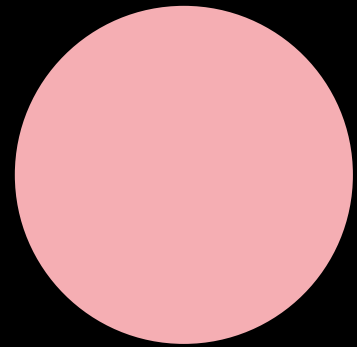
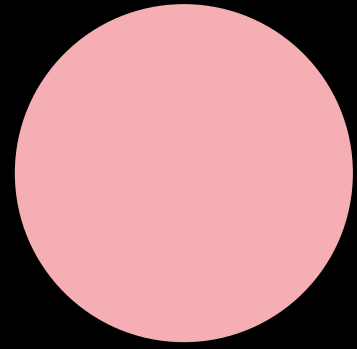


30 January 2020

Plastic packaging used by supermarkets vs the amount used by Riverford



Classified: Private

Summary of results

Study conclusion:

Riverford's veg boxes contain 82% less plastic than equivalent packaged products from major UK supermarkets.

Riverford's 3 most popular veg boxes contained 82% less plastic packaging collectively when compared to representative, packaged products across 7 UK supermarkets.

Introduction

Riverford claim to only use packaging when it's strictly necessary to prevent food waste and strive to find ways to use less.

Riverford wanted to understand how their use of plastic packaging in their vegetable boxes compared to the market commissioned Savanta to run a comparable packaging test with the leading UK supermarkets.

To test performance, we selected Riverford's 3 most popular boxes (seasonal organic - small, seasonal organic - medium, quick organic - medium) to compare packaged supermarket products.

The products that featured in the nine boxes across the weeks commencing 5th, 12th and 19th January were weighed, and compared against the same products from Morrisons, Tesco, Lidl, Aldi, Sainsbury's, Waitrose and Asda. The contents for each Riverford box used in the comparison are shown in the table below.

Table 1: Content of Riverford boxes used for the comparison

Week	Items in seasonal organic veg box - small	Items in seasonal organic veg box – medium	Items in quick organic veg box - medium
W/c 5 th January	Purple sprouting broccoli 250g	Courgettes 500g	Celery x1
	Courgettes 400g	Red potatoes 1kg	White onions 500g
	Red potatoes 700g	Carrots 650g	Sweet Potatoes 600g
	White onions 400g	Butternut squash x1	Flat Beans 250g
	Butternut squash small x1	Calabrese 500g	Calabrese 500g
	Curly kale 200g	True spinach 300g	Curly Kale 350g
	Romano Peppers x1	Mushrooms Chestnut 200g	Mushrooms Chestnut 200g
W/c 12 th January		Red pepper x2	Red pepper x2
	Red potatoes 700g	Red potatoes 1kg	Courgettes 500g
	Carrots 500g	White onions 500g	White onions 500g
	Beetroot 500g	Carrots 650g	Butternut squash small 600g
	Calabrese 400g	Cauliflower x1	Calabrese 500g
	True spinach 200g	Brussels sprouts 500g	Savoy cabbage x1
	Mushrooms Chestnut 200g	Swiss chard x1	Tomatoes cherry on the vine 250g
Tomatoes cherry on the vine 250g	Romano peppers x2	Swiss chard x1	
W/c 19 th January		Tomatoes cherry on the vine 250g	Mixed salad leaves 80g
	Red potatoes 700g	Red potatoes 1kg	Carrots 650g
	White onions 400g	White onions 500g	White onions 500g
	Carrots 500g	Parsnips 650g	Sweet potatoes 600g
	Sweet potatoes 400g	Calabrese 500g	Courgettes 700g
	Brussel sprouts 350g	Savoy cabbage x1	Cauliflower x1
	Swiss chard 100g	Mixed salad leaves 150g	Batavia Lettuce x1
Red peppers x1	Mushrooms Chestnut 200g	Mushrooms Chestnut 200g	
	Tomatoes Vine 480g	Romana peppers x2	

*Where Calabrese and Purple sprouting broccoli were unavailable from a competitor supermarket, the comparable product selected was broccoli

Method

In total, the packaging of 25 Riverford products were compared to the supermarket equivalent.

