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## The future of packaging includes many challenges and opportunities



Image courtesy of Kwik Lok Corporation

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By [John Unrein](#)

Digital ordering and home delivery are having a profound impact on the future of food and beverage packaging. Another important factor to address is sustainability, as consumers and the food industry both push to reduce and eliminate waste. Food packaging faces a host of challenges and opportunities.

Kwik Lok Corporation recently featured the “bakery closing line of the future” at the International Baking Industry Exposition (IBIE). Key components of the new closing line are the world’s first sustainable closure, Eco-Lok; the next generation in bag closing machines, the 910A; and a new tamper-evident solution that uses laser stitch technology to keep bakery items safe.

Portland, Oregon-based Franz Bakery has made a commitment to using Kwik Lok's plant-based Eco-Lok bag closure on its bread products, reducing the amount of petroleum-based plastic used in packaging. Yakima, Washington-based Kwik Lok released its Eco-Lok product earlier this year, which utilizes a resin made out of plant-based carbohydrates like corn and potatoes, emits fewer greenhouse gases in production compared to traditional closures and reduces the amount of petroleum-based plastic used overall.

By the end of 2019, Franz bread products will start to use the Eco-Lok as part of the company's commitment to reducing its plastic use by 10% by 2023.

"We were proud to partner with Kwik Lok during beta testing and are very excited to be one of the first companies to adopt the new Eco-Lok," says Franz vice president of purchasing Ken Waltos. "We are pleased to work with another Northwest company toward efforts for a more sustainable future."

Anchor Packaging offers products that include Crisp Food Technologies containers that keep fried foods hot and crispy on display; Safe Pinch Tamper-Evident containers for 30-minute home delivery; and affordable, upscale packaging for restaurant take-out and to merchandise prepared ready-to-heat meals. Anchor's unique stock product line includes more than 450 rigid packages and cling film products.

Inline Plastics features SnackWare food containers as part of its patented breakthrough Safe-T-Fresh line of tamper evident products that ensure product protection. Consumers want "food on the move" options at all hours of the day, and the pressure is on to innovate with tasty products and enticing displays. Now a wide variety of retail locations can offer healthy combinations with the versatility these products provide.

Further, retailers and consumers are seeking smaller, single-serve food containers. Inline Plastics is responding with a new product line of mini-sized containers, called Snackers. Snackers are compact and leak resistant containers that are perfectly sized for small servings. They make the most of snug merchandising spaces, while offering consumers the trusted safety and security of the Safe-T-Fresh tamper-resistant locking system.

"As retailer and consumer needs change with modern lifestyles, Inline is poised to provide food packaging options that support these transformations," explains Carrie Cline, Inline Plastics' senior product manager. "The launch of Snackers into the marketplace provides retailers with individual portion sized food packaging and delivers convenience to consumers with the added confidence that the food products will be fresh and secure."

## Food on the go

From 2017 to 2020, the average annual growth rate for digital restaurant orders is forecast at 22%, according to new research from The NPD Group's Eating Patterns in America, and 19% of grocery shoppers now order their edible groceries online.

"Food manufacturers and restaurant operators will need to understand how these trends will impact their businesses in order to stay ahead of the curve," says David Portalatin, NPD Food Industry advisor and author of Eating Patterns in America.

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