



**paper shipping sack
manufacturers'
association, inc.**

**Your Resource for Multiwall
Packaging Information.**

Recycling Paper Shipping Sacks

Do you package or receive food products in paper shipping sacks? Recycle them!

Paper industrial shipping sacks, often called multiwall sacks, provide efficient and economical packaging of a wide range of food, agricultural, construction, industrial and consumer products. And, because they are made almost entirely of paper, they often can be recycled after they are emptied. Recycling clean, unlined food paper shipping sacks helps reduce the amount of waste requiring landfill disposal and provides an exceptionally good source of fiber for the manufacturing of new cardboard boxes and other paper packaging products, as well as other paper products -- even paper towels.

It's Easy!

Unlined sacks containing food ingredients and products used in food manufacturing and processing industries are easiest to recycle. These sacks do not have plastic film linings or contain objectionable residues when shaken clean.

The first step: separate the used paper shipping sacks from non-recyclable materials. This is one of the most important things you can do to increase the sacks' value in the recycling stream.

Collect unlined food paper shipping sacks together with corrugated cardboard boxes (also known as old corrugated containers, or OCC). These sacks and boxes can be commingled, baled and collected together.

This is important because most unlined food paper shipping sacks are used in facilities or businesses that already recycle OCC. For many businesses, this will be the easiest way to keep sacks out of the landfill because so many businesses already separate their corrugated boxes for recycling. Clean unlined shipping sacks that have been used to transport food or food ingredients should be placed in containers along with corrugated cardboard boxes for recycling. Some businesses already recycle their paper shipping sacks this way, and paper recyclers are already familiar with this practice.

There is absolutely no need to pay for landfill disposal of clean, used unlined food paper shipping sacks. If a facility uses a sufficient quantity of unlined paper shipping sacks that warrants separate processing, those sacks could possibly have even greater value than if mixed with corrugated boxes. To understand the specific requirements, contact your local paper recycler or waste hauler. PSSMA can also help you locate paper recyclers that handle paper shipping sacks. [Email us at info@pssma.org](mailto:info@pssma.org) if you'd like assistance getting started on a sack recycling program.

The Bottom Line

Recycling used paper shipping sacks can improve **your** bottom line. Separating them from non-recyclable waste is often all it takes to get started, keeping them out of the landfill. Pick-up of used corrugated cardboard boxes for recycling is widely available to businesses throughout the US, and clean, unlined food sacks can be recycled along with them. Use PSSMA's guide and the advice of your local paper recycler to begin recycling your empty paper shipping sacks. You can feel good that you are providing a valuable resource to US paper mills that collectively are striving to recycle 70% of the paper used in the US by 2020, while you are keeping material out of landfills and improving your own bottom line.

Get More Details

PSSMA has issued this guide to assist users of products packaged in paper shipping sacks evaluate the potential for recycling used sacks, and for using the industry recycling emblem. The guide can also be viewed online [HERE](#) . And to learn what types of paper shipping sacks are most valuable (and will earn you the most revenue when recovered), see below or view online [HERE](#) . Also, some paper recyclers specialize in recycling of multiwall sacks. One such company is Wilmington Paper Company, a PSSMA member.

Additional Resources

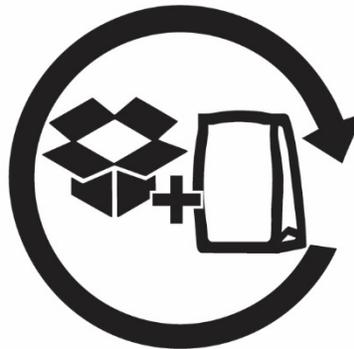
Paper Shipping Sack Manufacturers' Association, www.pssma.org

American Forest & Paper Association, www.afandpa.org

Fibre Box Association, www.fibrebox.org

Paper Stock Institute, www.paperstockindustries.org

Wilmington Paper Company, www.wilmingtonpaper.com



**Corrugated &
Food Paper Shipping Sacks
Recycle**

The Paper Shipping Sack Recycling Value Ranking for Businesses

Paper shipping sacks are efficiently designed to provide the optimum properties for product protection while using the minimum amount of packaging material. To achieve maximum strength per amount of paper used, the fibers in the papers used to construct paper shipping sacks are among the very strongest in the paper industry. When these fibers can be extracted from recycled sacks, they are extremely useful in adding strength and other performance parameters to other recycled packaging, such as corrugated cardboard containers containing recycled materials. However, when non-recyclable components, such as films, wet-strength paper additives, and significant concentrations of string and tape closures are included, recycling becomes more challenging, and the recovered material consequently becomes less valuable for recycling because of the additional processing required. Most mills are able to handle printed sacks used for food ingredients or products, which may be included with used corrugated cardboard boxes.

