



PRESS RELEASE

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For immediate release

"High Street Failing on Footprinting", say consumers

Research out today from the Carbon Trust reveals almost two thirds of consumers (63%) are more likely to buy a product if they know action is being taken to reduce its carbon footprint. At the same time, 70% of consumers want businesses to do more to help them make more informed environmental choices about the products they buy.

The research questioned more than 1,000 consumers across the UK to better understand their attitudes towards carbon reduction and the labelling of individual products. Key findings include:

Green credentials carry consumer weight – Committing to reduce a product's carbon footprint has a positive impact on the brand's reputation, as 58% of consumers say they value companies that are taking action to reduce their carbon emissions.

Environmentally responsible brands must shout louder – Only 12% of consumers think that companies are doing enough to cut carbon emissions and tackle climate change. This is linked to their call for help on making better choices, and a demand from just under half (47%) for information on how to reduce the footprint of a product when using it.

Consumer understanding of sustainability grows – 60% of consumers understood that a product such as a chocolate bar or loaf of bread has a carbon footprint. More than two thirds of the UK's carbon footprint comes from products and services, so acknowledging that we need to reduce these, as well as a company's or individual's carbon footprint, is vital.

Euan Murray, General Manager Carbon Footprinting, Carbon Trust comments:

"Companies can't ignore the fact that consumers do care about climate change and what a brand is doing to fight it. Carbon Trust research shows that a business' commitment to reduce the carbon footprint of its products has a significant impact with the consumer and that 70% of consumers want help in making the right choices.

“Retailers and producers who are committed to reducing their products’ carbon footprints can get ahead by responding to this increasing consumer demand. Our experience with product carbon footprinting in the last two years shows that businesses that take real action to reduce their carbon emissions are realising dual benefits of immediate cost savings and a strong ‘green’ reputation amongst consumers.”

The Carbon Reduction Label has been developed to help brands demonstrate their commitment to carbon reduction and help consumers understand more about taking action on climate change. The Carbon Trust’s primary objective here is to help businesses to measure, verify, reduce and communicate the carbon footprint of their products and services.

Murray concludes:

“We understand that consumer attitudes are going to be the key driver for business decision makers: our research findings vindicate this approach.”

Notes to Editors

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- The research was carried out in April 2009 by FDS International on behalf of the Carbon Trust’s Carbon Label Company (<http://www.carbon-label.com/business/about.htm>) and questioned more than 1,000 consumers across the UK to better understand their attitudes towards carbon reduction and the labelling of individual products rather than companies.
- The carbon footprint of a product or service is the total carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other greenhouse gases emitted during its life, from production to final disposal. The Carbon Trust is the leading international organisation helping companies measure, reduce and communicate the carbon footprints of their products and services.
- To support this, The Carbon Trust and Defra co-sponsored the development of PAS 2050 by BSI British Standards, published in October 2008. The PAS 2050 is the first international standard for companies to measure the carbon footprint of their products and services.
- In 2007, The Carbon Trust also launched the Carbon Reduction Label to help companies communicate the impact of their product carbon footprinting work to consumers. Companies that display the Carbon Trust’s Carbon Reduction Label (on pack, online or elsewhere) are making a commitment to reduce the carbon footprint of their product or service. The Carbon Reduction Label is the leading way to communicate a product carbon footprint anywhere in the world.
- The Carbon Trust has worked with companies on more than 65 product carbon footprinting projects and 3,000 individual product lines. They have worked with many internationally recognised brands including PepsiCo (Tropicana, Walkers and Quakers), Tesco, Coca Cola, Marshalls, and Kimberly Clark.