Unpacking Sustainability:

Do Consumers Really Understand Packaging Claims? Bridging the Gap Between Understanding and Opportunity

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Las Vegas, NV

Your presenters today

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Agenda

Charting the Rise of Sustainability from the Consumer POV

Sustainable Packaging Claims and Trends Across the Store

Case Study: Crack Open Growth

Charting the Rise of Sustainability from the Consumer POV

Consumer Life is the most comprehensive and longest-standing consumer trend study in the world

50+ years of tracking consumer activities, desires, and needs

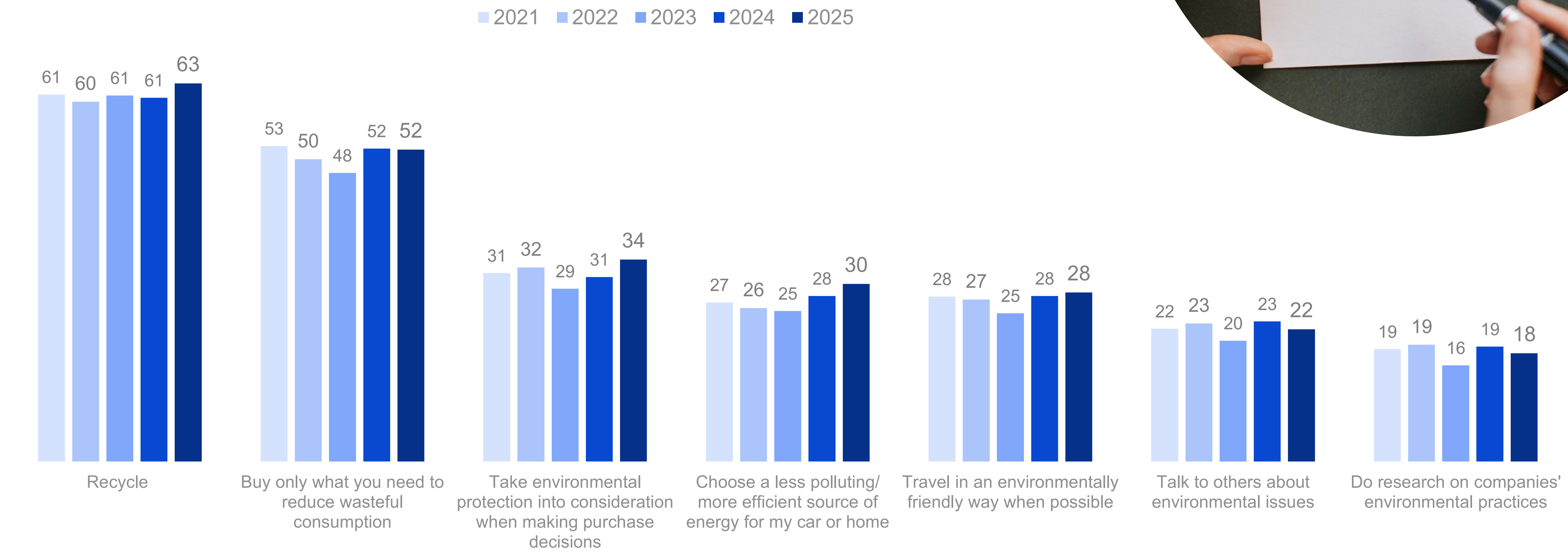
Green Gauge® is a multi-decade syndicated survey that provides marketers and sustainability professionals with a nuanced look at sustainability-related consumer attitudes and behaviors

NIQ

Environmentally friendly actions remain stable

Least disruptive and econo-centric behaviors trending upward recently

% who do environmentally friendly activities all or most of the time

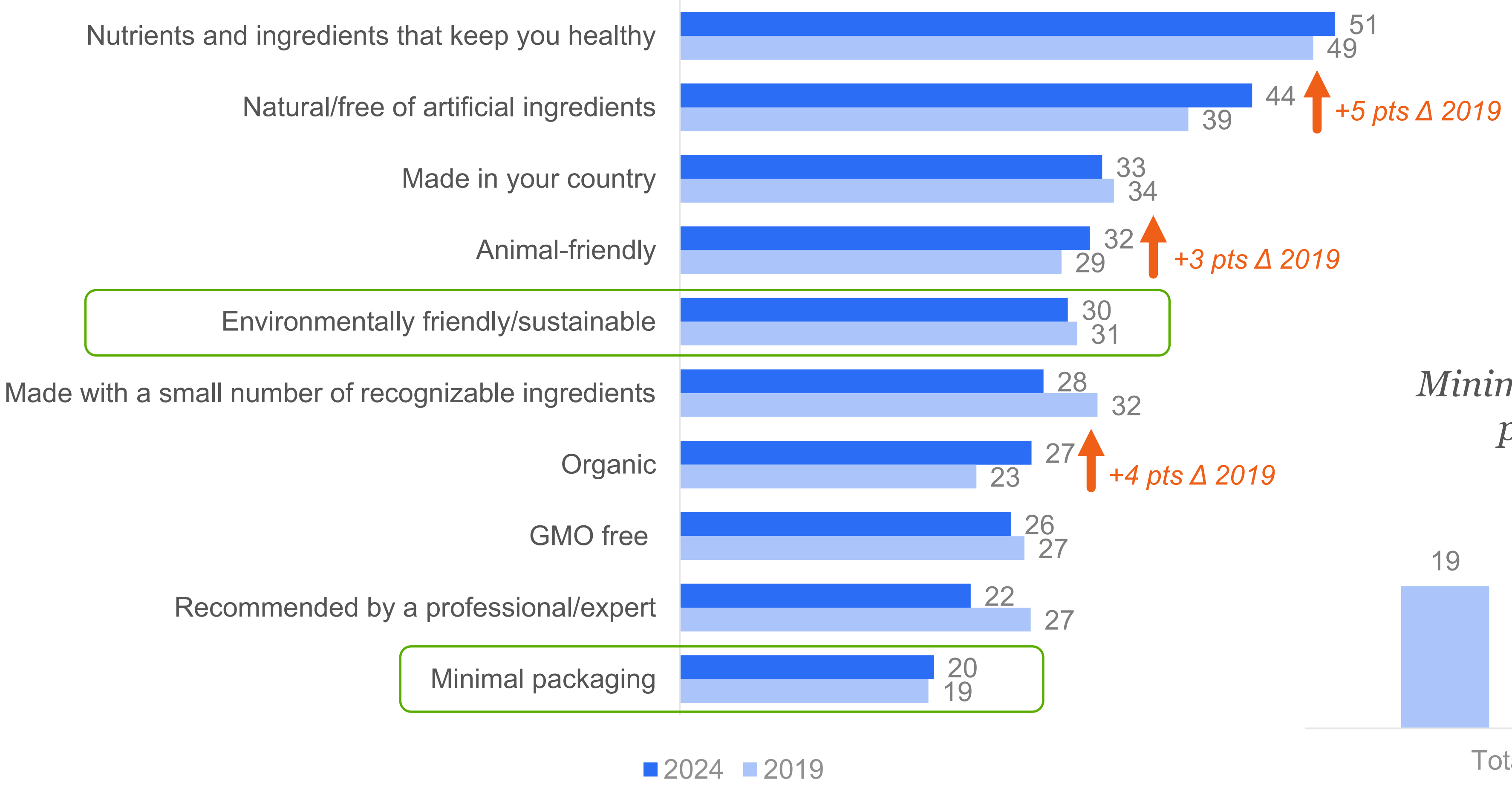


NIQ Consumer Life Green Gauge® Report
NIQ Consumer Life Global 2025 and previous: GG_2 (global = 18 countries)

