

Recycling rate of 69% confirms steel for packaging’s continued position as leader in Europe

Figure represents a further 3.5% reduction of steel for packaging’s CO₂ emissions year on year

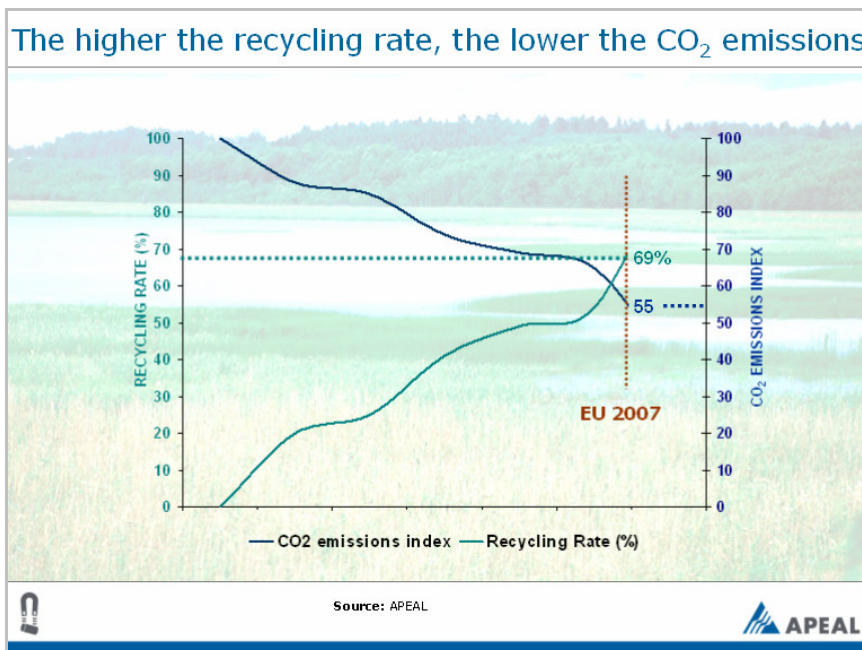
The latest figures from APEAL (the Association of European Producers of Steel for Packaging) show that 69% of steel packaging is recycled in Europe. This represents over 2.5 million tonnes of food and drinks cans and other steel containers being recycled in 2007, saving 4.8 million tonnes of CO₂. According to the latest available data, this places recycling rates for steel above those of other packaging materials such as plastic, beverage cartons and glass (19.7%¹, 32%² and 62%³ respectively).

Recycling is second nature for steel

Steel is an excellent performer in terms of recycling, being easily collected through a variety of systems. In addition, thanks to its natural magnetic properties, steel packaging is particularly easy and cost effective to sort for recycling. Finally, recycling is second nature for steel as recycled materials are an essential part of the steelmaking process. Steel is unique in that it has an infinite recycling loop - it can be recycled over and over again without any loss of its inherent properties. Hence, reusing steel for packaging and recycling it into new steel is a never ending process. This potential for unlimited recyclability gives steel a huge advantage in terms of sustainability.

Higher steel packaging recycling = lower carbon footprints

By integrating recycled steel into the manufacturing process the industry achieves energy savings of 70% and lowers its output of CO₂. Put simply, when it comes to steel for packaging production, the higher the recycling rate, the lower the CO₂ emissions; as recycling goes up, so carbon emissions come down. This means that natural resources are saved for future generations and that energy use and CO₂ emissions are significantly reduced.



In addition to steel packaging’s outstanding recycling performance, it is best in class for safety, protection and conservation, making it a top performer in terms of sustainability.

¹ Source: Plastics Europe (2006)

² Source: ACE (2007)

³ Source: FEVE (2007)

“Given concerns about climate change, the smarter use of resources should be at the forefront of all our minds. We hope that the standard set by steel for packaging will help to drive further growth in the recycling of all packaging materials across Europe”, added **Mr. Guillaume de Formanoir, President of APEAL**.

Improved recycling performance across the board

In 2007, the recycling rate for steel packaging continued to grow throughout Europe rising by 3% from the 2006 total. Top performers were Belgium and Germany where more than 90% of steel packaging was recycled. Switzerland, Austria and the Netherlands follow closely behind, recycling over 80% of their steel containers.

The trend towards increased recycling for steel packaging is confirmed in Central and Eastern Europe: Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and the Czech Republic have all boosted their recycling performance by between 16% and 45%.



“These figures show just how much of an impact we can have in reducing our emissions through recycling and better use of resources” said **Frieda Brepoels, prominent member of the environmental committee of the European Parliament**, commenting on APEAL’s 2007 recycling figures for Europe. “This is an excellent example of how our every day behaviour can collectively make a big difference in our fight against climate change. Recycling is one of the most cost-effective ways of reducing emissions so hopefully we will continue to build on this success and recycle even more next year.”

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Steel packaging offers value to society thanks to its exceptionally high recycling rates in Europe. Steel is recycled time and time again without its quality ever deteriorating. In this sense, steel is a truly renewable material. Thanks to its magnetic properties, steel is the easiest type of packaging to recover for recycling.

APEAL, the association of European producers of steel for packaging represents 92 % of the total production of steel for packaging in Europe. Its members are ArcelorMittal Packaging, Corus Packaging Plus, Rasselstein and US Steel Kosice.