



Tremendous amounts of energy are wasted on food packaging.

Food Packing Costs More Energy Than Production

The food on your dinner table may have wasted more energy just to package it than was actually spent in producing it.

According to a new report by the Center for Science in the Public Interest, the fancy packaging of certain foods, such as soft drinks and some canned items, requires more energy than is spent getting them to the family table. In its 14-page table, the Center, a non-profit group based in Washington, D.C., compiles some fascinating comparisons of the amounts of energy required to produce and package different foods.

Aluminum and plastic containers, which take large amounts of energy to produce, are becoming more and more widely used, the report said, at the expense of glass, steel and paper packaging which use less energy. The report calls throw-away aluminum cans and plastic milk bottles "great energy wasters," and recommends against the throwaway glass bottles for the same reason.

Among the highest energy users are such processed foods as TV dinners, frozen prepared foods, flavorings and spreads, canned beverages and cooking oil sprays that come in aerosol cans, it said.

The report also notes that a 12-ounce aluminum can of Budweiser beer takes 3,272 units of energy to produce, and 4,735 units of energy to package, while the same size steel can of Schlitz beer takes the same amount of energy to produce, but only 2,685 units of energy to package.

It takes 9,058 units of energy to produce a 16-oz. non-returnable bottle of Royal Crown Cola, the report said, two-thirds of that spent on the packaging.

While a returnable bottle the same size takes an additional 1,850 units of energy to make, the report said, returnable soft drink bottles are re-used an average of 15 times, so total energy requirements are much lower over a period of time.

The report says Americans spend about 12 percent of their total energy output on growing, processing and packing food. It recommends five methods of reducing energy consumption while preserving high nutrition standards.

Growing more vegetables and fruit at home can save a good deal of transportation and packaging energy. The report said it takes less than half the energy to grow potatoes at home than it does to bring commercially grown ones to the supermarket. Growing apples at home, a much more difficult process, takes about one-sixth the energy spent on commercially grown apples.

Other recommended energy saving practices are shifting from animal to vegetable protein, cutting down on processed foods, avoiding nonreturnable beverage containers, and buying more bulk and unpackaged foods.

Some other comparisons from the table:

Producing grain fed beef takes 42,600 units of energy per pound, compared to only 29,650 units of energy per pound for folage fed beef;

It takes almost as much energy, 31,950 units, to produce a dozen grade A large eggs as it does to produce 1.97 pounds of Holly Farms frozen chicken breasts, 37,756 energy units. But it takes a lot more energy to package the eggs, 2,256 energy units, compared to 388 energy units for the chicken packaging;

Using a plastic bag to put fruit and vegetables in at the supermarket takes 171 more energy units than a paper bag.

I am sure this omission was an error, and I appreciate its correction by printing this letter.

Thank you,
Peter E. Riess
President of Guilford
College Revelers

Editor's Note:

I regret the omission in last week's issue of the **Guilfordian**. The omission of the Revelers from the students activities list was not intentional, it was an oversight on my part. Thank you for your letter.

Leslie

Letters to the Editors

Dear Editors,

I am very disappointed in the level of service offered in the cafeteria this year. I am referring specifically to the lack of vegetarian dishes on week-ends. If you are a vegetarian you must survive from Friday until Monday on a meager diet of peanut butter and cottage cheese, and whatever non-meat protein that just happens to be served.

If a simple dish like macaroni and cheese or an omelete could be served, both vegetarians and non-vegetarians could be fed. But no; Ron Short has specifically told one non-meat eater that since vegetarians number only 15% of the student body, they will just have to get along.

Ron needs to realize that Guilford is a Quaker school where the needs of **everyone** are taken into consideration, not just the majority. If he can at least attempt to accomodate everybody, he'll be doing a good job. If he won't even try, he doesn't deserve his job.

A Disgruntled Student



Dear Editor:

I would like to question the Guilfordian's policy on unsigned letters to the editor. I personally do not think that a letter which is not signed should be printed. Any personal opinion no matter how biased can be printed without any concern about taste or fairness. In the case of last week's letter, I didn't think that the letter was harsh enough to need the author's name withheld. The victim also suggested ways for the cafeteria to change their ways. I think a change in this policy will eliminate spiteful letters such as last year's (on the semi formal dance), and will promote a more open atmosphere concerning letters to the editor.

Geoff Wilkinson

Dear Editor,

I read your article in the **Guilfordian** (Sept. 8) about the new Founders Building, and was quite distressed to see that there was no mention of the Guilford College Revelers anywhere in the article. Our offices are also located in the new building right next to the recreation room. Also there, are the offices of the drama faculty, Dr. Donald Deagon and Mr. Dean Regenos.

No Stars, Just Parties

As many of you have noticed, last Thursday night's "Star party" did not materialize. Because of the amount of interest shown, we have rescheduled the "star party" for Tuesday night, September 16th, at 10:00 P.M. Once again, Jupiter will be the "star attraction"! Also, don't forget the non-credit, free computer class, sponsored by the SPS, which will meet on

Wednesday, September 17th at 10:00 AM in the basement of King room 030.

The South Central Farmers Committee, Post Office Box 1094, Delano, California 93215, represents the growers in offering the facts of the farm labor issue. They have materials and information which are available to anyone interested in this issue.