

The Rise of Single-Serve Food Packaging

As consumer preferences shift and technologies advance in both the food and beverage and the food packaging industries, smaller-sized packages are becoming more popular. Thanks to an increased focus on health, convenience, and environmental sustainability, single-serve and miniature food packaging solutions are in high demand.

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With consumers now placing more importance on dietary intake — having a better understanding of what they’re eating and how much they should be eating — single-serve packaging is becoming the go-to choice for many health-conscious consumers.

Ease of use is another factor; in today’s fast-paced world, consumers desire portability, the ability to eat on the go, kid-friendliness, the ability to meet TSA regulations, and so on.

And finally, as environmental and sustainability concerns mount, steps are now being taken to reduce the risk of food spoilage while minimizing waste.

Companies Driving Demand for Single-Serve Food Packaging

The fast food industry has long depended on miniature packaging for on-the-go, portable condiments, salt, pepper, and other items. More recently, changes to kids' meals, such as the inclusion of fruit as a side-dish option, are necessitating new miniature packaging solutions.

Traditional retail food producers are also beginning to require single-serve food packaging solutions. Yogurt and beverage producers are introducing portable standup pouches, while producers of items like jam and nut butters are increasing the number and variety of single-serve cup options. Companies in the spice industry are also expanding their product offerings to include individual and premeasured retail options.

Meal-kit services like Blue Apron, Plated, and HelloFresh are some of the largest — and newest — drivers of the single-serve trend in food packaging, as these companies depend on miniature and single-serve packaging to effectively portion out ingredients for consumers. Using this type of packaging for meal-kit services allows for optimal portability and intuitive consumer use.

How Companies are Meeting the Demand for Single-Serve Packaging



Food and food packaging companies are now pursuing various methods to meet consumers' desire for conveniently packaged food. The specific solutions used, however, depend on the food product itself.

For instance, creating snack-sized packaging — or “snackifying” products — is an increasingly popular technique.

Snack-style packaging designs can be used for a range of products, such as single-serve spices and condiments for at-home use. This type of packaging is novel, convenient, and can help with portion control for consumers with health and dietary concerns.

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Nutrition information labeling is also becoming more and more important; in addition to meeting FDA labeling guidelines, food packaging must also appeal to consumer sensibilities — a recent report showed that 61% of grocery shoppers believe that reading food packaging labels is an important step in maintaining health.

The “rightsizing” or downsizing trend in food packaging makes it easier for consumers to portion control and understand the nutritional value of the foods they’re purchasing.

Because producing miniature and single-serve packages inevitably increases the volume of packaging material used and ultimately disposed of, many companies are also focusing on environmentally friendly packaging initiatives.

To reduce waste and meet the growing consumer demand for sustainable business practices, many food packaging companies are offering compostable and even biodegradable packaging products, which are commonly produced using polylactic acid (PLA) based materials.

Partnering with an Experienced Contract and Toll Manufacturer

As demand rises for convenient, sustainable, and healthy food options, food and beverage producers and packaging companies are consistently working on

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innovation solutions to meet those demands.

To do so, companies often must partner with experienced contract or toll manufacturers; these experts can offer a wide range of services to help food-industry and food-packaging businesses create reliable miniature and single-serve packaging products.

Sierra Coating Technologies is proud to provide industry-leading contract and toll manufacturing services for the food packaging industry. To learn about the cost-saving benefits of working with a contract manufacturer, download our free eBook, “The Financial Case for Contract Manufacturing.”

