

CASE STUDY

International Paper ClassicPak®7 WF



Overview

Poultry processors and retailers require corrugated packaging to move their product to market in a safe and presentable manner. High levels of humidity and rough handling make the supply chain challenging. Historically, the corrugated package was impregnated and/or coated with a petroleum-based wax to meet customers' and retailers' needs.

Looking to improve sustainability and reduce waste by increasing recycling, retail grocery distribution chains challenged their suppliers to improve the total sustainability performance of their products and the packaging they are transported in.

Several poultry processors came to International Paper requesting a more environmentally friendly package – one that is recyclable with other corrugated (OCC) and repulpable – one without petroleum-based wax.

Our customers also wanted to see if switching to a recyclable container might increase retailer loyalty and bottom line results.

Objective

Develop packaging that combines the industry proven features of International Paper's ClassicPak®7 product line with the wax-free 100% recyclability desired by the marketplace.

Strategy

Our innovation team members searched the coating industry for a cost-effective, wax alternative for Modified Atmosphere Packaging (MAP) applications. The new coating must have the same or better barrier properties than wax, be fully recyclable and repulpable, FDA approved for food contact and printable.

Ultimately, the best, most innovative solution for poultry processors was realized through a cooperative effort between International Paper and a major supplier of industrial coatings. The new package was tested in the lab and extensive field trials before being released into the marketplace.

Results

The materials in the ClassicPak®7 product line have been matched to the packaging system needs of our processors and their customers through the introduction of the ClassicPak®7 WF – a wax-free, 100% recyclable and repulpable package that can be sold for OCC rather than hauled to a landfill after use.

The poultry processors are meeting their customers' sustainability requirements and improving their sustainability scorecard rating. Just as importantly, they are meeting their own sustainability and income goals by using a recyclable box in the marketplace.



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