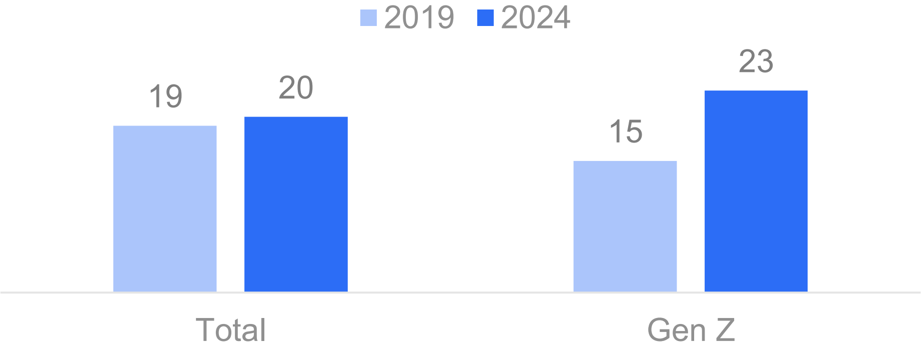
“In me, on me” categories remain a strong opportunity

FMCG is well positioned to capitalize on sustainability, especially when combined with other elements like wellness, organic, and animal-friendly

Shopping influencers for products consumed or put on body (%)



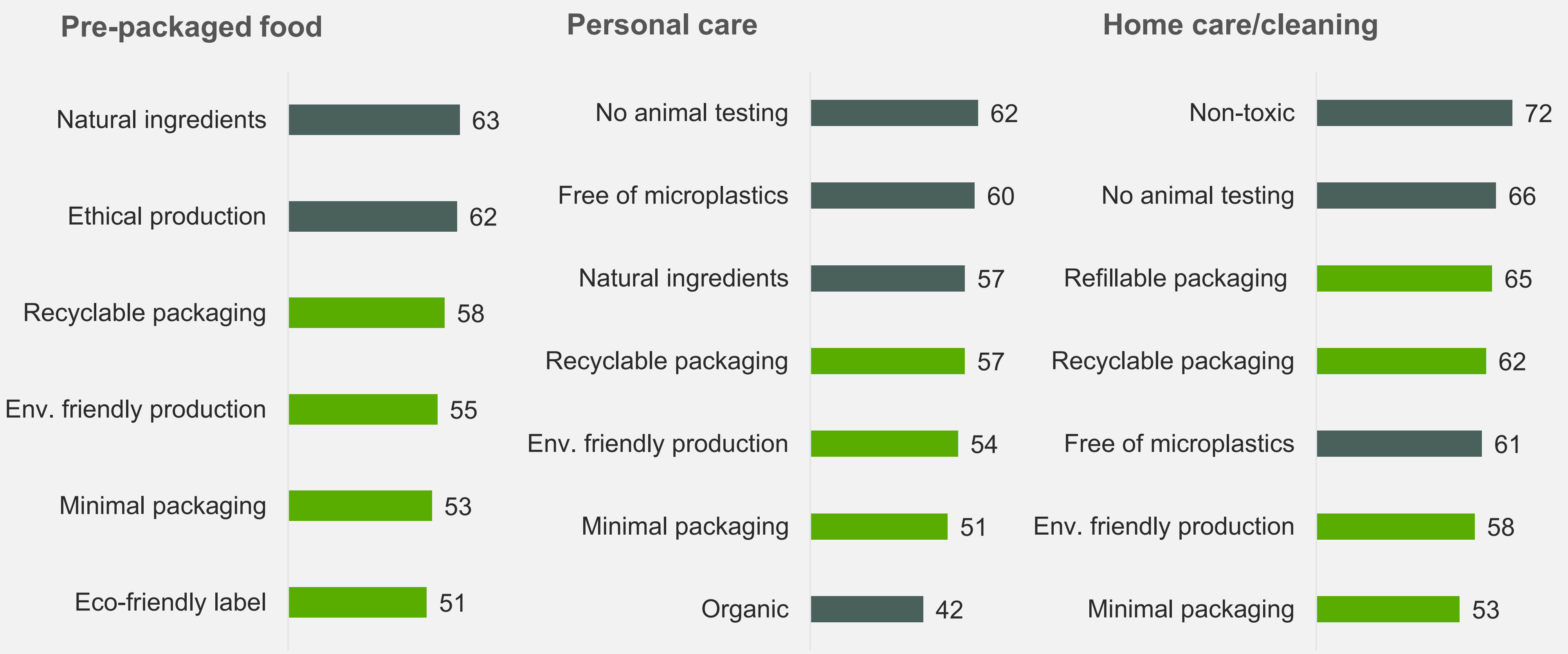
Minimal packaging is increasingly a purchase driver for Gen Z:



Understand the sustainability purchase triggers for your category

In CPG, packaging is often on par with ingredients; microplastics are another watchout

How important are the following environmental aspects when purchasing (%, Top 2)

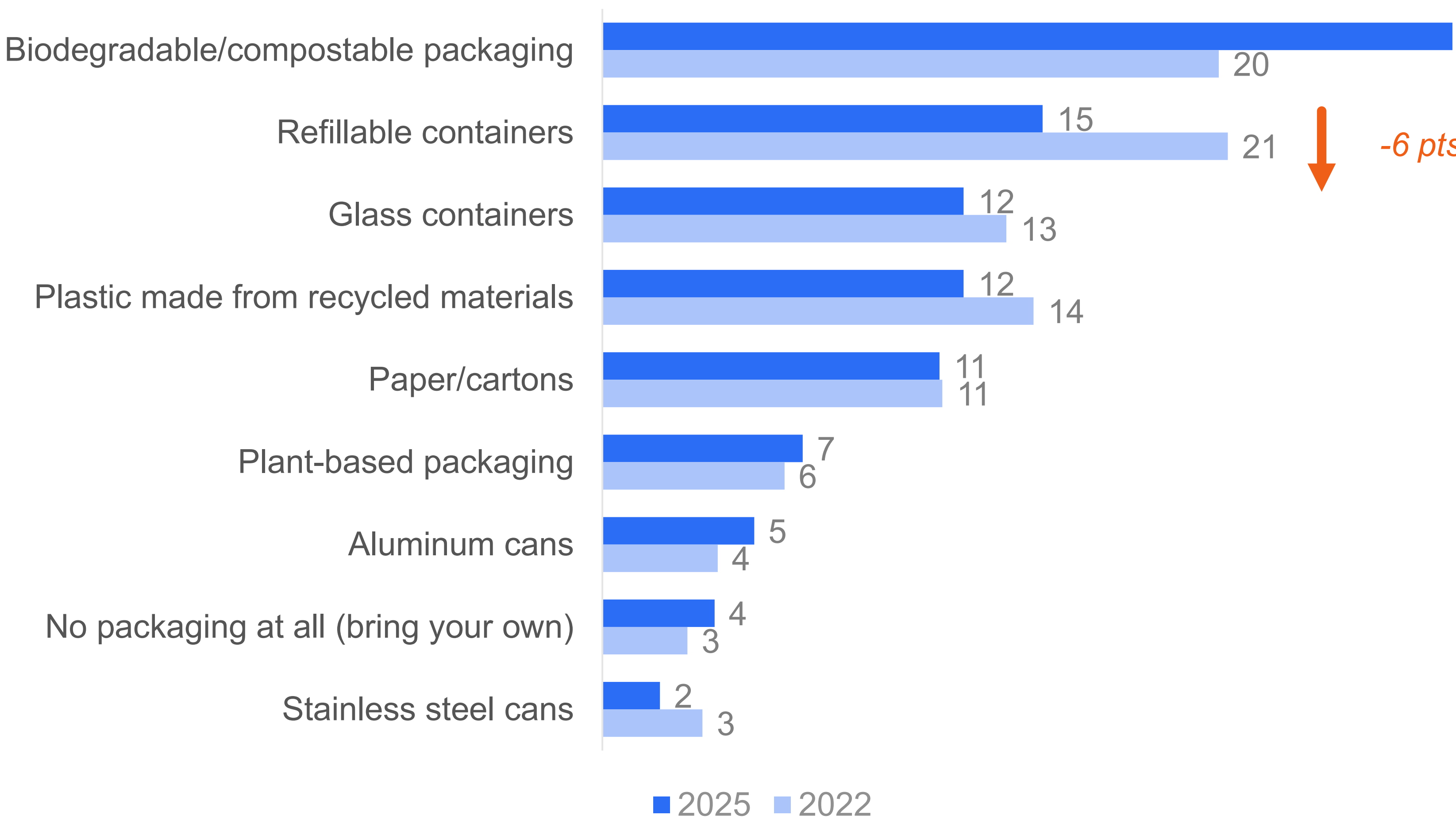


https://www.cosmeticsdesign.com/Article/2025/02/05/aora-mexico-partners-with-repurpose-global-to-tackle-beauty-industrys-plastic-waste-problem/

