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Note: The North American steel industry has committed to using Life Cycle Analysis (LCA) to measure and communicate transparently about the real environmental impact of steel. Among other things, LCA considers the total environmental impacts generated by the production, as well as use and end-of-life (recycling or disposal) phases of a product.

Company Statement

Independent Can Company recycles steel, aluminum, corrugated, pallets, plastic and mixed paper. We also recycle solvents used to clean our equipment.

Independent Can has a focus on scrap reduction in all of our printing and can manufacturing processes. All steel scrap is sent to a recycling facility.

The steel purchased to make our cans contains at least 25% recycled steel and up to 60%. On average, each steel can contains 37% recycled content.

Tin-plated Steel

Steel recycles infinitely without loss of quality or strength. Eighty percent of all metal ever produced is still in existence.

Any grade of steel can be recycled into top quality new metal. Whereas plastic and paperboard may have one or two applications beyond the first use, the life cycle ends in a landfill or ocean.

Steel can be separated by magnetics from other materials in the waste stream. Labels, glue, inks, coatings and other contaminants are burned off in the recycling process.

Many bioplastics and compostable packaging require special handling and facilities that are not accessible or convenient to consumers. Steel is curbside, single-stream recyclable. Steel will also biodegrade over time if discarded.

Specialty Cans

Tin-plated steel cans satisfy all of the sustainability criteria – reusable, recyclable, collectible and biodegradable. Cans, throughout the decades, have reduced food waste and extended the shelf life of products.

Government Statistics

The latest EPA figures estimate the recycling rate in the US for steel cans to be 71.3 percent (1.2 million tons). In Europe the rate is 79.5 percent.

Industry Statistics

More than 18,000 curbside, drop-off and buyback programs accept steel cans, which provides access to steel can recycling for more than 160 million consumers across America. More steel is recycled annually than paper, plastic, aluminum and glass combined.

Steel Cans:

- A barrier to moisture and light that adds shelf life
- The most recycled food packaging
- Designed for optimal collection for closed loop recycling
- Optimize materials and energy conservation

Steel is a permanent material. Permanent materials are classified as materials that, once produced, can be infinitely recycled or reused without any loss in quality, which is also called closed-loop material recycling.

New steel made from recycled cans reduces greenhouse emissions by 75%. Cans weigh 33% less than they did 25 years ago. Steel has life cycle advantages because of its relatively low energy use, high recyclability, conservation of natural resources (iron ore, coal, limestone and water) and the extensive reuse of by-products (96%). ■