

Retailers committed to phasing out PFAS as a class from food packaging

A growing chorus of major retailers, from Amazon to McDonald's, are adopting policies to phase out and ban [PFAS](#) (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) from food packaging. This action is driven by increasing evidence of drinking water contamination by PFAS, the potential for serious health impacts from exposure to these chemicals, increasing government regulation, and pressure from NGOs and consumers to act.

This fact sheet shows the commitments of **17 retail chains with over 71,000 stores and more than \$307 billion in sales** that have committed to eliminate or reduce PFAS in food packaging.

Commitments are listed below for: [Fast-food and fast-casual restaurant chains](#) • [Grocery chains](#) • [Other retail chains](#)

Fast-food and fast-casual chains phasing out PFAS from food packaging

Seven fast-food and fast-casual restaurant chains with a combined total of **more than 51,000 stores and over \$120 billion in annual sales** have committed to eliminate PFAS in food packaging.

Retailer	Details of commitment	Number of U.S. stores ¹ Except as noted below	Total annual U.S. sales ¹ Except as noted below
	CAVA committed in August 2020 to eliminate PFAS from its food packaging, including molded fiber containers and other items, by mid-2021.	110	~\$85 million
	Chipotle announced in March 2020 it would phase PFAS out of its molded fiber burrito bowls by the end of 2020. In April 2021, the company announced it would “complete the transition” for its molded fiber kids’ trays by removing PFAS from them “by the end of 2021.”	2,580	\$5.5 billion
	Freshii committed in August 2020 to transition to PFAS-free molded fiber bowls by early 2021.	411 (global)	\$104.3 million (global)
	McDonald's announced in January 2021 that it would remove added PFAS from “guest packaging materials globally by 2025.”	39,198 (global)	\$100.2 billion (global)
	Panera Bread reported in Summer 2020 that it is working to remove PFAS from the few packages that still contain these chemicals, following up on its Fall 2019 statement that it would transition to PFAS-free baguette bags by June 2020.	2,160	\$5.8 billion
	Sweetgreen announced in March 2020 it would phase PFAS out of its molded fiber bowls by the end of 2020.	103	\$184 million
	Taco Bell announced in January 2020 that it would remove PFAS from all of its “consumer-facing packaging materials” by 2025.	7,427 (global)	\$11.7 billion (global)
TOTALS		51,989 stores	\$123.5 billion in sales

Grocery chains phasing out PFAS from food packaging

Four of the biggest grocery chains in the United States with a combined total of **more than 5,000 stores and over \$130 billion in annual sales** have committed to reduce or eliminate PFAS in food packaging.

Retailer	Details of commitment	Number of U.S. stores ² Except as noted below	Total annual U.S. sales ² Except as noted below
	<p>Ahold Delhaize, the third-largest dedicated U.S. grocery chain, announced in September 2019 its intent to restrict PFAS in private-label food packaging, but with no public timeline.</p>	1,973	\$44.7 billion
	<p>Albertsons, the second-largest dedicated U.S. grocery chain, reported in September 2019 that it removed PFAS from certain prepared food and bakery product packaging (cake plates).</p>	2,252	\$62.4 billion
	<p>Trader Joe's reported in December 2018 that it is asking vendors to avoid using PFAS in the company's packaging.</p>	503	\$13 billion
	<p>In late 2020, Whole Foods Market adopted a restricted substance list that restricts intentionally added PFAS in all food service and exclusive brand packaging and reported that it had already discontinued or reformulated food service packaging containing intentionally added PFAS, including molded fiber plates and bowls. This followed a December 2018 statement that it removed all packaging that tested positive for likely PFAS treatment as reported in Take Out Toxics.</p>	501 (U.S. & Canada)	\$16.9 billion (U.S. & Canada)
TOTALS		5,229 stores	\$137 billion in sales

Other retailers' commitments to ban PFAS from food packaging

Six other retailers selling food or food packaging with a combined total of **more than 13,000 locations and over \$47 billion in annual sales** have committed to reduce or eliminate PFAS in food packaging.

