



- Advertisement -

**Bags are in, trending to surpass bulk sales**

By

Kyle Eberth

March 7, 2022

Industry data compiled by [CMI Orchards](#) note a growing trend toward bag over bulk sales with a tipping point in the near future. “Our estimates point to bags taking favor across conventional and organic apples sometime in the next 12-18 months,” said Danelle Huber, marketing specialist at CMI.



CMI Orchards compiled Nielsen IQ data and information from Category Partners to convey overall industry trends over the last five years. The reports shows since 2017 bag vs. bulk sales in the conventional category have seen a 28 percent change toward bagged commodities, with a 51 percent swing in the organic category. Overall volume has seen bagged volume grow from 34 percent in 2017 to 44 percent in 2021.

“Not all retailers report their data, so these numbers don’t accurately portray actual bags vs. bulk sales” but are indicative of a trend, said Huber. “The actual numbers are likely far more extreme.

“Simply put, bags sell,” said Huber, who noted convenience and perceived security as primary reasons for shoppers gravitating toward bagged commodities. “Bags deliver perceived security from contact,” a trend that was certainly ingrained in the minds of shoppers since the onset of the

---

pandemic. “Shoppers are more comfortable buying bagged products than they were previously.”

Regarding production and retail, Huber noted, “bags offer more flexibility with fruit sizing,” and offer more accessible spaces for brand messaging and flavor information. Additionally, Huber said, “bags are sold at a fixed weight, often forcing shoppers to buy more volume at one time.

“This information is interesting because it shows how dramatically things have changed, even over the past five years,” said Huber, with retailers migrating to bagged products vs. bulk. “Based on the data we looked at, we are potentially less than a year away from bags being preferred overall.” Organics are already there.

“Category trend information pertains to retailers as it forecasts consumer shopping habits and can help plan assortments,” similarly, “growers can use this data to plan at the orchard level to try and hit fruit target sizes,” said Huber.

She also highlighted the increasing growth toward grocery delivery and curbside pickup. “Shoppers, at first, seemed to be wary about others selecting their produce for them,” said Huber, “but bagged items are an easy ‘click’ for the online shoppers.”

Bagged fruit also offers specific UPC codes, making online and digital promotions easy to execute from both the retailer and supplier side. “UPC’s offer an easy ringing process at the front end of the store,” said Huber, “while increasing accuracy and decreasing shrink.”

Regarding environmental stewardship, Huber noted there are now more bag options than ever, “with fully recyclable No. 2 plastic, bags made from a portion of post-consumer recycled plastic, bags made from any plastic with organic additives that break the bags down in the landfill (biodegrade) and of course the industry standard currently, which is No. 4 or No. 5 plastic.” Giving retailers and consumers a myriad of environmentally considerate choices.

Lastly, Huber emphasized the importance CMI places on data-informed projections and decision-making: “We look at information like this to make sure we are innovating in the best ways to support what makes sense for our retail partners and what consumers are ‘hungry’ for.”

Time will tell when bagged volume surpasses bulk, CMI predicts that time is coming soon.

[Kyle Eberth](#)



---

## About Kyle Eberth |

Kyle Eberth is new to the produce industry, but has grown up around it, in proclaimed "Apple Capitol of the World," Wenatchee, WA. For the past 14-years he has worked in the non-profit sector with an emphasis on brand storytelling, community engagement, and donor relationships.

Kyle graduated from Whitworth University (Spokane, WA) in 2007. He and wife Kelsey were married shortly thereafter, when they moved to Wenatchee to launch their careers. Kyle is "Dad" to Brooklyn and Hudson, together the Eberths enjoy skiing, biking, their family and friends, and playing together in the beautiful place they get to live.

[Print](#)