North American Metal Packaging Alliance, Inc.

Benefits of Metal Packaging

Metal Packaging Maximizes Food Safety

Metal can technology is essential to food and beverage safety. Metal packaging protects food quality and nutrition, while enabling high temperature sterilization that eliminates the dangers of food poisoning from microbial contaminants. Put another way, metal cans protect human health by reducing the potential for serious illness.

Metal Packaging Is Crucial to Feed Needy Populations

Canned food products play a critical role in feeding those in need; a role that cannot be easily or effectively replaced by fresh, refrigerated, or frozen alternatives. Metal packaged products offer a significantly longer shelf-life for foods, making them the best option to provide nutritious foods at the lowest possible cost to people around the world. Conversely, fresh foods are only viable for a few weeks while frozen foods are too costly or impossible to distribute in many geographies. Metal packaged products enable global assistance for those impacted by famine or natural disasters, as well as local food pantries or Women, Infant and Children (WIC) programs that assist our citizens in need within the U.S.

Metal Packaging Results in Less Food Waste

Although they are certainly options for many people, fresh, refrigerated, and frozen foods result in higher product waste than canned foods. Fresh foods have a shelf-life of a few weeks at best, with refrigerated and frozen foods slightly longer. But none compare to metal packed foods, which typically have a shelf-life of two years or more.

Metal Packaging Is Energy Efficient

From farm to table, canned-ready meals are the most energy effective method for food delivery, followed by bulk refrigerated products and fresh fruits and vegetables. Compared to metal packaged foods, frozen products require about 70% more energy.

Metal Packaging Encourages Recycling Efforts

Metal packaging encourages recycling efforts, with steel cans and aluminum representing the two highest categories of packaging products collected for recycling. Metal and food beverage containers are 100% recyclable and can be recycled without losing strength or quality. More importantly, the value of the steel and aluminum product lines allow for community recycling efforts and curbside pick-ups for all recyclable materials. Without these products and the monies

generated through their resale, recycling programs would have to be subsidized further by taxpayers or eliminated completely.

Metal Packaging and Epoxy Resins Coatings Are Effective for a Broad Range of Food Applications

While there are a number of can coating approaches claimed to be alternatives to epoxy coatings, there is no readily available, suitable alternative to BPA-based can coatings that meets the essential safety and performance requirements for the broadest spectrum of foods now packaged in metal containers. The alternatives that do exist are only viable for certain use applications. They have not been proven successful in the vast array of food and beverage products currently on the market. For example, there is a metal can on the market that is coated with a baked-on oleoresinous enamel, rather than an epoxy coating. That can is currently only used for dried beans, and no other types of food products. It represents an extremely small fraction of the overall canned vegetable market.

Another alternative approach is polyethylene terephthalate (PET) laminate technology, which involves an application of PET plastic inside the metal container. This technology has been used in Japan, primarily for hot beverage containers. There appears to be a perception that all metal food and beverage containers in Japan have moved to BPA-free alternatives, but this is not true. In fact, only about 40% of the food can market in Japan use the PET laminate technology and a significant portion of that 40% still requires the use of an epoxy coating as an adhesive to hold the laminate on the metal.