While local conditions may vary, making it imperative to consult your local paper recycler or waste hauler, the list below provides a general guide from the most valuable to least valuable mix of used sacks.

1. Most Valuable

- Unlined, clean sacks without closure tapes or strings not used to package hazardous chemical or other materials. Most sacks containing food or agricultural ingredients are in this category.
- Large quantities may be bundled for separate recycling and could command a premium price over other grades.
- Small and medium quantities of clean used food paper shipping sacks should be segregated and placed with corrugated cardboard containers for recycling in the OCC stream.

2. Valuable

- A mix of unlined, cleaned sacks not used to package hazardous chemical or other materials, which contain few sacks with string or closures. Check locally for limits.

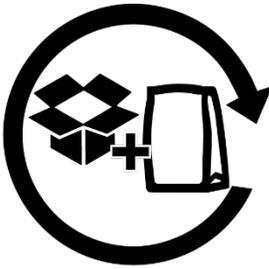
3. Less Valuable

- Clean sacks, not used to package hazardous chemical or other objectionable materials, which contain plastic films or plastic liners or high concentrations of string or tape closures. Commingled lined and unlined sacks generally are not suitable for recycling, since recycled paper mills cannot handle feedstocks which contain significant quantities of plastic film-lined sacks. The recycling option for lined sacks is generally limited to export markets.

4. Not Recyclable

- Sacks used to package hazardous chemical or other objectionable materials which would require special handling or storage.
- Sacks containing excessive residues. Used sacks should always be shaken clean before being segregated for recycling.

On-Package Recycling Symbol for Food Paper Shipping Sacks



Corrugated & Food Paper Shipping Sacks Recycle

The PSSMA has worked with FBA, AF&PA and recycling mills to develop a marking system that clearly identifies paper shipping sacks that can be recycled in a commingled collection with cardboard boxes (Old Corrugated Containers – OCC).

The greatest potential for multiwall sack recycling exists for unlined paper shipping sacks used to package food ingredients and products. Those are *the only sacks authorized* to use the PSSMA recycling emblem which provides an 'on-package' reminder that these sacks may be recycled along with OCC. That category of sacks is the largest single summary commodity sack, accounting for 41% of all 2015 paper shipping sack production.

Unlined food paper shipping sacks offer the greatest potential for recycling, and are authorized to use the PSSMA Recycling Logo shown below. As the logo indicates, the easiest way for most sack users to recycle these sacks is to include them with the corrugated boxes that are already widely recycled. To download the image for printing, go to www.pssma.org.

Using the Paper Shipping Sack Recycling Symbol

The Paper Shipping Sack Manufacturers' Association (PSSMA) makes available for voluntary use by its membersⁱ on certain food paper shipping sacks of the recycling emblem shown below in compliance with these criteria:

- Prior to beginning any multiwall sack recycling program, check with local paper recycler to understand local conditions and requirements.
- Approval for use shall be obtained from the purchaser of the paper shipping sacks.
- The emblem should be printed at a readable size on the sack. If the sack contains a freight certification mark, the recycling emblem may be placed in the vicinity of the freight certification stamp.
- Sacks using the recycling emblem shall be free of plastic or film linings. Sacks with plastic or film linings shall not use the recycling emblem.
- Sacks shall be emptied of all contents prior to recycling.
- Sacks shall not contain residual materials that could pose a hazard to the health of workers during the recovery and recycling process, or that could interfere with the operation of paper recovery and recycling equipment or systems, such as sacks containing residual cement or chemicals.
- The primary means of recycling sacks marked with the recycling emblem shall be comingling with the cardboard/old corrugated container paper recovery stream. Advice regarding the use of other recycling methods, such as separate baling of multiwall sacks shall be determined by recycling service providers.

Sacks containing plastic films or liners, non-paper closures and other non-paper components, or residuals may be recyclable in certain situations. Recycling of such sacks should be discussed with local recycling service providers. Working in conjunction with customers destined to receive the recycled materials, they can provide advice regarding the suitability and methods for recycling.

ⁱ Suppliers of paper shipping sacks for use in the US who are not members of PSSMA should contact PSSMA for licensing arrangements.