

# 2008 FAST FOOD INDUSTRY PACKAGING REPORT



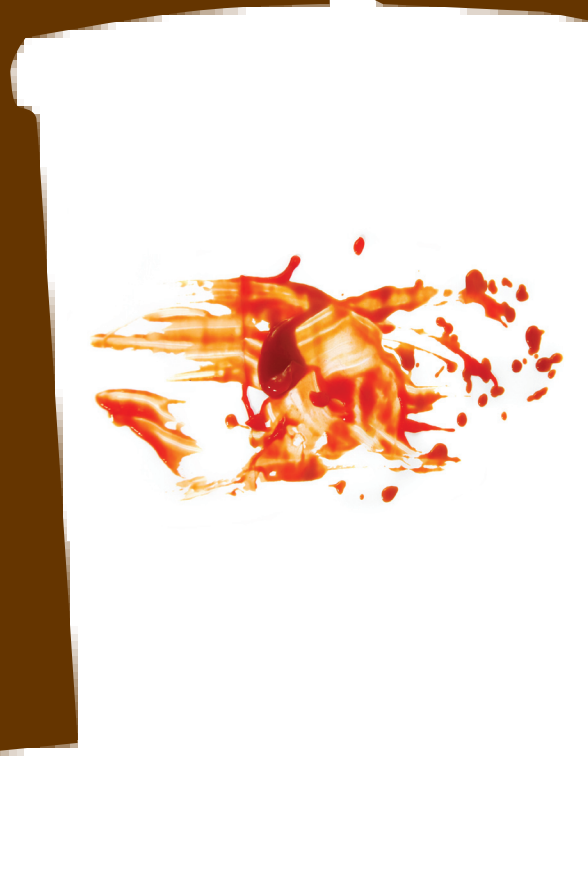
DOGWOOD  
ALLIANCE

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## Would you like your forest for here or to go? --Quick and dirty fast food packaging

Packaging symbolizes the disposable society we have become. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the fast food industry with drive-through windows, french fries, burgers and hundreds of on the go food choices. Last year sales for the 400 largest U.S.-based fast food chains were \$277.2 billion (6.8% increase from the year before). Our fast food lifestyle is literally burying us in an avalanche of excessive packaging and waste. Every year millions of pounds of food packaging waste litter our roadways, clog our landfills and spoil our quality of life. But more than litter, today's fast food packaging is destroying our Southern Forests.

Fast food industry giants including McDonald's, Wendy's, Pizza Hut, KFC, Taco Bell, and more are big buyers of paper packaging from the forests of the Southern United States. With nearly 100 paper packaging mills in the South, the packaging decisions of these corporations have a **tremendous impact on our forests**. While these companies are always coming up with new menu items, promotions and updated brands, the fast food companies continue to source their paper packaging from the paper mills connected to out-moded business as usual forestry practices including large-scale clearcutting, logging of special endangered forests, and the conversion of natural forests to sterile industrial pine plantations. **THERE IS A BETTER WAY.**



Southern forests and more specifically the Southern Swampland region of the Mid-Atlantic Coast, are jewels of the American landscape, and are being destroyed to bring you fried chicken, burgers and fries, and super-sized convenience in a glut of wrappers, boxes and cups.

America's fast food culture is hurting more than our waist lines. The average American eats fast food more than 150 times per year. More and more, the piles of packaging we are forced to deal with no longer only serve the essential functions of protecting and transporting goods and products, but instead represent an extension of a company's branding, marketing and sales strategy.

As a result, 300 pounds of packaging waste are generated each year for each person in the United States and 32% of the entire domestic waste stream consists of containers and packaging. The disposal of all that packaging in landfills ultimately results in the release of millions of pounds of greenhouse gases as the paper rots.

You see it on the roadsides, sidewalks and corners of our cities and towns. Too much of this packaging is not recycled or otherwise disposed of properly. Diners on the run generate more than 1.8 million tons of fast food packaging in the United States each year.

With its grab-and-go, overly packaged food stuffed with unnecessary condiments, fast food outlets are our country's primary source of urban litter. Recent surveys show that fast-food packaging makes up about 20 percent of all litter, with packaging for chip bags, drink containers, candy wrappers and other snacks comprising another 20 percent.

