PAPERTECH

DUAL-OVENABLE TRAYS
BAKERY

A Guide to Sustainable Paper Trays for Fresh Bakery:

How Bakery Brands Can Secure Reliable Supply, Win Shoppers with Recyclable Packaging and Stay Ahead of Regulation



Bakery packaging carries more uncertainty than ever.

Tariffs on plastic and aluminum are driving up packaging costs and overseas shipping delays disrupt production. Meanwhile, regulatory requirements are tightening and retailers are pushing toward eco-friendly packaging.

All these pressures point toward the same alternative packaging: recyclable paperboard.

However, some bakeries may remain cautious about adopting "sustainable paper trays" because they fear operational risk.

The good news? Switching to a reliable supply of paperboard trays is now simple. Dual-ovenable and recyclable paperboard trays are engineered to provide the performance and sustainability to help keep bakeries running, stay ahead of regulations and give shoppers the eco-friendly packaging they want.

Plus, with a domestic supplier, bakeries can be confident they can keep production on schedule.



Who is PaperTech?

PaperTech has made pressed paperboard trays for more than 25 years in our own 150,000 sq. ft., SQF Level 2 certified plant in Findlay, Ohio. We ship 98% of orders on time and complete, and one day's freight reaches 60% of the U.S. population.



What is Dual-Ovenable?

One tray goes from the freezer (-40°F) to a conventional oven (450°F), and it's microwaveable too. No repanning between steps.



What is Pressed Paperboard?

Trays pressed from flat sheets of paperboard, not molded from wet pulp like molded fiber trays. The result is a smooth, rigid tray that holds its shape through filling and sealing, with a surface your branding prints on directly.

This guide will show you:

- **How tariffs, resin prices and shipping delays are affecting plastic and aluminum packaging**
- **Why shoppers and retailers are moving toward recyclable paper packaging**
- **How new state packaging laws (EPR) can add cost to non-recyclable packaging**
- **How pressed paperboard trays run on your existing line, from denester to freezer to oven**
- **What to look for in a domestic tray supplier**

Want to see how PaperTech's DUAL-OVENABLE pressed paperboard trays perform on your bakery line?
Our engineers will bring the trays to you and run a trial on your equipment.

To speak with an expert and set up your trial, fill out our contact form at **papertrays.com/bakery-trays** or call **720-556-1347**.

Rising costs, unpredictable tariffs and overseas delays.



Four–year highs
in PE and PP resin prices in spring 2026, with analysts expecting prices to stay elevated through the year[1]

25% tariff
on many Chinese–origin plastic products including packaging, with no set expiration (Section 301)[2]

Up to 50% tariff
on imported aluminum, charged on full customs value (Section 232)[3]

44%
of container ships arrived behind schedule in July 2026, with late arrivals averaging 6.06 days[4] (Section 301)[2]

Figures as of September 2026. Tariff rates and resin prices change often.

Plastic and aluminum are increasing in cost.

Plastic and aluminum packaging have been the bakery default for decades, largely because of their consistent and low cost. However, tariffs (which have been revised repeatedly since early 2025) have raised packaging costs and made them difficult to predict — and difficult to ignore.

The volatility is the hardest part. Packaging is quoted months before it is consumed, and retail pricing is committed even further out. When landed cost moves mid–cycle, your margin absorbs it rather than your customer's. For a bakery holding annual program pricing with a retailer, that makes every quote into a bet and accurate profit projection impossible.

Global supply chain carries operational risks.

Overseas trays that arrive late do more than delay a shipment. Bakery production runs on fixed bake and ship windows, so missing packaging means idling a line, paying to expedite or holding finished product that is already losing shelf life.

Each of those costs more than the tray. The one your customer notices is the short order or the stale delivery, which puts a reputation built over years in the hands of a container you never controlled.

When manufactured domestically, paperboard trays eliminate tariff exposure and global supply–chain delays associated with plastic and aluminum packaging.



Shoppers' habits are evolving.

Sustainability directly impacts purchasing decisions.

Consumers want packaging they can feel good about.

For bakery brands that want to project a fresher, more thoughtful image, paperboard packaging offers a real opportunity to stand out, especially to shoppers who are looking for it.

A natural-looking tray tells consumers you care about quality.

Research shows people rate products higher in quality when they come in sustainable packaging, and that perception is tied directly to how natural the packaging appears. Aluminum looks industrial. Plastic looks manufactured. Paper looks natural.

PaperTech's DUAL-OVENABLE paperboard trays are ideal for fresh bakery.

Our paper trays provide the structural rigidity and freezer-to-oven versatility needed to preserve product integrity from oven to shelf to home. Paperboard's natural appearance and feel also trigger the same cues as a bakery box or a bread bag, which shoppers view as packaging for artisanal food.