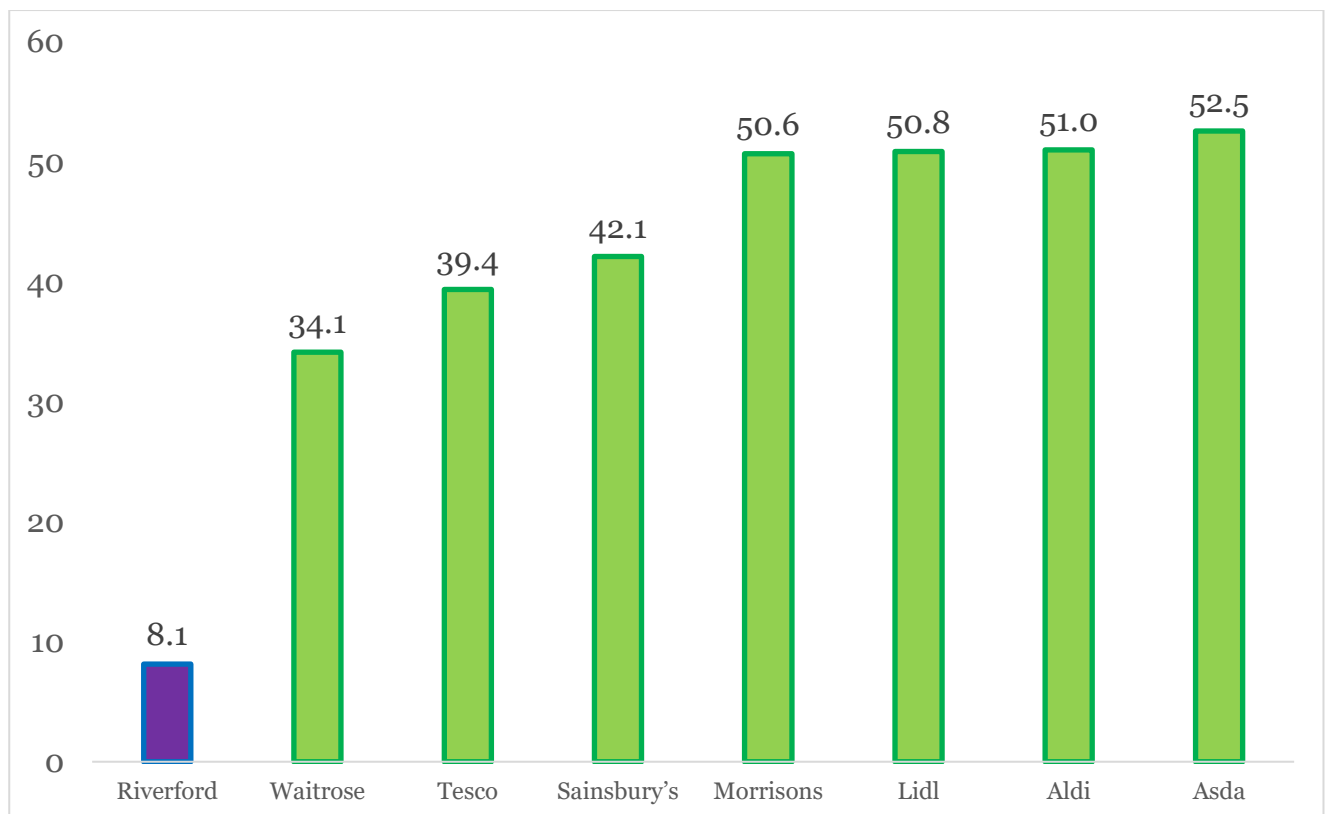
The comparative products from each supermarket were sourced using the following criteria

- Where possible, the same organic product of the same weight was selected
- Where not available – and if within 50g (100g for potatoes) – the same organic product was selected
- If no comparable organic product of a similar weight was available, the non-organic product nearest to the weight included within the Riverford box was selected

Results

Riverford's veg boxes contain 82% less plastic than equivalent packaged products from major UK supermarkets. On average, Riverford's veg boxes contained just 8.1g of plastic packaging vs an average of 45.8g across comparable products, across seven leading supermarkets.

Chart 1: Average weight (g) for comparable products by supermarket across a 3-week period



The results by week are shown below:

Table 2: Weight of plastic for Riverford and supermarkets by week, by box

		Weight of plastic (g)								Supermarket average	
		Riverford	Morrisons	Aldi	Lidl	Tesco	Waitrose	Asda	Sainsbury's		
Seasonal - small	Total 3 weeks	28.0	174.4	175.4	174.7	134.5	117.3	180.5	145.5		
	Average per week	9.3	58.1	58.5	58.2	44.8	39.1	60.2	48.5		
Seasonal - medium	Total 3 weeks	22.2	137.9	138.6	138.6	107.6	93.0	143.0	115.0		
	Average per week	7.4	46.0	46.2	46.2	35.9	31.0	47.7	38.3		
Quick - medium	Total 3 weeks	23.1	143.5	144.7	144.2	112.0	96.8	149.4	118.3		
	Average per week	7.7	47.8	48.2	48.1	37.3	32.3	49.8	39.4		
Average across all boxes (3 weeks)		24.4	151.9	152.9	152.5	118.1	102.4	157.6	126.3		137.4
Average across all boxes per week		8.1	50.6	51.0	50.8	39.4	34.1	52.5	42.1		45.8

Results

Riverford's veg boxes contain 82% less plastic than equivalent packaged products from major UK supermarkets.

Riverford had the lowest total plastic weight each week compared to each supermarket.

Even comparing Riverford's plastic packaging volume with Waitrose - the nearest supermarket in terms of total plastic packaging used showed that Riverford used 76% less plastic packaging over the three-week period.

Many supermarkets typically use a similar amount of packaging for the comparable products; Waitrose and Tesco (34.1g and 39.4g respectively) use less than the other supermarkets who collectively averaged 49.4g over the three-week period.