Why The Can Could Be The Right Choice For Your Products

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For more than 200 years, the food can has enabled brands to provide high quality, nutritious food to consumers around the world. Even as new packaging formats enter the market, metal continues to demonstrate packaging success. Like many inventions, the can was created to solve a specific problem: feeding European armies in the early 19th century who needed to carry their own food supplies for long distances in harsh conditions without opportunities for re-supply. The format also helped broaden food access to civilians, which until then had been restricted based on seasonal factors and the limited geographic reach of any given product.

Metal packaging lifted those restrictions. In fact, more than 1,500 distinct food types are currently being packed in metal cans. But protection means more than simply guarding against damage during transport. While food cans provide this benefit, they also enable food safety and security with long shelf-stable storage, protecting the quality of a product from the field to the fork and helping give back to the environment, thanks to infinite recyclability.

Shelf Life Extension and Nutritional Value

Metal is inherently sturdy and offers a superior oxygen barrier. Additionally, cans feature a tight seal that protects packaged contents more effectively than alternative formats, from exposure to light, air and humidity. These attributes contribute to the can’s ability to lock in nutrition and offer a strong product shelf life, both of which strengthen consumer brand loyalty. During packaging, retorting destroys bacteria and the metal can keeps the product safe. The product’s flavor is protected and spoilage is prevented, minimizing food waste.

Additionally, the can’s airtight seal eliminates the need for preservatives or refrigeration. The seal is also tamper resistant. In fact, the food can has an unprecedented safety record. According to the FDA, “There has not been a single occurrence of a food-borne illness resulting from a failure of metal packaging in more than 35 years.”

Brand Protection Through Innovative Packaging

Two well-known advantages for supply chain optimization are metal’s durability and strength. With its hermetic double-folded seam, metal guarantees that packaged foods are protected throughout the supply chain, reducing the risk of accidental leakage or spoilage. The stackable design of metal containers facilitates convenient warehouse storage and point-of-sale display.

At the same time, companies are trying to maximize production efficiencies and are

actively seeking packaging formats to help them achieve that goal. Metal packaging supports this, as it offers several significant advantages across the supply chain. Can tops and bottoms are designed to make the format simple and stable to ship, store and stack, thus streamlining logistics and protecting companies from product loss during transit. Brands can be assured that their products will arrive securely on store shelves and will appear on displays exactly as intended.

Cans also require minimal secondary packaging, which is an additional means to reduce costs.

A Renewable Resource

The word “renewable” is often applied to natural resources, like trees and plants, which can rejuvenate over a period of time. Although responsible resource management is an important factor for all packaging types, metal represents a distinct type of resource - a permanent one. In fact, the food can is the most recycled packaging format in the world.

In contrast to most other packaging formats, metal is 100 percent recyclable, with no loss of quality. Once metal is extracted, it can be used over and over again, saving energy and valuable resources each time it is recycled. For several decades, metal has had an extensive infrastructure in place for easy recycling of metal packaging. Out of all the steel ever produced, 80 to 90 percent is still in use today, thanks to an incredibly efficient supply and recycling stream.

At the same time, technological advances, for example with lightweighting, have led to a reduction in the actual amount of metal used in the package while still providing a high-performance container with the strength and critical barrier properties on which customers depend. According to the Can Manufacturers Institute (CMI), food cans weigh 33 percent less today than they did 25 years ago, contributing to overall savings and efficiencies.

About Crown Holdings, Inc.

Crown Holdings, Inc., through its subsidiaries, is a leading supplier of packaging products to consumer marketing companies around the world. World headquarters are located in Philadelphia, PA. For more information, visit www.crowncork.com [1].

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