



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** Apr. 17, 2014

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## **Colgate Commits to 100% Recyclable Packaging by 2020 for Three of Four Product Categories**

### ***Announcement Comes After Shareholder Engagement With As You Sow***

**OAKLAND, CA** - After dialogue with environmental nonprofit As You Sow, personal care products giant Colgate-Palmolive has committed to making 100% of its packaging for three of four product categories completely recyclable by 2020. In addition, Colgate has committed to work towards developing a recyclable toothpaste tube or package, which would bring its fourth product category close to the same sustainability standard. Most toothpaste tubes are made from unrecyclable plastic laminates.

“We congratulate Colgate-Palmolive on its leadership in phasing out unrecyclable packaging,” said Conrad MacKerron, Senior Vice President of As You Sow. “Huge amounts of embedded value and energy are being buried in landfills. These packages should be designed to be recycled, reducing the use of virgin natural resources and mitigating emissions that contribute to climate change.”

The company also agreed to increase the average recycled content of its packaging to 50%. Increasing the recycled content of key packaging materials such as polyethylene terephthalate (PET), polypropylene (PP), and paper pulp (fiber) is crucial to improving the sustainability of consumer packaging. Companies using packaging that is both made from recyclable materials and is recyclable after use help conserve resources and reduce waste.

Unrecyclable packaging doesn’t just end up in landfills. According to a [recent assessment](#) of marine debris by the Global Environment Facility, unrecyclable packaging gets swept into waterways, which contributes to the growing problem of plastic pollution of the world’s oceans and damages marine ecosystems. There is also emerging evidence that plastic particles in the marine environment can absorb and spread toxics through the marine food web, and possibly to humans.

In 2012, As You Sow filed a [shareholder resolution with Colgate-Palmolive](#) requesting that it explore the feasibility of adopting an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) policy for post-consumer packaging. The resolution argued that such a policy would help reduce carbon emissions and other pollution resulting from the company’s business practices. As You Sow [withdrew the proposal](#) after Colgate-Palmolive agreed to engage in dialogue which led to the new policy statement by the company.

Colgate’s commitments include:

- By 2020 achieve 100% recyclable portfolio of Home, Pet, and Personal Care packaging - three out of four of its product categories;
- Develop a fully recyclable toothpaste tube or other packaging in the fourth category, Oral Care;
- Increase recycled content of packaging from 40% to 50%; and
- Reduce or eliminate use of PVC in packaging.



## Keurig Commits to Recyclable K-cups

Colgate-Palmolive is part of a growing corporate movement towards recyclable packaging. Following a dialogue with As You Sow, Keurig Green Mountain Coffee, maker of single use Keurig K-cups, recently issued a [sustainability report](#) committing to make all K-cups recyclable and achieve zero waste-to-landfill at their manufacturing and distribution facilities by 2020.

“We think you’ll see more and more companies making similar commitments as environmental concerns continue to resonate with consumers,” said MacKerron. “Leadership companies realize that by addressing the sustainability of their packaging now, they are positioning themselves to succeed in the markets of the future.”

## Capri-Sun, Kraft Foods Lag Behind Industry

While some companies are leading the way on recyclable packaging, others persist in using unsustainable packaging. ‘[Designed to be Waste](#)’, a new video released by As You Sow’s Waste program, focuses on the troubling practice by some companies to use unrecyclable packaging for products that could easily be sold in recyclable glass or cardboard. One high-profile example is the Capri-Sun line of juices and fruit drinks, distributed in North America by Kraft Foods Group. These drinks are marketed to children and sold in composite laminate/aluminum foil pouches that cannot be recycled into new pouches. More than a billion Capri Sun pouches are estimated to be landfilled annually in the U.S. alone. As You Sow has filed a [shareholder resolution with Kraft Foods Group](#) requesting the company assess the environmental impacts of using unrecyclable packaging.

“It is counterproductive to the development of a circular materials economy to use these unsustainable pouches when better alternatives have been around for decades,” said MacKerron. “With families becoming more aware of the impact packaging waste has on the environment, companies that continue to lag behind industry leaders are at risk of consumer backlash.”

As You Sow’s [Waste program](#) advocates for more responsible production and recycling of consumer products and packaging to preserve the Earth’s limited natural resources. In addition to the resolution at Kraft Foods, the Waste program has also filed resolutions with [Kroger](#), [Safeway](#), [Mondelez International](#), and [Dr Pepper Snapple](#) on similar sustainability issues, including a push for producer responsibility policies that recapture recyclable packaging for reuse.

“Our research shows that \$11 billion of recyclable materials are wasted annually,” added Conrad MacKerron. “These resources should be generating profits and green jobs. Instead they play a role in poisoning our environment and generate risk for the companies that produce them.”

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**As You Sow** is a nonprofit organization that promotes environmental and social corporate responsibility through shareholder advocacy, coalition building, and innovative legal strategies. For more information visit [www.asyousow.org](http://www.asyousow.org).