

Increasing Sustainability with Paper Straws



A Case Study

Because of environmental concerns, many states and businesses are pursuing alternatives to plastic straws. When moving to paper straws, choosing the right printing ink to prevent contamination is key to consumer safety

Global Changes

Plastics, especially single-use plastics, have dominated the headlines over the last year. Images of plastic waste on beaches and news of floating plastic islands in the ocean have prompted many U.S. cities, including Seattle, San Francisco and Miami to ban plastic straws. Companies have followed suit. Starbucks® announced in July 2018 they are in the process of eliminating plastic straws by 2020, switching to alternative, more environmentally-friendly straw solutions. The European Union has led the charge for several years to ban one-time use of plastics, aiming to reduce their impact on the environment. In March 2019, the EU parliament passed a law that requires all EU member states to ban plastic straws, plastic cutlery, plastic cups, and plastic drink stirrers by 2021.

What Prompted the Change?

Research shows that in 2015, plastic consumption worldwide exceeded 300 million metric tons. Converting that for each of the world's 7.6 billion humans equates to almost 90 pounds of plastics used per person each year. That number is growing, with flexible plastics leading the pack. While plastic straws are just the tip of the iceberg, they show how consumers have started to think about the impact single-use plastics can have on the environment.

What is the Solution?

Short of an outright ban on plastics, it is not clear if there is an immediate solution. However, many companies have started to look at sustainably-sourced alternatives to plastic for their straws. Paper straws have emerged as a leading alternative, with companies looking for printing solutions to color straws to provide differentiation, designs, messaging or corporate branding in a way that is safe for consumers.

Starbucks® is a registered trademark of Starbucks Corporation

Safety

As a paper straw sits for extended periods of time in different types of liquids and comes in direct contact with the mouth and lips, companies are looking for printing inks and coatings that are specifically formulated and manufactured to mitigate the risk of contamination for the consumer.

Non-Toxic Printing Inks

Colorcon No-Tox® Products, a leader in the development and manufacturing of US FDA and EU compliant printing inks for direct and indirect contact with food, offers over 50 years of experience in regulatory compliant formulated inks and coatings and has been providing inks for direct contact on paper straws for over 10 years.

By working hand-in hand with each client's product development teams, Colorcon offers a wide range of inks and coatings that adhere well to the various paper substrates and don't bleed, leach or otherwise contaminate the beverage. Our direct food contact inks and coatings are formulated to hold up to all kinds of liquids, including dairy, acidic carbonated sodas and alcoholic beverages to name a few.



About Colorcon No-Tox® Products

Colorcon No-Tox® Products is a leading manufacturer of US FDA and EU compliant printing inks for direct and indirect food contact applications. All No-Tox inks and coatings are manufactured in a cGMP, FDA and ISO 9001:2015 registered facility, and come with a written regulatory compliance guarantee.