

Cutting Carbon with Corrugated

The corrugated packaging industry is pleased to announce that it has reduced its carbon footprint by 12%. More organisations are becoming involved with the measurement of carbon and a number of customers are now asking suppliers to take steps to reduce their carbon footprint. This achievement demonstrates that, once again, the paper industry leads the way on environmental matters.

The evidence for the reduction in corrugated packaging's carbon footprint comes from the FEFCO database compiled by an independent consultant. From data gathered in 2006, the consultant calculated in 2008 that the CO₂ equivalent of corrugated packaging (its carbon footprint) was 887 kg per tonne of board leaving the factory gate. In 2010 the consultant repeated the calculation, based on 2009 data, and the CO₂ equivalent had dropped to 784kg, a 12% decrease. The savings were largely as a result of less energy usage in the paper mills.

"This means that the corrugated industry has already exceeded, way ahead of schedule, the 10% target currently being called for by Courtauld Commitment 2," says Andrew Barnetson of the Confederation of Paper Industries (CPI). "This is an important fact to communicate because we feel the focus on packaging in Courtauld Commitment 2 is excessive when the real problem lies elsewhere. Packaging is designed to prevent damage to products – damage which is ten times more environmentally significant."

CPI believes that, with WRAP's help, the way is open to move the Courtauld Commitment in a more progressive direction as far as packaging is concerned. Barnetson explains: "Everybody agrees that it is essential to use packaging to minimise product damage and wastage. Everybody also agrees that we need to optimise the use of packaging to achieve that objective. Our industry is calling for 'rightweighting not lightweighting'. What we want to do now is move the debate on in such a way that everyone begins to understand that the right corrugated packaging can create huge environmental savings through its overall performance, such as making better use of space to take lorries off the road, not to mention its superb record on recycling rate and recycled content."

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Notes to Editors

- CPI is the voice of the paper industry in the UK, representing papermakers, tissue manufacturers, corrugated packaging producers and recovered paper merchants.
- CPI represents 75 Member Companies, with a combined annual turnover of £4 billion and 24,500 personnel.
- For additional information on the UK paper industry, in the first instance, please contact Catherine Waterfield, External Affairs Coordinator, on 01793 889612 or email cwaterfield@paper.org.uk. Alternatively, please visit: <http://www.paper.org.uk>.