Packaging preferences point to ease of use

Reduced interest in refillable containers among older consumers

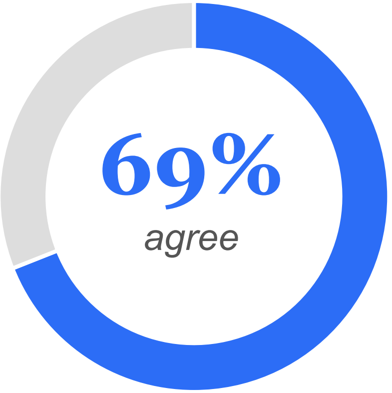
Packaging preference for packaged food (%)



Package labeling remains critical—and credible

High trust across categories

I believe the environmental claims on labels and in advertising



Gen Z	**71%**
Millennials	**75%**
Gen X	66%
Boomers	65%

Top 5 sources of trustworthy information for environmental impact by product sector

	Appliances	Personal electronics	Packaged food	Home care/cleaning	Personal care
#1	Online reviews	Online reviews	**Product labels**	**Product labels**	**Product labels**
2	**Product labels**	**Product labels**	Online reviews	Online reviews	Online reviews
3	Family, friends	Company websites	Family, friends	Family, friends	Family, friends
4	Company websites	Family, friends	Company websites	Company websites	Company websites
5	News	News	News	Government	Social media

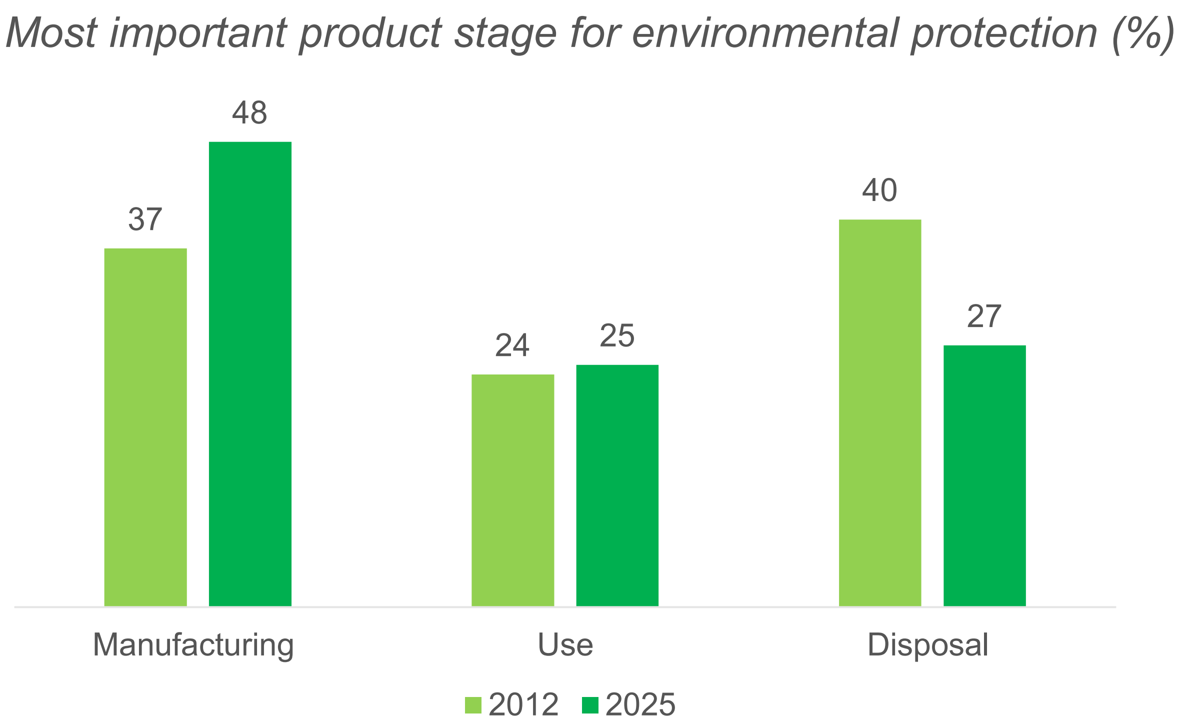
Green Gauge Plus 2022 ATS_3, SS32, SS38, SS40, SS42, SS46

Lean forward | Growing expectation for circularity

Consumers placing greater responsibility on brands and manufacturers

42% agree Brands and companies have to be environmentally responsible these days

+5 pts from 2023



Lean Forward | Government accountability in sustainability is rising as an expectation

Yet ratings on institutional efforts leave room for improvement

47% agree

+11 pts from 2023

The **government should be addressing our environmental problems**, and not individuals like me

Led by Gen Z and Millennials

61% agree

+3 pts from 2008

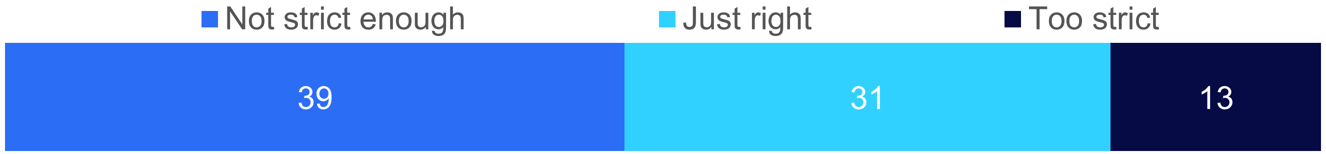
I would like to see **major change in environmental protection** within 4 years after the 2024 Presidential election

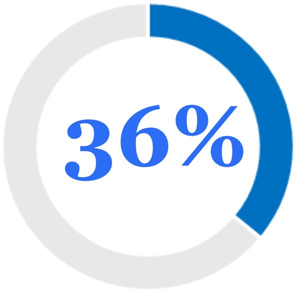
#3 on a list of 8 areas of change

#1 among Gen Z, moderates, and liberals

4 in 10 Americans think environmental laws and regulations are not strict enough

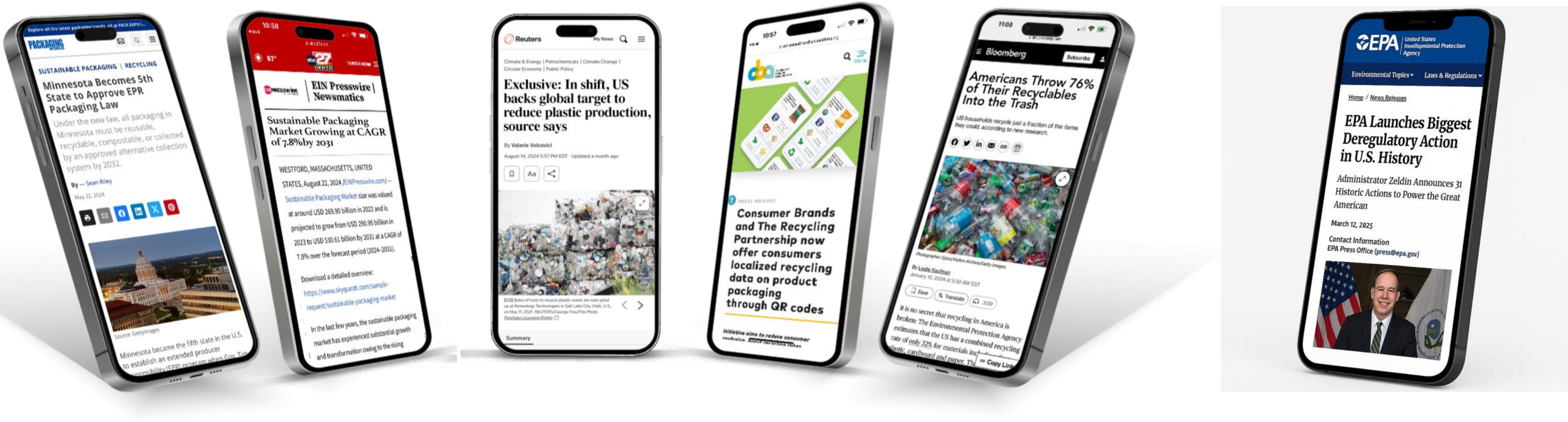
Perception of environmental protection laws
(% selecting)





of Americans believe that the government is doing a **good or excellent job at reversing global warming/climate change**

