



- The entire world is changing towards a circular economy where the focus is on ‘take, make, recycle, and use again’.
- Key factors that influence packaging include the environment, law, consumers, cost pressure for cheaper alternatives and technology.
- Packaging design optimisations must focus on limiting food waste; extended shelf life aim to reduce carbon footprint and extend shelf life.
- Europe introduced plastic taxes for plastics containing less than 30% recycled content; this will increase demand for food grade recycled plastics.
- Brand owners and retailers might require packaging suppliers to perform life cycle assessments on packaging solutions across the entire value chain in order to determine where the environmental impact of the products and assist them in making informed decisions to reduce the impact.

### **Key Benefits of doing a life cycle assessment:**

- *Identify the packaging configuration that offers the lowest environmental impact overall.*
  - *Explore improvement opportunities to reduce the environmental impact across the value chain.*
  - *Recommend the best packaging solutions to customers based on their specific needs.*
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- The European Union’s adoption of the corporate sustainability reporting directive forced 50 000 European companies to report their environmental governance. This will also affect their value chain, including suppliers.
  - South African farmers need to take a serious look at the sustainability and recyclability of their fresh produce packaging if they want take advantage of emerging market opportunities around the world.
  - For compostable and biodegradable packaging there needs to be a large-scale system in place to ensure that the biodegradable or compostable packaging is collected and goes where it needs to.
  - Sustainable packaging is an obligation if one looked at the United Nations’ development goals. Strategic education and marketing could directly impact five of the 17 development goals.
  - Those are Goal 2 [Zero Hunger], Goal 3 [Good Health and Well-being], Goal 12 [Responsible Consumption and Production], Goal 13 [Climate Action] and Goal 17 [Partnerships to achieve the Goal].