

Ms. Michele Buck, President and CEO
The Hershey Company
19 E. Chocolate Ave
Hershey, PA 17033

April 24, 2022

Dear Ms. Buck:

As the market leader for candy bars and other packaged snack foods, Hershey's is a business role model for other snack food companies. Unfortunately, your success and lack of enthusiasm for sustainable practices has a significant impact on the environment.

While your 2020 Sustainability report indicates that 77% of your packaging is reusable, recyclable or compostable, the **multi-layer plastic wrappers** used for most of your candy bars and similar products are **neither recyclable or biodegradable**. These are among the top polluters of the environment, observed by NGOs during clean up drives.

As reported by [Fast Company](#), the Corporate Plastic Pollution Scorecard from the non-profit "As You Sow" **rates Hershey's with a failing grade "F"** in addressing plastic pollution. [In the report](#), the low rating is based on the criteria of Packaging Design, Reusable Packaging, Support for Recycling and Producer Responsibility, among others.

The 5 Gyres consortium [B.A.N. List 2.0¹ report](#) draws upon datasets from Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Cleanup Day, NOAA's Marine Debris Tracker, Clean Ocean Action, Project Aware, and Heal the Bay. According to this report, **food wrappers (candy, chips, etc.) are the #1 polluter**. Just during the **2019 International Coastal Cleanup (ICC)**, Ocean Conservancy revealed that **over 4.7 million** food wrappers were collected **in a single day!** Many brands contributed to this pollution, including Hershey's. Similarly, the [Brand Audit Report 2020²](#) from the **Break Free From Plastic** movement also lists food wrappers among the most common product types found in their trash audits. According to them, Hershey's is the third biggest plastic polluter in the world.

We hope that by sending this letter, and your multi-layer plastic package wrapper of your product physically back to you, you will take **URGENT** steps to move towards alternative packaging that is more sustainable. We have some suggestions for you:

1. You already wrap some of your chocolate in aluminum. Why not expand your usage of that? And why not use [recycled aluminum](#) – which takes 95% less energy to produce?
2. Companies like TIPA [offer real, completely biodegradable alternatives](#) to plastic wrappers totally suited for chocolate bars. These are also back-yard compostable. We know, because they are in some of our backyards, composting.

The solutions that are likely to be actually impactful at a larger scale are these home/ backyard compostable wrappers, (until more industrial compost sites are constructed) or a Re-Use model such as refill bins at supermarkets. Imagine the impact Hershey's would make toward sustainable packaging by partnering with such fledgling, innovative companies!

As the brand leader in chocolates, we ask that Hershey's show similar leadership in promoting **EPR (Extended Producer Responsibility)**, creating truly sustainable packaging for other companies to emulate, and combat this massive plastic pollution crisis that our world is grappling with.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent and important topic!

Sincerely,

focotrashmob@gmail.com

On behalf of: FoCo Trash Mob partnering with Be the Solution to Pollution - changemakers for **Break Free From Plastic**.

References:

1. Plastics BAN List 2.0 – November 2017: https://www.5gyres.org/s/5Gyres_BANlist2.pdf
2. Global Brand Audit Report 2020 | Break Free From Plastic:
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3. This company claims to help the world's biggest corporations recycle. Activists say it's greenwashing. — Basel Action Network (ban.org):
<https://www.ban.org/news/2021/8/9/this-company-claims-to-help-the-worlds-biggest-corporations-recycle-activists-say-its-greenwashing>
4. Lexington Law Group: [2021-03-04-Complaint-Terracyclefx.pdf \(lexlawgroup.com\)](https://www.lexlawgroup.com/2021-03-04-Complaint-Terracyclefx.pdf)
5. Composting facilities in the United States- by Olga Kachook.
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6. A Plastic Planet- Materials Library. <https://aplasticplanet.com/resource-library/>