Headwinds | Some states accelerate, while EPA deregulates



SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING COALITION®

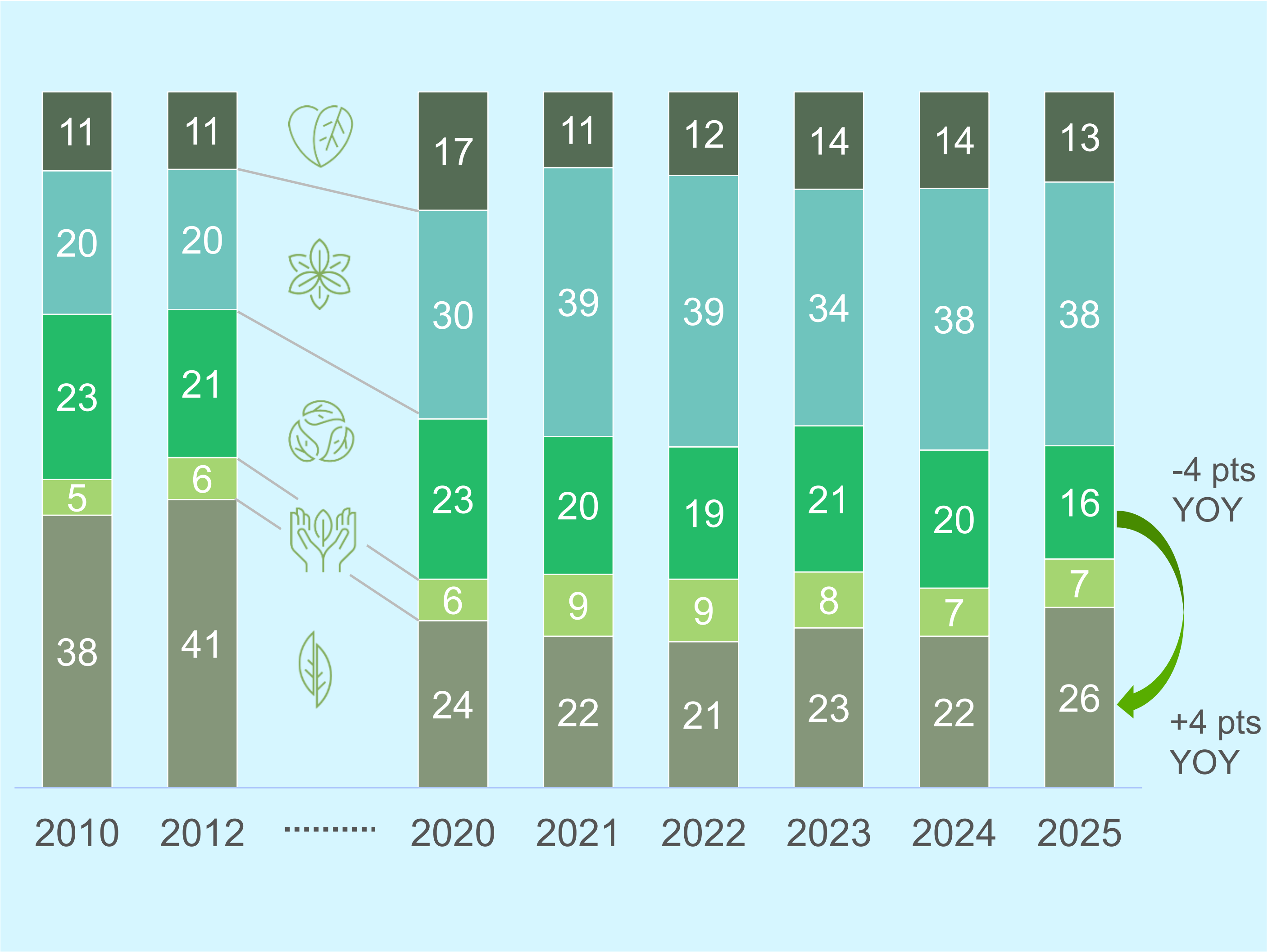
10 States have introduced legislation on EPR for packaging in 2025

5 EPR for packaging bills have passed in the U.S.

SPC https://epr.sustainablepackaging.org/

Headwinds | Signs of green fatigue

Long-term shift in sustainability mindset offset by rising skepticism

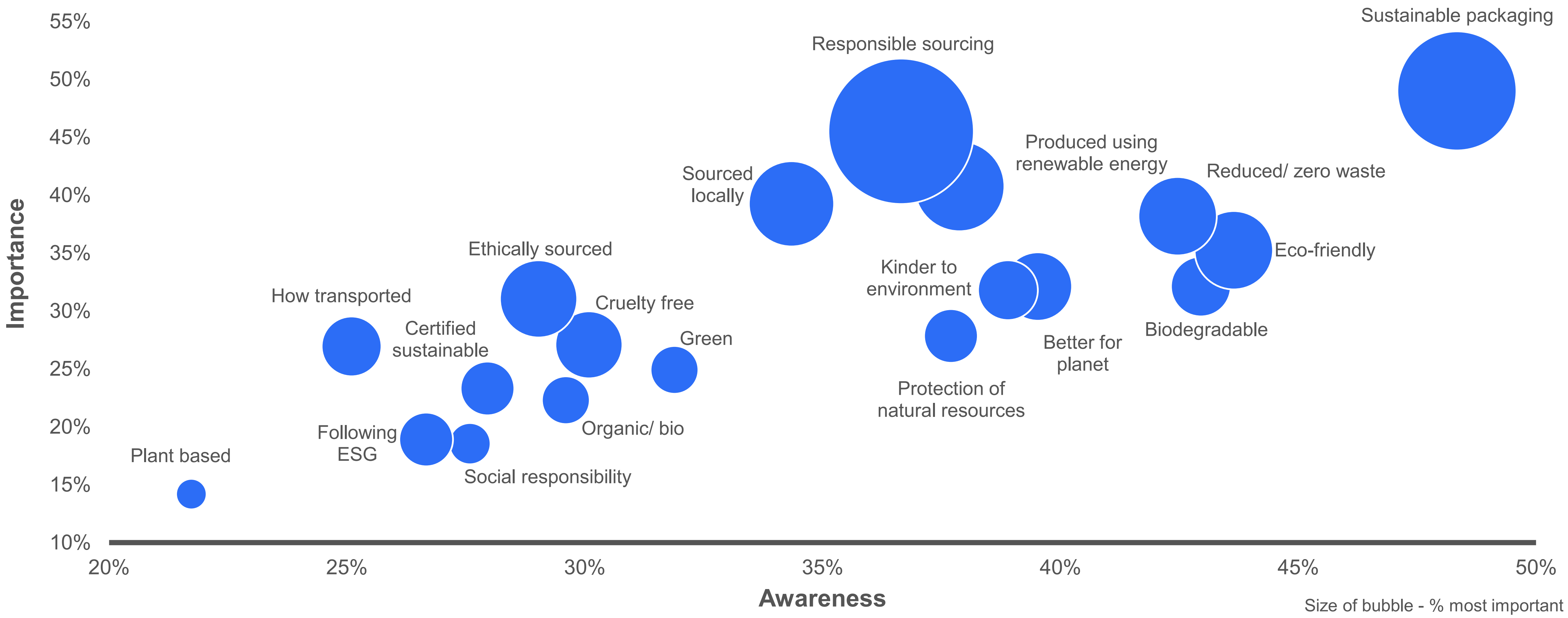


Green in Deed	The most genuinely active in environmental thought and action
Glamour Green	Considers green behavior as a badge of honor/status symbol – eager to showcase eco-friendly behaviors and purchases
Carbon Cultured	Pro-environmental attitudes, but focus mostly on the "easy" behaviors
Green in Need	Holds pro-environmental attitudes, but lack the tools to translate them to behaviors
Jaded	Skeptical and cynical, but still engages in low-effort environmental behaviors