Consumers are choosing brands that match their values. Packaging is part of the impression you make on a consumer, and paper trays send the right message.

82% of consumers say they'd be willing to pay more for sustainable packaging[5]

49% of U.S. consumers say paper is best for the environment overall[5]

46% say paper is the easiest packaging to recycle[5]

35% would consider avoiding a retailer that isn't reducing non-recyclable packaging[5]

Major Retailers Are Pushing for Recyclable Packaging

Walmart	Its Recycling Playbook steers suppliers away from hard-to-recycle packaging materials, including PVC, polystyrene and EPS, and pushes design for recyclability across its private brands[7]
Whole Foods Market	Has eliminated polystyrene foam from its meat trays and food service packaging in U.S. and Canadian stores[8]
Costco Wholesale	Asks suppliers for widely recyclable packaging and certified fiber, accepting FSC, SFI and PEFC certification with a preference for FSC[9]
Kroger	Has committed to 100% recyclable, reusable or compostable "Our Brands" packaging by 2030[10]

What recyclable packaging can do for your brand:

- **Repeat customers:** Shoppers tend to stick with brands that share their values, and many will recommend them to others.
- **Retailer support:** Recyclable packaging lines up with retailer sustainability goals, which can help in shelf space and program conversations.
- **Room to invest:** With most shoppers willing to pay more for sustainable packaging, the switch can help pay for itself.

More shoppers are buying baked goods.



Shoppers want eco-friendly packaging, but they still want their baked goods to arrive intact. Our sturdy and dual-ovenable paperboard trays are engineered to accommodate both objectives.

96.7%

of U.S. households buy from the perimeter bakery[12]

31.9 trips

per year for the average shopper, at $6.63 per trip[12]

$22.6B

U.S. in-store bakery market[11]

Shoppers want fresh bakery in their routine.

Sustainable paper trays give customers what they want, which is high-quality baked goods in natural-looking packaging they can feel good about. The result is stronger brand recognition and advocacy that can turn a switch to sustainable packaging into a cost-neutral or even profitable choice.

DUAL-OVENABLE paperboard trays are purpose-engineered for fresh bakery.

Engineered with structural rigidity and freezer-to-oven versatility, our sustainable trays deliver what bakeries need to build shopper confidence.

A dual-ovenable paperboard tray free of dents or flimsy corners tells shoppers they are choosing a better product.

When packaging reflects quality, shoppers view the product as worth the price. Paperboard also delivers a natural appearance that foil and plastic cannot match. The result is a bakery product the shopper is glad to have on their counter.

Plastic is piling up.

400 M
Metric Tons

of plastic are produced worldwide every year.
Less than 10% is recycled[13]

At least 60%
of Americans can recycle our paperboard trays through curbside or drop-off programs (How2Recycle® Widely Recyclable)[14]

Plastic packaging in the U.S. has a recycling rate of **13%**[15]

Regulators, retailers and consumers are demanding a change because living in a world with landfills full of plastic is not sustainable.

What is EPR?

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) laws shift the financial burden of packaging waste from cities to the companies that produce it. For food processors, non-recyclable packaging can trigger compliance fees, higher disposal costs and regulatory scrutiny. Those costs will be passed down to your company unless you take proactive steps.

By switching to recyclable paperboard trays, you stay ahead of regulations before they impact your operation, making it a strategic business move that goes far beyond just going "green."

New laws are emerging.

Non-recyclable packaging is becoming more costly.

7 States
(California, Colorado, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, Oregon and Washington) have enacted comprehensive packaging EPR laws[16]

8 States
(New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Illinois and Georgia) have bills pending or in committee[17]

Up to $25K
per day in non-compliance fines under Oregon's law[18]

Up to 1%
of Sales per jurisdiction (early estimates of EPR fees)[19]

Plastic still accounts for roughly 60% of bakery packaging, but paper and paperboard are growing at nearly 7% annually, the strongest CAGR among substrates in the category.

Figures as of September 2026.

SFC · PEFC · SQF CERTIFIED · Western Michigan University 1903 · Kosher Certification · Member of How2Recycle · FSC FOREST STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL · SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY INITIATIVE

Your production needs to continue running smoothly.

Worried that switching to paper trays will slow your line or compromise product quality?

The truth is that with the right supplier and the right modern paperboard design, you can make the switch without dealing with denester jams, seal failures or thermal warping that can derail your production and ruin the quality of your baked goods.



Make Your Product Stand Out with Print-On-Tray Capability

Unlike plastic, aluminum and molded fiber, paperboard provides a clean printable surface. And with our in-house printing, you can eliminate unnecessary steps and print brand details, nutrition panels and QR codes directly on your tray.



DUAL-OVENABLE paperboard trays are engineered to proactively address these problems.

