



Kwik Lok has been increasing its commitment to sustainability ever since co-owner Stephanie Paxton Jackson took the helm with her sisters five years ago. She shares the story of how and why the company is focusing now more than ever on sustainable packaging initiatives.

Sustainability has become such an important issue in the food and beverage marketplace. When and why did Kwik Lok decide to escalate its commitment to implementing more sustainable business practices?

Stephanie Paxton Jackson: My sisters and I took over the family business five years ago, after the passing of our father. At that time, we really wanted to concentrate on being socially responsible. We realized our products have a global impact, and we knew that anything we could do to reduce our carbon footprint would have a ripple effect. We wanted to drive meaningful change in our industry and beyond.

What are some of the initiatives you've recently launched that focus specifically on sustainable packaging? Any new products or plans you'd like to share?

Last year, we launched the world's first bag closure made

with renewable plant-based resin called Eco-Lok. We are excited, because this closure uses up to 20% less petroleum-based materials when produced, and when our customers buy/use Eco-Lok, carbon emissions are reduced by up to 20%. We have also developed a way to bind and label produce without using

much packaging; we call the machinery Kwik Link. We are proud of this new technology, because it gets the message out to a challenging part of the grocery store, which has been produce and it's overpackaging.

How can Kwik Lok help retailers and CPG companies alike communicate a message of sustainability to the customers they serve?

We believe our message to retailers and other CPG companies is to "just start." They already may be doing some great things and don't even realize it. When we first started down the sustain-

ability path, we were looking for something to use as a foundation. Then we realized we're one of the best in the U.S. at keeping our workers safe—zero hours lost to injuries. So we built on that. Why not take the same care and attention we give our employees and give the planet a little love, as well? We took a good, long look at everything, from product conception to production and sales. Then we went all-in and not just in one department, but on every level. And in the process, we realized countless opportunities to increase sustainability across all of Kwik Lok as a whole.

Can sustainable packaging actually help boost sales?

Yes, we believe that we can "do good and do well." In other words, we could do good environmentally as well as financially—those two things are not mutually exclusive. You can make an impact on both sides of the scale. Consumers are, as a whole, conscious of the need to care for the environment, and many take sustainability into account when choosing a product. We are seeing bakery and produce customers around the globe, for example, adopting our sustainable solutions as part of their own environmental goals to cut carbon and reduce packaging impact.

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Kwik Lok is owned by Melissa Steiner (from left), Kimberly Paxton-Hagner and Stephanie Paxton Jackson.