

Top Down or Patchwork? Emerging Sustainable Packaging Regulations in North America

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Environment Climate Change Canada (ECCC) recently published a national Framework Paper on recycled content and labeling rules for plastics as well as a draft pollution prevention (P2) planning notice for primary food plastic packaging that would require the largest retailers to require 10% minimum recycled content (MRC) for food and beverage packaging and eliminate 95% of plastic packaging for fresh fruits and vegetables. In the United States, four states, led by California, have enacted laws requiring Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), MRC goals, and recyclability labeling. Several other states are considering similar legislation. The differences in each of these enacted and proposed laws may create a complex patchwork of sustainability regulation in the United States and between Canada and the U.S. What challenges and opportunities will producers encounter as they navigate this patchwork of emerging regulations?