# Stump

# Would you like some deforestation with that?

**From the forests to the drive-thru – where does that fast food packaging come from?**

The Southern United States remains the world's largest paper producing region. The mills that produce paper products in this region have a tremendous impact on our forests. Indeed, every year millions of acres of the South's forests are clearcut to feed the pulp and paper industry. And to support these mills, across the South, **43 million acres of forests have been converted into sterile, row-crop like pine plantations** -- a poor biological substitute for the rich diversity of our Southern forests. The U.S. Forest Service states that nearly one out of every five acres of Southern forests is now pine plantation. The conversion of our native forests to plantations also brings the associated industrial forestry practices of increased use of toxic fertilizers and herbicides and the potential threat of release of genetically engineered trees which could wreak havoc on our natural forest ecosystems.

In addition, the impacts on the Southern swampland region are particularly destructive. In an area that consisted in large part of bottomland forests and other forested wetlands that served as important biological habitats, carbon sinks and protection from floods, industrial forestry is the leading cause of the destruction of forested wetlands. This process of ditching and draining the wetlands to make way for pine plantations has greatly reduced the size of the majestic Green Swamp in Southeastern North Carolina.



While these Southern mills produce a wide variety of paper for products ranging from cigarette paper and newsprint to paper cups and swabs, paper packaging accounts for approximately 25% of all of the wood fiber coming from Southern forests. Across the South dozens of mills owned by large domestic and international companies produce a laundry list of fast food packaging products; from bags to boxes and buckets and from wrappers to coffee and drink cups. This region produces lots and lots of fast food packaging.

The fast food chains' vast purchasing power and their insatiable demand for brand centered paper packaging means that their packaging choices directly impact the Southern swamplands where the companies source their packaging from mills in the heart of the largest paper producing region in the world. While packaging companies serve a variety of markets, the largest end markets for packaging products are the food and beverage sectors. Food and beverage packaging represents nearly 58% of the entire packaging industry.

As far as impact to the South, one big player rises to the top. Giant pulp and paper manufacturer **International Paper** owns 5 container board mills and 4 additional consumer paper packaging mills across the South that produce:



# Welcome to Stumpy Burger, may I take your order?

## Who are the fast food players?

Fast food is here to stay. It's big business and has become a part of the American way of life. Last year sales for the 400 largest U.S.-based fast food chains were \$277.2 billion, a 6.8% increase over the year before. The innovations of the fast food industry have given us more and cheaper dining options. We also know the tremendous economy of scale of the industry has been a force that has transformed agriculture, meat processing and labor markets in the late twentieth century. But did you know that the food chains' vast purchasing power and their insatiable demand for brand centered paper packaging has also had a large

negative impact on the forest of the Southern US, the largest paper producing region in the world?

These fast food companies are large corporate customers of the big paper packaging mills feeding on the forests of the Southeastern swampland region and they have the market power to directly influence the paper producers whose forestry practices negatively impact Southern forests. Instead of supporting destructive business as usual forestry practices, the fast food companies can move towards more responsible paper practices including increased use of post-consumer recycled content fiber to

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The fast food giants listed here are a small sampling of the many chains that exist in America. Likely, they may be the one you pull into on a road trip when you're tired and the kids are screaming or when you are just plain in the mood. Remember the average American eats fast food more than 150 times per year. But each and everyone of the companies on this list buys millions of dollars of paper packaging from the big packaging mills that have been the drivers for so much forest destruction across the Southern swampland region. Some of them maybe leaders in sales, burgers, tacos, fries or sandwiches, but when it comes paper packaging

**THERE ARE NO FREE REFILLS.**



## Yum! Brands

Headquartered in Louisville, Kentucky, Yum! Brands is the world's largest restaurant company and the corporate parent of five big fast food restaurants: KFC, Taco Bell, Pizza Hut, Long John Silvers and A&W, with more than 35,000 restaurants in more than 110 countries and territories. With that kind of size and that secret recipe of 11 herbs and spices, don't tell us that Yum! Brands can't make a difference with the paper packaging producers whose forestry practices negatively impact Southern forests

## KFC



What we used to call Kentucky Fried Chicken is the leader in the fast food chicken sector. There are over 14,000 KFCs, and yearly sales of over \$14 billion, when you order your bucket of Extra-Crispy don't you wish that your bucket was made from recycled paper and not paper sourced at the expense of Southern Forests.

