

A Footprint for a Sustainable Future

Creating alternatives to single-use and short-term-use plastics, motivated by awareness that chemicals from plastic packaging are seeping into food

by Tyler Butler

▶ Do you remember the infamous video, showing Christine Figgenger, Ph.D., pulling a straw out of a sea turtle's nose? The video went viral on YouTube and is widely considered to be the catalyst that launched the outrage and action about plastic ocean pollution.

Long before that, though, in 2014 it was Troy Swope and Yoke Chung, who met at Intel and noticed that plastic residue in packaging was damaging computer wafers during shipping. After further research they were able to confirm their own suspicions: Chemicals from plastic packaging were seeping into food.

The duo recognized that plastic had been linked to a number of health issues, and that it served as a contributing factor to the global environmental crisis. Recognizing what was unfolding due to single-use plastic pollution, they saw an opportunity to create a solution.

The result was Footprint, a materials science technology company that uses research and development to invent plant-based material alternatives to single-use and short-term-use plastics. Footprint has a clear mission to create a healthier planet and healthier people. In the first phase of its mission, the company is working to eliminate single-use and short-term-use plastics in the packaging found in consumer goods, and in our food chain — for large food suppliers and in grocery stores.

Footprint works closely with many of the world's largest retailers and food companies, including Conagra, McDonalds, Kraft, General Mills, P&G, Beyond Meat and Sweetgreen. Early on, Conagra was a key partner, entrusting Footprint with the development of plant-based fiber bowls for its Healthy Choice line of frozen foods.

Thanks to its customer-centric, consultative approach in developing disruptive solutions to solve specific, first-time challenges, Footprint found its niche. This partnership between Footprint and Conagra has proven successful for both companies, leading to increased sales and plastic reduction. Perhaps more impressive than this is how Footprint is further supporting its own mission. Footprint is prompting positive change through several philanthropic conservation-based efforts it has launched.

Footprint started its foundation in 2021, and initiated Pledge 2050, a call to action encouraging people around the world to quit single-use plastic. The Footprint Foundation educates people on the serious impact that plastic has on our planet and bodies. The Foundation's goal is to work collaboratively together with businesses and consumers to inspire long-lasting change.



Footprint believes the time is now to quit plastic, encouraging people to take the pledge sponsored by the Footprint Foundation and committing to eliminate a single-use plastic item from their everyday life, whether it's plastic water bottles, plastic utensils, plastic bags, or plastic straws. The company's foundation also works with many global NGOs and community organizations as well as academia, with several initiatives underway in Arizona specifically. Pledge 2050 has provided a way to encourage consumers to take small steps to reduce plastic.

Larry Fitzgerald Jr., former NFL Arizona Cardinal, and executive chair of 2023 Superbowl Committee, shared, "As a father of three and a lover of travel, I want to see our world be a safer and more sustainable home for future generations. Footprint's vision of reducing and even eliminating toxins from the food we eat is a landmark step in the right direction. I'm going to be taking Footprint Foundation's Pledge 2050, committing to what we can do to reduce plastic waste in our lives. Together we can change things — whether it's at a football game, basketball game, a concert or at home."

Now coming full circle, the same doctor who pulled that straw from the turtle's nose in that viral video now serves as the organization's director of science and education. Dr. Figgenger brings with her an expertise in marine conservation, a passion for this work and her YouTube celebrity status, with a focus on eliminating plastic pollution while empowering women in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). Through her role with the foundation, she is uniting her passions to increase awareness and knowledge about how people can help eliminate plastic waste from the environment and food chain by making easy, everyday changes.

Footprint has the rare opportunity to change history and move mankind toward a more sustainable and healthy way of living. Whether through its innovative science-based solutions or through its leadership on awareness and mitigation, Footprint is laying a path for us to follow as we work to save our planet. ■

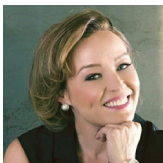
Footprint footprintus.com



PLEDGE 2050

Join The Footprint Foundation in taking the pledge to quit plastic. By 2050 there will be more plastic in our ocean than fish. The time is now to quit plastic. Take the pledge, enter to win a free T-shirt, and learn how we can save the planet, together.

pledge2050.org



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