Sustainable Packaging Claims and Trends Across the Store

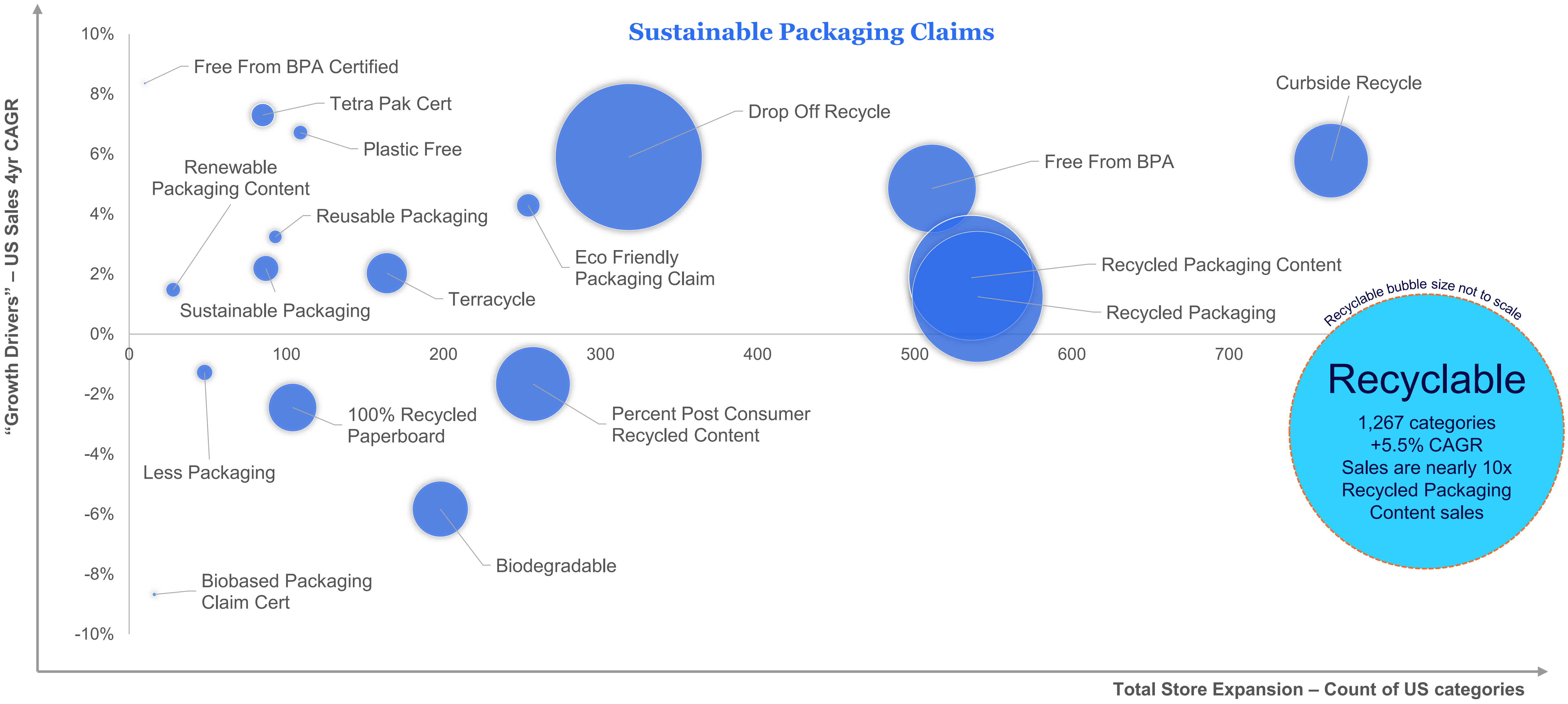
What makes a brand sustainable?

Claims that make a brand **sustainable**



Source: NielsenIQ 2023 Sustainability Report - Q: Coming back to grocery brands, which of these claims do you believe make a brand “sustainable”?

Packaging claims are growing across the store



Bubble size denotes total sales in L52 week All attributes represent claims STATED on package unless indicated by an * symbol

Source: NIQ, Retail Measurement Services, NIQ Product Insight—powered by Label Insight; Total US xAOC; Total Store (excludes Gen Merch); # of Categories selling, 4-yr CAGR ($); 52 weeks ending September 9, 2025

Recycling Claims are Leading the Way

Sustainable packaging presents opportunities throughout the store

		$ % Chg YA	4-yr CAGR ($)	$ Volume
	Total Store[1]	+2.2%	+4.5%	
	All Sustainable Packaging	+0.4%	+3.4%	$92.4B
Proven trends	Drop off recycle	-2.2%	+5.9%	$53.5B
	Recycled packaging content	-1.1%	+1.9%	$39.0B
	Recyclable checked locally	+5.5%	+7.1%	$21.2B
Growing trends	Free from BPA	+0.3%	+4.9%	$19.3B
	Curbside recycle	+6.3%	+5.8%	$13.7B
	Sustainable packaging	+4.4%	+2.2%	$1.6B
Developing trends	Tetra Pak certifications	+10.1%	+8.3%	$1.6B
	Renewable packaging content	+4.1%	+1.5%	$0.5B
	Free from BPA certified	+8.9%	+8.4%	$14MM

'Stated' claims on package. Does not represent all available sustainable packaging attributes.

Source: NielsenIQ Retail Measurement Services, NielsenIQ Product Insight, powered by Label Insight, Total US xAOC; Total Store – PI Sustainable Packaging stated attributes; $ % change vs year ago, 4-year CAGR; Latest 52 weeks ending September 6, 2025
[1]Total Store = Food & Beverage, Alcohol, Baby, Healthy & Beauty Care, Household Care, Pet Care