## Taco Bell



There are nearly 6,000 Taco Bells with total sales reaching nearly \$6 billion. Believe it or not, two billion Americans ate at Taco Bell in 2006. And it takes an awful lot of paper packaging to wrap up all of those items on the value menu. Instead of getting all that paper from the big mills that so negatively impact the Southern swampland region, we say, "Hey Taco Bell, Yo Quiero a responsible paper procurement policy!"

## Pizza Hut



Not quite as fast as the others, Pizza Hut with over 7,500 restaurants is certainly more than a slice of the fast food market. With over \$5 billion in sales that's a lot of pizza boxes, napkins and bags. We call on Pizza Hut, the folks that brought us "America's Favorite Pizza" to deliver paper packaging with high recycled content.

## Long John Silvers



The largest fast food seafood chain with over 1200 restaurants worldwide, Long John Silvers netted \$800 million in sales last year. Across the globe, they haul in nearly four million customers each week. As far as we can tell from our interpretation of the pirate code of conduct, all of those boxes and bags should come from recycled fiber and responsibly managed forests. Please join us in saying "Argg matey, stop supporting the destruction of Southern forests."

## A&W All American Food



From a single root beer stand in Lodi, California, there are now almost 650 of these restaurants world wide. They sell lots and lots of burgers, fries, sodas and yummy root beer floats. Those kinds of treats ought to be set up in fine recycled style.

## McDonald's



Headquartered in Oak Brook, Illinois, McDonald's is the behemoth of the fast food sector with nearly 14,000 restaurants and 2006 sales of over \$55 billion! McDonald's sales are more than its next three fast food competitors combined. If you have not seen a big yellow M recently, you need to get out more. McDonald's is a huge consumer of paper packaging and 83% of the packaging used for food and drink is made of some form of paper or other wood-fiber material. Recycled paper now makes up 31.5% of the total material used in McDonald's packaging. That makes them the largest buyer of recycled fiber in the fast food sector. Yes, Mayor McCheese, they clearly have made some progress in becoming more responsible in their paper packaging choices. That's a start and who doesn't love the occasional visit, but with billions and billions served the big kahuna needs to do better when it comes to staying out of the important forests of the Southern swampland region.

## Jack in the Box



Headquartered in sunny San Diego, California, Jack in the Box is serving up lots of paper packaging sourced from the large packaging mills across the Southern swampland region. With over \$2 billion in annual revenue and nearly 2,100 outlets, Jack is in the position to do something good for Southern forests by reducing excessive packaging and bringing in more recycled fiber. Now that would really give Jack a big head!

## Arby's



Sandwiches, sandwiches, sandwiches, at over 3,500 locations. Last year Arby's had revenues of \$3.2 billion. With its headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia, Arby's should be a natural leader in Southern forest protection and in making their packaging more responsible. Arby's, please turn away from using paper from business as usual logging practices like large scale clearcutting and the conversion of natural forests to industrial pine plantations that have been so destructive to the forests of the South and increase your use of post-consumer recycled paper packaging.

## Wendy's



Yes we have a beef with fast food burger giant Wendy's. Located in Dublin, Ohio with sales approaching \$8 billion dollars per year and nearly 6000 restaurants, that's an awful lot of paper packaging. And Wendy's with their drive-thru' open late is pushing a lot of paper packaging made at the expense of the beautiful and bio-diverse Southern swampland region right out the window. Their burgers and baked potatoes are good, but their paper packaging really needs to be spiced up. And ask yourself, "Where's the beef?" Wrapped up in layer upon layer of packaging from endangered forests of course!