Retailer	Details of commitment	Number of U.S. locations ³ Except as noted below	Total annual U.S. sales ³ Except as noted below
	<p>In 2020, 7-Eleven disclosed on its website that it began replacing packaging with PFAS coatings with alternatives like molded fiber clamshells.</p>	9,046	\$18.6 billion
	<p>In 2020, Amazon published a restricted substance list for certain private-label food-contact materials that restricts PFAS, among other chemicals and classes of chemicals as well as plastics. This applies to Amazon Kitchen-brand products sold in Amazon Go, Amazon Go Grocery, Amazon Fresh, and Fresh grocery delivery.</p>	36	n/a

	In early 2021, Office Depot released a restricted substance list showing that PFAS is restricted in disposable foodware, furniture, and textiles.	1,307	\$6 billion
	In early 2021, Rite Aid published a restricted substance list for its own-brand food-contact materials that restricts PFAS, among other chemicals and classes of chemicals.	2,461	\$15.6 billion
	Staples published a restricted substance list in October 2019 that designated the PFAS class as a priority for “safer alternatives innovation” in disposable foodware, furniture, and textiles.	1,093	\$6.9 billion
 	In 2020, TJX announced that it plans “to switch out compostable serve-ware in our U.S. Corporate office cafeterias to ensure that the compostable serve-ware we use is free of PFAS chemicals.”	3 (Corporate office cafeterias)	n/a
TOTALS		13,946 locations	At least \$47.1 billion in sales

Endnotes

¹ Except noted below, number of restaurants and total sales are from 2019 and in the U.S., from QSR magazine’s list entitled “Ranking the Top 50 Fast-Food Chains in America,” <https://www.qsrmagazine.com/content/qsr50-2020-top-50-chart>
CAVA: Restaurants are as of March 2021 (<https://cava.com/locations>); sales are from 2018 (<https://www.restaurantdive.com/news/cava-secures-40m-in-latest-funding-round/568953/>)

Freshii: Number of restaurants and total sales are from all of its locations across the world; North America-only numbers could not be found. Number of locations is as of February 2021, and sales reflect FY2020 <https://freshii.inc/press-releases/press-release-details/2021/Freshii-Inc.-Announces-Fourth-Quarter-and-Fiscal-Year-2020-Results-and-Announces-Normal-Course-Issuer-Bid/default.aspx>

McDonald’s: Restaurants and sales are global. Sales are for 2019, <https://corporate.mcdonalds.com/corpmcd/en-us/our-stories/article/ourstories.q4-and-2019-results.html>; locations are as of the end of 2020, <https://d18rn0p25nwr6d.cloudfront.net/CIK-0000063908/66cf4c9f-1e8c-4436-8a2f-95f189fde65f.pdf>

Panera: US-only stores and sales for FY2019 are from here: <https://www.restaurantbusinessonline.com/top-500-chains-2020/panera-bread>

Sweetgreen: Restaurants and sales are as of January 2020 and for 2019 respectively (<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/04/business/sweetgreen-salads.html> and <https://www.restaurantbusinessonline.com/top-500-chains-2020/sweetgreen>)

Taco Bell: Restaurants and sales are global and as of the end of 2020 (<https://d18rn0p25nwr6d.cloudfront.net/CIK-0001041061/7fd47355-464e-4d38-9848-24e7c25b5e4e.html>)

² For this table, the number of stores and total annual sales are from 2019 in Progressive Grocer’s list, The PG 100, <https://progressivegrocer.com/pg-100-walmart-amazon-kroger-dominate-top-retailers-food-and-consumables?-from=gate%20;%20only%20has%20US%20stores>. The stores and sales are U.S.-only, except for Whole Foods Market, whose stores and sales reflect U.S. and Canadian locations.

³ Except for Amazon and TJX, the number of stores and sales cover 2019 and U.S. locations only. Source: <https://nrf.com/resources/top-retailers/top-100-retailers/top-100-retailers-2020-list>

Amazon: As of February 2021, there are 26 U.S. Amazon Go locations, 8 Amazon Fresh stores, and 2 Amazon Go Grocery stores. (<https://www.supermarketnews.com/retail-financial/amazon-go-draws-high-interest-us-shoppers>)