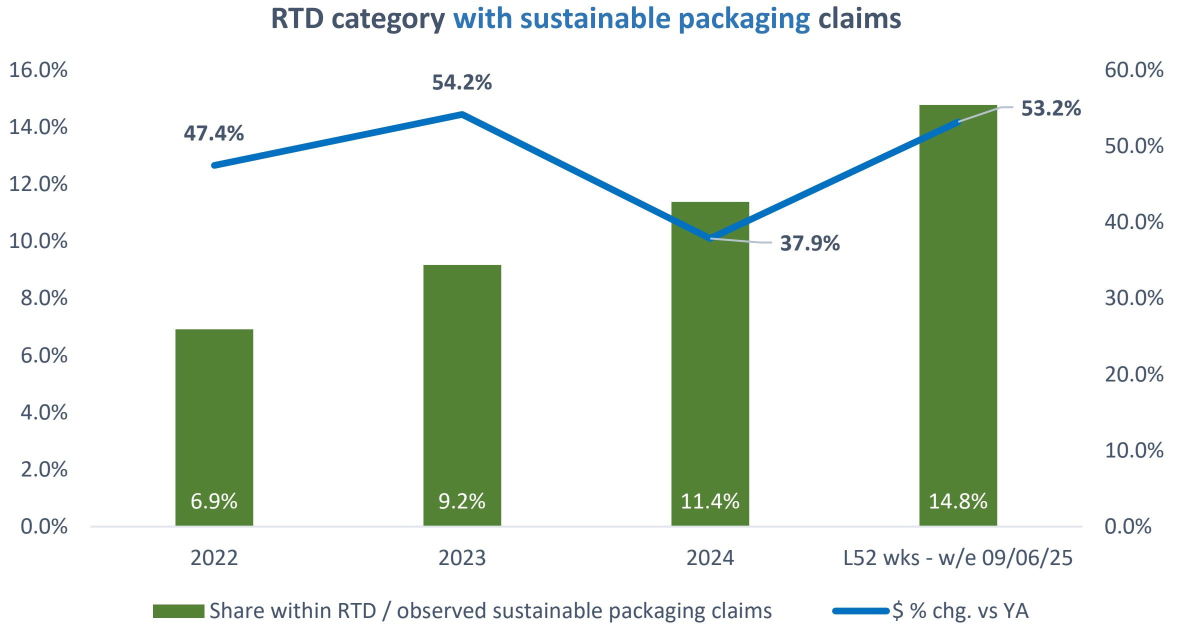
NIQ

Claims Case Study: Crack Open Growth

NIQ

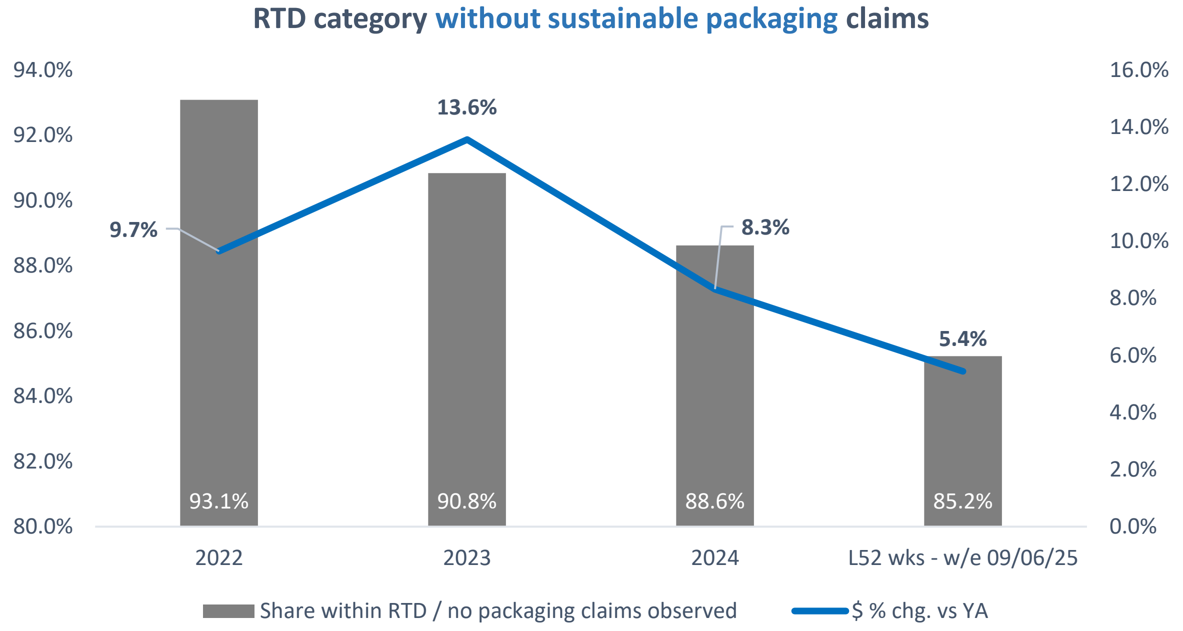
Sustainable packaging claims within RTDs are growing significantly, gaining market share

Sustainable packaging claims are gaining $ share year over year gaining market share and importance



Single Packs only

There is a clear focus on growth with sustainable packaging claims.
$ share without sustainable packaging claims is declining.



Single Packs only

Source: NielsenIQ Retail Measurement | US ALC – Integrated & NIQ Product Insight, powered by Label Insight | Total US xAOC + Liquor Open State + Conv | ALC PACK: Single

Room for Standardization

21 out of 55 Sustainability Claims in the Ready to Drink Category reference some variation of the word '*Recycle*'

1 PERCENT FOR THE PLANET MEMBER
100 PERCENT RECYCLABLE
ALL ALUMINUM CAN PLEASE RECYCLE
ALL ALUMINUM PLEASE RECYCLE
ALUMINUM IS INFINITELY RECYCLABLE
ALWAYS RECYCLE
BPA FREE
BPA FREE CANS
BPA FREE LINING
CANS ARE 100 PERCENT RECYCLABLE
CANS INFINITELY RECYCLABLE
CARTON IS RECYCLABLE BOARD
DONT BE TRASHY
EARTH FRIENDLY PACKAGE
ECO FAIR
ECO FRIENDLY
FSC MIX
FSC MIX BOARD
GLASS FREE
INDEFINITELY RECYCLABLE
MADE WITH 15 PERCENT RECYCLED PLASTIC
MAHALO FOR RECYCLING
METAL RECYCLES FOREVER
NO BISPHENOL A
NON INTENT BPA FREE
NOT APPLICABLE
PACK IT IN PACK IT OUT
PLEASE RECYCLE
PLEASE RECYCLE AFTER YOU ENJOY
PLEASE RECYCLE IF PERMITTED IN YOUR AREA
PLEASE RECYCLE ME
PLEASE RECYCLE SLEEVE AND CAN SEPARATELY
PLEASE RECYCLE THIS BOTTLE
PLEASE RECYCLE THIS CAN
PLEASE REUSE OR RECYCLE
PROTECT OUR PLANET
PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT
RECYCLABLE
RECYCLABLE ALUMINUM
RECYCLE
RECYCLE DAMMIT
RECYCLE IT
RECYCLE ME
RECYCLE RESPONSIBLY
RECYCLE THE CAN
RECYCLE THIS CAN
RECYCLING IS COOL
REMOVE SLEEVE AND RECYCLE GLASS
SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT
SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY INITIATIVE CERTIFIED
SOURCING
SUSTAINABLY PACKAGED
TERRACYCLE
THANK YOU FOR RECYCLING
THE ORIGINAL ENVIRONMENTALLY FRNDL BOX
WORLDS FIRST ECO FRIENDLY COCKTAIL PACKAGING

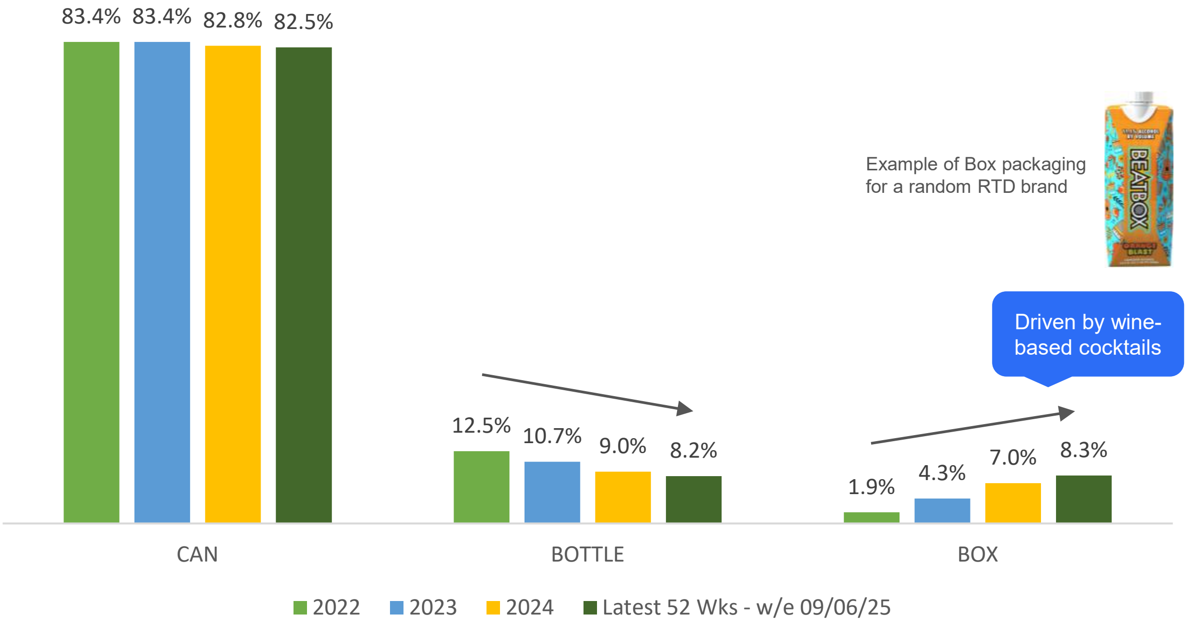
PACKAGE ENVIRONMENTAL CLAIM	ALC MANUFACTURER	ALC BRAND FAMILY	ALC PACK	ITEM	UPC
RECYCLE DAMMIT	ALL OTHER COMPANIES	WILLIE'S SUPERBREW	MULTI PACK	WILLIE'S SUPERBREW BCH SLZ AST BEACH ADE VA...	086000762714
RECYCLE DAMMIT	ANHEUSER-BUSCH INC.	KARBACH	SINGLE	KARBACH MARGARITA CAN ALUMINUM 1PK 16OZ	081002820197
RECYCLE DAMMIT	ANHEUSER-BUSCH INC.	KARBACH	SINGLE	KARBACH PALOMA CAN ALUMINUM 1PK 16OZ	081002820196

