

## New US guidelines for packaging materials sustainability



Pic: GS1

GS1 US recently published the 'Best Practice Guideline for Sustainability in Packaging Materials', created by apparel and general merchandise leaders to help the industry incorporate sustainable packaging practices in the supply chain. It provides guidance on the selection of packaging materials and processes to minimise non-recyclable waste.

The new guideline is focused on the use of polybags, packing techniques and materials, and cartons. It was developed by industry partners to address dual challenges: increasing reliance on omni-channel fulfillment and the growing demand for sustainable packaging.

The new guidance, developed for both suppliers and retailers, is applicable to all North American companies trading products in the general merchandise and apparel sector. This includes, but is not limited to, cosmetics, jewelry, footwear, fashion accessories, apparel and sportswear, sporting goods, home fashion and small appliances, according to a press release by GS1 US.

GS1 US, a member of GS1 Global, is a not-for-profit information standards organisation that facilitates industry collaboration to help improve supply chain visibility and efficiency through the use of GS1 Standards, the most widely used supply chain standards system in the world.

Included in the guidance are recommendations for the use of polybags (typically low-density polyethylene (LDPE)-based plastic bags) that protect products during transit from manufacturing sites to distribution centers and onwards to retail stores and consumers' homes (through e-commerce).

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Best practices covered in the guideline include rightsizing of packaging components and optimizing polybag thickness to reduce plastic waste, as well as guidance on recyclability, bag closures, labels and carton fulfilment.

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