



EU Packaging Rules:

What U.S. Food and Beverage Exporters Need to Know

U.S. Department of Agriculture • U.S. Mission to the European Union



WHAT IS THE PACKAGING AND PACKAGING WASTE REGULATION (PPWR) – EU REGULATION 2025/40?

FULL LIFE CYCLE

The PPWR sets EU rules for packaging across its whole life cycle. It covers sustainability, labeling, reducing packaging waste, and extended producer responsibility.

SCOPE

The PPWR covers packaging whether it's empty or holds a product. Transport packaging is also in the scope, including wooden pallets, plastic wrap, and bulk bags.

SINGLE MARKET

Packaging that meets PPWR rules can move freely across the EU single market.

KEY DATES



ALREADY IN EFFECT

Substances of Concern

- ♦ **PFAS:** The EU bans food contact packaging with PFAS above a set level (Article 5). The rule treats PFAS the same whether someone added them on purpose or not. You must be able to back up your compliance if asked.
- ♦ **Heavy metals:** Lead, cadmium, mercury, and hexavalent chromium combined may not exceed 100 mg/kg.

WHAT TO DO: Expect questions from your importer. Check with your packaging supplier now.

ALREADY IN EFFECT

Declaration of Conformity (DoC)

- ♦ Every packaging type sold in the EU needs a DoC signed by the manufacturer. The DoC is a written self-declaration that a packaging type meets certain PPWR requirements.
- ♦ **Transport packaging has no exemption.** Pallets, pallet collars, wrappings, and straps each need their own DoC.

WHAT TO DO: Get information from your packaging suppliers. Check who is the "manufacturer" under PPWR. Sign the DoC as your importer will ask for the documentation.

IN PREPARATION NOW*

Minimum Amounts of Recycled Plastics

By 2030, plastic packaging placed on the market must contain a minimum percentage of recycled content recovered from post-consumer plastic waste.

PACKAGING CATEGORY	MINIMUM RECYCLED CONTENT (2030)
Single-use plastic beverage bottles	30%
Contact-sensitive PET packaging	30%
Contact-sensitive packaging (other plastics)	10%
Other plastic packaging (all other formats)	35%

IN PREPARATION NOW*

Recycled Plastic Rules for Non-EU Countries

- ♦ Plastic recycled outside the EU must meet the same sustainability standards as plastic recycled inside it. The European Commission still has to set out how it will assess recycling plants in other countries.
- ♦ For recycled plastic for food contact material, Regulation 2022/1616 requires a government authority in the exporting country to certify the recycling facility. This could cause problems once the 2030 recycled-content minimums start.