Source: NielsenIQ Retail Measurement | US ALC - Integrated | Entire Dataset | Total US xAOC + Liquor Open State + Conv | ALC PACK: Single

Taking a deeper dive on packaging shape and material

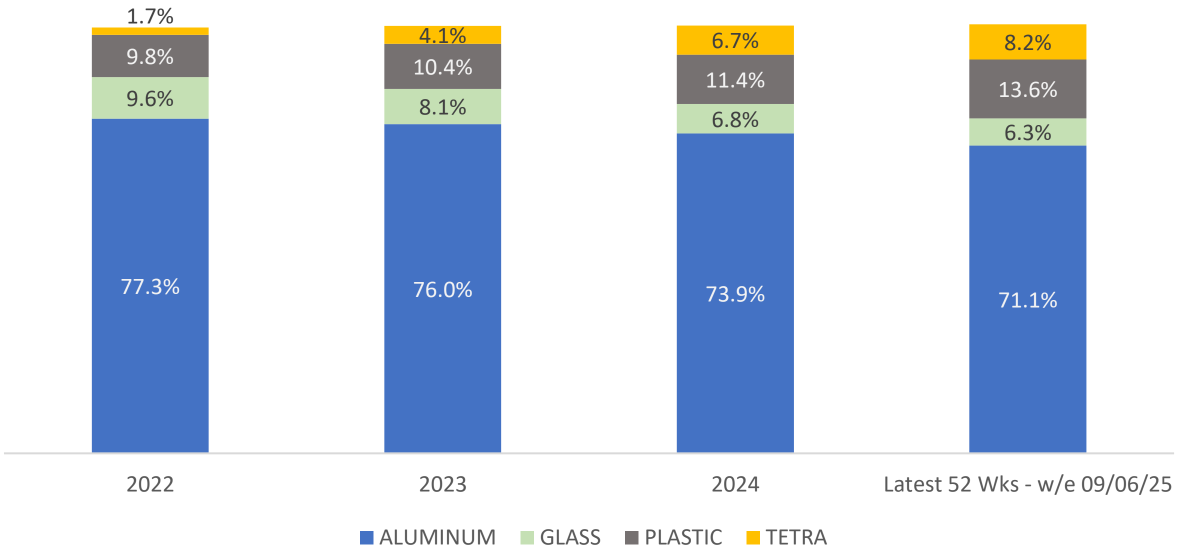
Cans are holding but Bottles losing share to Box, while Aluminum and Glass are losing share to TetraPak Box and Plastic

By Structure: Cans are holding, Bottles are losing share to Box



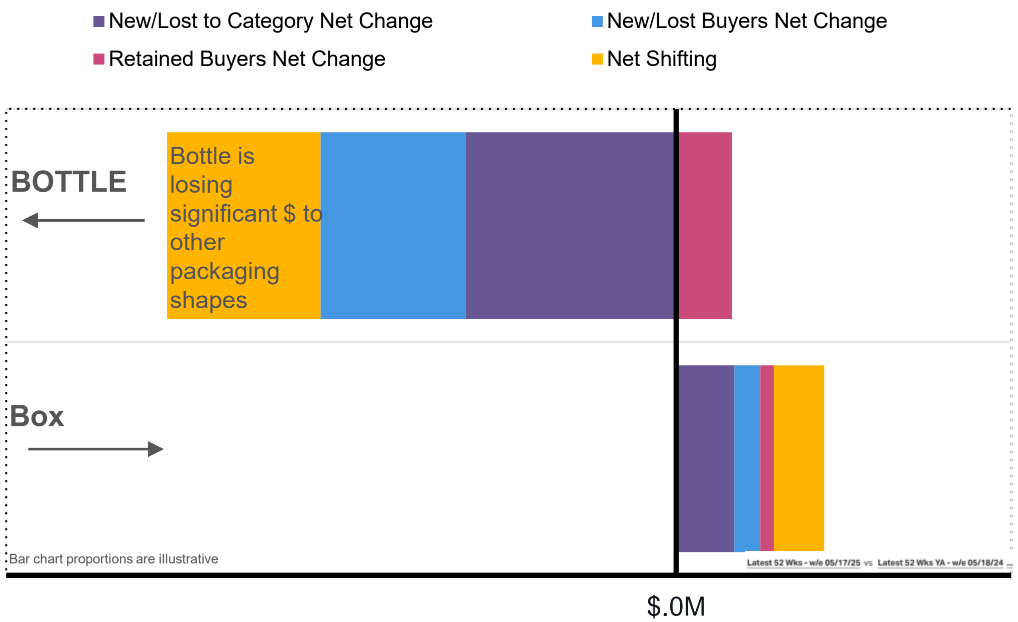
Source: NielsenIQ Retail Measurement | US ALC - Integrated | Total US xAOC + Liquor Open State + Conv | ALC PACK: Single

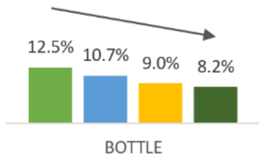
By Material: Aluminum and Glass losing share to TetraPak Box and Plastic



Source: NielsenIQ Retail Measurement | US ALC - Integrated | Entire Dataset | Total US xAOC + Liquor Open State + Conv | ALC PACK: Single

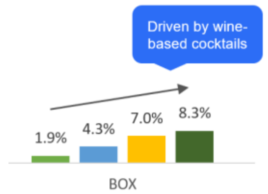
Consumer Insights – Do you *know your buyer* and what motivates them?