## Chicken 'n Biscuits



Located in Charlotte, North Carolina, Bojangles is another Southern company that should be doing more to ensure that their paper packaging does not come from industrial clearcuts and monoculture pine plantations created by ditching and draining what was once some of the most biologically rich bottomland forests. As a Southeastern favorite based on Southern flavors, the packaging wrapping their chicken and biscuits flying out of their 400 restaurants should come from sustainably managed forests and recycled paper.

## Quiznos

This purveyor of toasted sandwich treats has 4,600 restaurants and unfortunately market research has indicated that the packaging around their crunchy treats comes from the big paper mills that drive the destructive business as usual forestry practices of large-scale clearcutting and the conversion of natural forests into monoculture industrial pine plantations. Come on Quizno's just because your headquarters are located in the Rocky Mountain State of Colorado it doesn't mean you can ignore the impact of your packaging choices on the forests of the Southern swampland region.

# 11 FAST FOOD JUNKIES

## Thank you, please pull forward...

### Better business, better packaging

Working together, we will educate the public and the marketplace about the negative environmental impact on Southern forests caused by business as usual fast food packaging. We will tell these companies that yes they can make changes to protect Southern forests and the rich biodiversity, clean water, clean air and climate protection these forests provide for us. Together we can transform the paper packaging coming out of our forests.

Together we call on these large companies to:

1. Reduce their over use of packaging.
2. Maximize the use of 100% post-consumer recycled boxboard, a readily available alternative.
3. Eliminate paper packaging coming from the most biologically important endangered forests.
4. Eliminate paper packaging coming from suppliers that are contributing to the conversion of natural forests into industrial pine plantations.
5. Work with packaging suppliers to improve forest management practices through increased use of fiber from responsibly managed forests certified by the Forest Stewardship Council.
6. Recycle waste in restaurants to divert paper and other recoverable materials from landfills.

Recently Starbucks shifted away from all virgin fiber to a 100% recycled paperboard. Indeed, production of 100% recycled paperboard uses 50 percent less energy compared to virgin grades of paperboard, thus significantly reducing the greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere. For example, Americans go through 15 billion -- yes "B," billion -- disposable hot beverage cups per year. And market projections are to reach 23 billion disposable cups per year by the year 2010! Starbucks alone uses in excess of 1.7 billion paper cups per year. Recently Starbucks shifted away from all virgin fiber to a 10 percent recycled post-consumer cup. That small step forward saves about 11,000 tons of wood and 47 million gallons of wastewater annually. Driving the large paper packaging suppliers to adopt more sustainable forestry practices like Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification would limit clearcutting, halt conversion, protect important species and set the stage for restoration of critical wetlands across the region. Fast food restaurants can also help the amount of waste from their operations going to the landfill by increasing recycling. Approximately 1/3 of all waste produced in a fast food restaurant is paper based and only a small portion of that is recycled. water annually.



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## Thank you, enjoy your meal

### It's time to take action

With your help we can make it crystal clear to these companies that Southern forests are too important to be wasted for packaging. You can change the way fast food corporations make their decisions about packaging.

Fast food packaging is a problem--from the unsustainable forestry practices used to log for paper all the way to the ridiculous amounts of waste and litter.

You can tell the 11 Fast Food Junkies that you care about Southern forests and you don't want to see the most biodiverse temperate forests in the world being destroyed for KFC chicken buckets, nugget boxes, and to-go bags.

The good news is that there are simple solutions and we can encourage The 11 Fast Food Junkies' CEO's to do their part in protecting Southern forests and slowing global climate change. This is an exciting time to join the campaign with so much momentum moving towards transforming the packaging problem.

Join us today in sending a strong message to the 11 Fast Food Junkies' executives. Let's send the fast food industry a wake up call—that it's time for these corporations to be responsible for their choices.

Southern forests are too important to be wasted for Fast Food packaging. With your help we've been able to transform some of the most destructive corporations on the planet for their impacts on our forests, air, water and culture. Changing corporate behavior is one of the most efficient and effective ways to create real, on the ground change for our future. Together we are creating positive solutions.

Order up some hot and spicy environmental responsibility at [nofreerefills.org](http://nofreerefills.org)

