

## RPC Position Statement: Product & Food Waste

### Background

Product waste occurs when products are discarded, damaged, or unused throughout the supply chain. Food waste in particular, is of concern globally. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) reports that more than a third of all food produced around the world is wasted or lost. This includes food rejected at source, food spoilt or lost through the supply chain and waste food in the home of the consumer.

On average, ten times more energy goes into the production of food and goods than into their packaging. With more than 50% of the world's population now living in towns and cities which are increasingly reliant on sophisticated logistical networks, product losses throughout the supply chain represent a large environmental impact\*. The yearly impact of wasted food currently equates to 250km<sup>3</sup> of wasted water usage, over a billion tonnes of wasted CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, over 1.4 billion km<sup>3</sup> of wasted space, and \$750 billion of wasted investment.

\*INCPEN ([www.incpen.org](http://www.incpen.org))

### RPC's Position

RPC's position is that packaging plays a key role in reducing product waste throughout the supply chain. Packaging aids the protection of products, particularly during the transportation and retail stages of the lifecycle, and through sustainable design, can influence a reduction in product waste.

Within food and non-food market areas where product waste is an issue, RPC works with customers to design packaging that can reduce product waste. Packaging can incorporate features such as portion control, resealability and barrier properties in order to protect products for longer and reduce associated waste.

RPC has been a member of the Save Food initiative ([www.save-food.org](http://www.save-food.org)) since 2013, a joint campaign organised by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations and Messe Düsseldorf to highlight and fight global food loss and waste.

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