Built to run on the equipment you already have.
Our trays hold their dimensions from magazine to denester to fill to film seal, so they run on your current equipment. That means no costly slowdowns, repanning or product damage. Our engineers will also run a trial on your line so you can see it for yourself before you commit.

Freezer-to-oven versatility in a single tray.
–40°F to 450°F and Microwaveable
Our sturdy paperboard trays handle extreme cold and heat, making them suitable for take-and-bake, thaw-and-sell, frozen bakery and home meal replacement programs. One tray carries the product through the whole journey, with no repanning between steps.

Paper trays shaped to fit your bakery product.
Available in round, square and rectangular formats and multiple depths, our trays meet the shape requirements for baked goods including coffee cakes, cinnamon rolls, muffins, strudels, individual pastries and more. Lids are also available as part of a complete packaging option.

Your supplier should help you move faster.

Global supply chains are unpredictable, and production windows wait for no one.

Packaging delays can stall production, disappoint customers and cost you business. A U.S.–based supplier keeps that from happening.

How does a domestic supplier help?

- Reliable supply without overseas delays
- No tariffs or hidden costs
- Lower carbon footprint, higher sustainability
- Strict quality standards you can trust
- Supports American jobs and communities

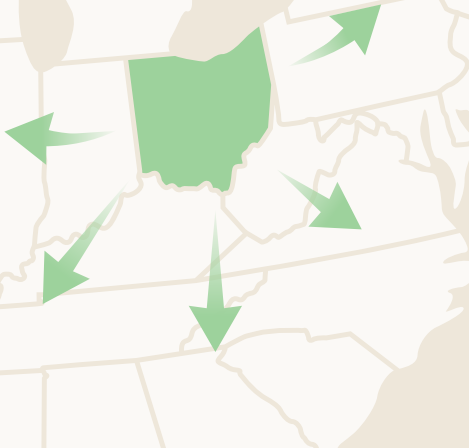
If a supplier is too small, they might not have the manufacturing capability to handle your order. But if a supplier is too big, you might get slow responses and an impersonal customer experience.

We Deliver Our Paperboard Trays with a **98% On–Time and Complete Rate.**

From our 150,000 sq. ft. SQF Level 2 facility in Findlay, Ohio, we combine agility with scalable production to provide our customers the packaging they need to stay on schedule.

- **Proximity:** Our facility sits one day's freight from 60% of the U.S. population, which reduces shipping delays and costs
- **Capacity:** Modern equipment plus ongoing investments to increase output
- **Speed:** Quick adjustments and consistent deliveries during peak production windows
- **Expertise:** 25+ years in paperboard, with engineers who will integrate paperboard trays on your line by running tests on your site
- **Confidence:** Domestic supply shields you from global shipping delays and tariff exposure
- **Sustainability:** SFI–, FSC– and PEFC–certified materials, recyclability documentation and U.S. compliance expertise that international suppliers cannot match

During peak season, when production lines are running, waiting weeks for overseas shipments is not an option. Our U.S. manufacturing and hands–on engineering team means you get what you need, when you need it.



Why are bakeries switching to recyclable paperboard trays?

Plastic and Aluminum Are Getting Expensive

Unpredictable tariffs are driving up the cost of bakery packaging. Rates keep moving, which makes packaging costs nearly impossible to forecast.[2,3]

Global Supply Chains Are Unreliable

In July 2026, more than four in ten container ships arrived behind schedule, and late arrivals ran about six days late on average.[4]

Regulations Are Tightening Fast

As of September 2026, seven states have enacted comprehensive packaging EPR laws and eight more have bills pending. Oregon fines up to $25,000 per day for non-compliance.[16–18]

Retailers Are Pushing For Sustainable Packaging

Major retailers, including Walmart, Costco, Kroger and Whole Foods, are steering suppliers toward recyclable materials and away from hard-to-recycle plastics.[7–10]

Shoppers Pay Attention to Their Bakery Packaging

82% of consumers say they'd be willing to pay more for sustainable packaging, and research shows natural-looking packaging improves how shoppers rate the food inside.[5,6]

DUAL-OVENABLE Trays Are Engineered for Fresh Bakery

Our paperboard trays handle the demands of the entire bakery process, from filling to freezing to heating. You also get print-on-tray capabilities that aluminum and plastic can't match.

PaperTech Delivers When It Counts

Our Findlay, Ohio facility sits one day's freight from 60% of the U.S. population. We maintain a 98% On-Time and Complete Rate, and our team picks up the phone when you need support.



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Looking to keep your bakery production on schedule with a domestic supply of sustainable packaging?

Let's talk about integrating DUAL-OVENABLE paperboard trays seamlessly into your process.



To speak with an expert and set up your trial, fill out our contact form at **papertrays.com/bakery-trays** or call **720-556-1347**.

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