curve with new programs, How2Recycle is easy to understand by design.
- Consumers think highly of companies that use How2Recycle. They like that companies are making an effort and care about the environment. Consumers also indicated that using How2Recycle showed the company had a broader sustainability motivation.



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MEMBERS OF THE HOW2RECYCLE LABEL PROGRAM



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How2Recycle

Honest
tea

Ziploc

Members

 **cei**
Converting Ideas Into Innovation

Kellogg's


CCFBRANDS

ESTÉE
LAUDER
COMPANIES


PAC
WORLDWIDE

 **Sealed Air**

Minute
Maid.

Endust

ConAgra
Foods
Food you love


HILEX



AMPAC.
innovation in action


seventh
GENERATION

Annie's

Wegmans

Plum
organics

ecologic
packaging the earth can live with


REI


TARGET.


CLOROX

 **Kimberly-Clark**

Reynolds
Consumer Products


BEST
BUY


GENERAL MILLS

Σ SIGMA PLASTICS GROUP



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Fees

Tiered Annual Fee for company-wide use:

Annual Revenue:	SPC Members	Non-Members
Less than \$10 million	\$2,000	\$3,000
Between \$10 million and \$1 billion	\$3,000	\$4,500
Exceeding \$1 billion	\$4,000	\$6,000

One-time setup fee of \$1,500, waived if License Agreement is signed without negotiation.

Companies or individual brands within companies may join using the revenue categories above. If a single brand joins, the fee is based on the brand's revenue.

FEE SPONSORSHIPS ARE AVAILABLE FOR:

- **Use of the Store Drop-off Label, Courtesy of the American Chemistry Council's Flexible Film Recycling Group.**
- **Alameda County Businesses, Courtesy of StopWaste.**



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How2Recycle

Communications & Outreach

Website

www.How2Recycle.info

Info, feedback survey, and photos

Social Media

[Facebook.com/How2Recycle](https://www.facebook.com/How2Recycle)

[Twitter.com/How2Recycle](https://twitter.com/How2Recycle)

Print and Web Media

News coverage to industry and beyond

Presentations

Conferences and webinars



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How2Recycle

Vision

Be the “standard” for U.S. recyclability labeling

**Be on the majority of consumer goods
packaging by 2016**



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Why Should Companies Use the How2Recycle Label?

- Support and grow an industry-wide endeavor
- Demonstrate leadership and promote recycling behavior
- Encourage clear and transparent recycling communication
- Easily comply with Federal Trade Commission Guidance
- Improve and increase clean streams of recycled materials
- Pre-launch consumer testing and current findings confirm How2Recycle's effectiveness



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How Can Municipalities Get Involved?

- Keep recycling information simple and move away from RICs
- Include a “caps on” message for plastic bottles
- Ensure your public knows about retail drop-off for PE bags & films
- Place How2Recycle information on your websites: GreenBlue has suggested content and collaboration possibilities
- Please consider endorsement and joining the SPC!



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Thank you!

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GreenBlue

Sustainable Packaging Coalition

How2Recycle's Website

How2Recycle Gallery of Packages

www.greenblue.org

www.sustainablepackaging.org

www.how2recycle.info

www.how2recycle.info/gallery



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