

Earth Day statement

General Manager of Pro Carton, Tony Hitchin



Every year on the 22 April, people across the world celebrate Earth Day to show their support for environmental protection and the theme for 2021's celebrations is 'Restore Our Earth'. At its core is a message that as the world slowly recovers from the coronavirus pandemic, the way we live our lives must not return to normal if we are to conserve the planet and reverse the destructive path of climate change.

For many years, sustainability has been a growing priority across all industries. This trend has been accelerated over the last year, with global lockdowns dramatically changing the way we live, work and consume. On a larger scale than ever seen before, humanity's activity and movement instantly slowed. And as a result, we've seen a decrease in greenhouse gas emissions and pollution, coupled with an increase in air and water quality¹. For many it revealed the true scale of the impact humans have on the health of the Earth.

A combined approach is crucial in a green recovery. Reforestation efforts, climate restoration technologies, and regenerative agriculture, must be used alongside smaller scale changes that we can make on an everyday basis, from dietary decisions to avoidance of single-use, non-recyclable packaging solutions.



¹ <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s13762-020-03021-3>

Packaging is essential for the protection of goods, but if it is not biodegradable, recyclable and renewable, it can pollute the environment and hinder our efforts to restore the Earth. For this reason, the future of packaging must involve forest-based materials such as cartonboard, as its lifecycle is circular and its production is sustainable. The European forest industry manages the forests to ensure the maintenance of bio-diversity and healthy growth, so that between 2005 and 2020 Europe's forests grew by 58,390 km² - an area larger than Switzerland and equivalent to 1,500 football fields of forest growth per day². In our opinion, Europe's example of sustainable forest management is a model for the rest of the world as more trees means greater absorption of CO₂ and takes us one step closer to achieving a truly circular economy.

There is no doubt that the future requires drastic change to reverse the harm to the environment. There is no better time than now to help nature to readdress the balance and restore Earth's equilibrium. Indeed, many of us have developed a newfound appreciation of nature whilst partaking in popular lockdown hobbies such as jogging, walking and gardening. As we eagerly return to normal life, this year's Earth Day has never been more pertinent.

Ends

Find hi-res images at: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/procarton/albums/72157718988241946>

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Notes to editors:

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About Pro Carton

Pro Carton is the European Association of Carton and Cartonboard manufacturers. Its main purpose is to promote the use of cartons and cartonboard as an economically and ecologically balanced packaging medium.

www.procarton.com

² <https://www.twosides.info/european-forests/#:~:text=Between%202005%20and%202020%2C%20European,of%20forest%20growth%20every%20day!>

What is cartonboard?

Cartonboard is a multilayer paper-based material with, usually, three or more layers of fibre derived from wood, or recycled materials such as paper or cartonboard. It is often used in packaging to make cartons for everyday products, such as breakfast cereals, frozen foods, luxury fragrances and pharmaceuticals.

EXAMPLES OF CARTONS MADE FROM CARTONBOARD:



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Is cartonboard the same as cardboard?

Cardboard is a generic term and, whilst cartonboard is a type of cardboard, it is different from 'corrugated cardboard' which is a firmer, heavy-duty paper-based packaging commonly used for transport (like Amazon parcels). In contrast, Cartons are always printed often with high quality graphics and special varnishes and finishes. Liquid packaging board (e.g. Tetra Pak) used to hold milk and fruit juice is not categorised as cartonboard.

EXAMPLES OF PACKAGING THAT ARE NOT CARTONBOARD:



Liquid packaging

Corrugated