RTD / **Bottle** / L52 weeks

Demographics	Buyers Index	Value Index	Value per Buyer	Occasions per Buyer
Total Panel	100	100	$29.16	2.6
Boomers+ (Born before 1965)	99	97	$28.66	2.6
Gen X (Born 1965 - 1976)	112	118	$30.70	2.7
Millennial (Born 1977-1994)	95	96	$29.70	2.6
Gen Z (Born 1995 or later)	95	84	$25.78	2.2



RTD / **Box** / L52 weeks

Demographics	Buyers Index	Value Index	Value per Buyer	Occasions per Buyer
Total Panel	100	100	$19.93	2.6
Boomers+ (Born before 1965)	76	56	$14.72	1.8
Gen X (Born 1965 - 1976)	111	107	$19.31	2.5
Millennial (Born 1977-1994)	118	145	$24.43	3.2
Gen Z (Born 1995 or later)	104	98	$18.90	2.6

Understand packaging and competitive landscape

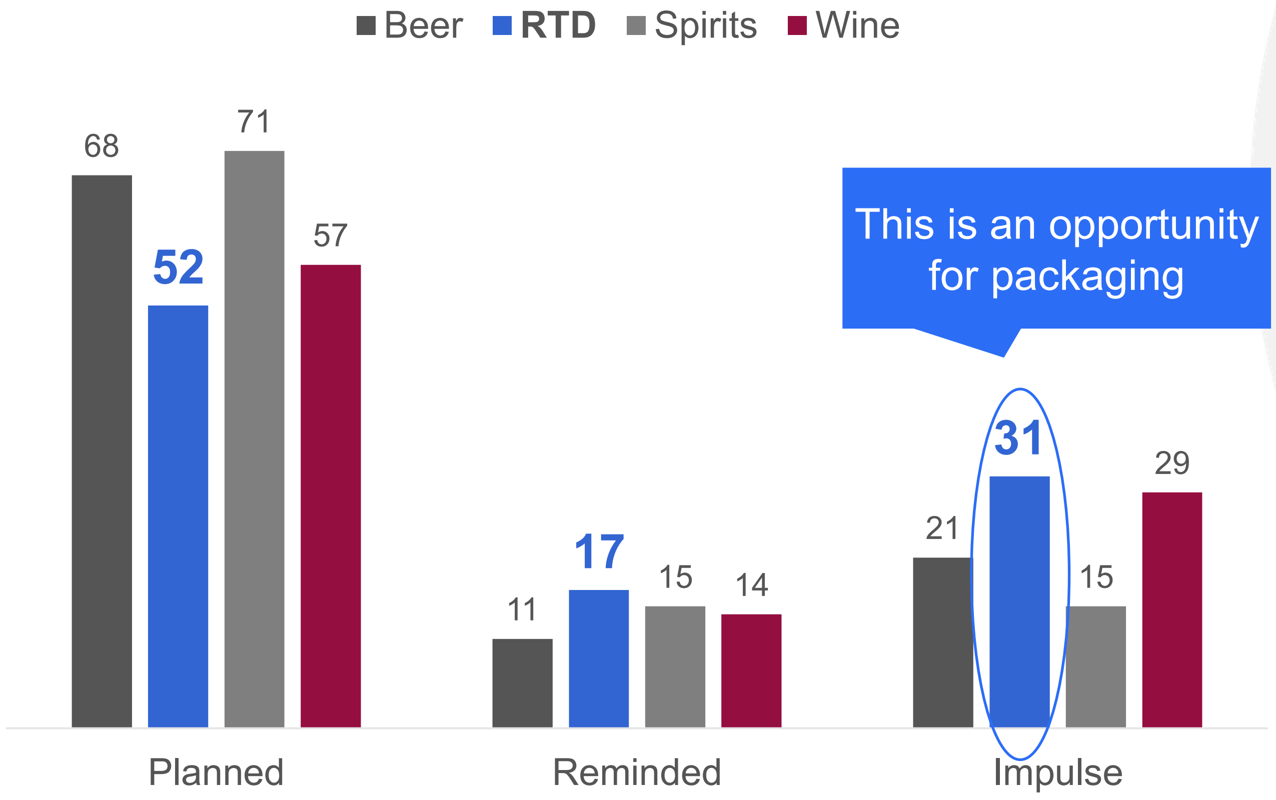
Understand shopper motivations and attitudes

Understand and target the right demographic segment

Source: NielsenIQ Panel On Demand Omnishopper | US BEV AL - ALC INTEGRATED (21+ Only) | Entire Dataset

RTDs continue to be more likely an impulse purchase due to evolving mix and distribution gaps

Category Planning - % of purchases



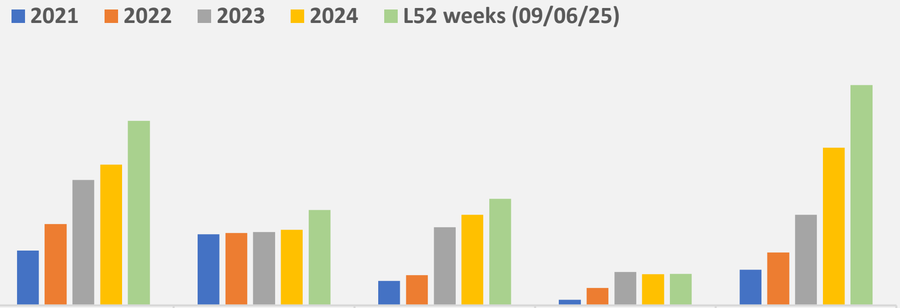
Survey your target buyers to understand:
What drives an impulse purchase?

→ ***How can your package*** increase
- trial and repeats?
- Penetration?
- Value per Occasion?
- Incremental $

Sales by Sustainable Packaging Claims by US State – Does EPR influence claims?

1

$ Share of Sustainable Packaging claims within each state
Category: RTD



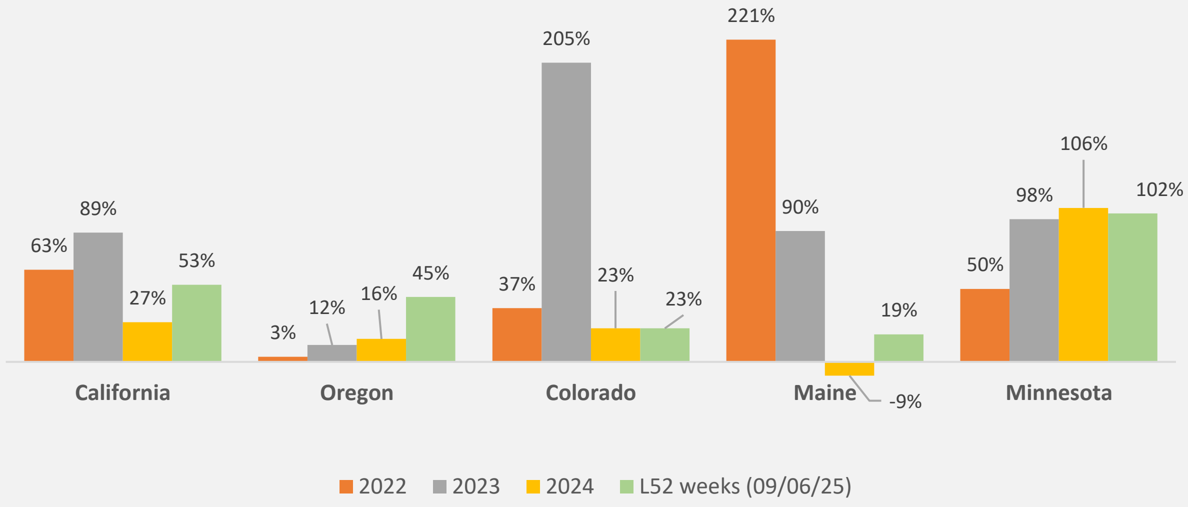
	California	Oregon	Colorado	Maine	Minnesota
2021	7.0%	9.0%	3.1%	0.7%	4.5%
2022	10.3%	9.2%	3.8%	2.2%	6.7%
2023	15.9%	9.3%	9.9%	4.2%	11.5%
2024	17.8%	9.6%	11.5%	4.0%	19.9%
L52 weeks (09/06/25)	23.3%	12.1%	13.5%	4.0%	27.8%

105	69	100	72	93

Number of producers

2

% $ chg. vs YA / Sustainable packaging claims growth vs YA
Category: RTD



Source: NielsenIQ Retail Measurement | US ALC – Integrated & NIQ Product Insight, powered by Label Insight | Total US xAOC + Liquor Open State + Conv | ALC PACK: Single

Takeaways

Consumers trust environmental claims on labels and ads, but terms like recycling vary widely which leads to confusion

As U.S. states enact EPR legislation, standardized language and regulation will accelerate compliance and action

Our packaging data and consumer insights goes deep and can help support tracking and measuring your sustainability, packaging and marketing goals

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Thank you

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