RE: HF44 – Test and Report Phthalates in Packaged Food

Dear House Chair Anderson and Members of the Agriculture Finance and Policy Committee,

My name is Hannah Resendiz Olson, and I am a lifelong resident of Minnesota. I am a Climate and Health Equity Leaders Fellow with Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate, a Community Health Specialist for a local public health department, and a proud alum of St. Catherine University's Master of Public Health program.

I am testifying in **support** of HF44. This bill will require food manufacturers to test their products for phthalates (THAL-ates) and publish the results.

As a health professional, I am deeply concerned about the impacts of plasticizers and (THAL-ates) phthalates in our food. I support HF44 as an essential bill to help protect consumers from harmful plasticizers, which are known to be endocrine disruptors that lead to adverse health effects.

Healthy Kids Minnesota, a Biomonitoring Program campaign of the Minnesota Department of Health, has published notices on the health impacts of (THAL-ates) phthalates on children. Endocrine-disrupting chemicals (EDCs) affect the body's natural hormones, and while this can be harmful at all ages, it can be most harmful during development for infants and children. This is why some (THAL-ates) phthalates are already banned for use in childrens' products. This disruption to the endocrine system can lead to disease and death, including heart disease, cancer, diabetes, reproductive and neurological disorders, and compromised immune functioning. We are not only exposed to EDCs through cosmetic and personal care products, but we are consuming them directly in the food we eat.

Minnesotans deserve to know what is in their food. There is no safe level of plasticizers in food, yet we are unknowingly and frequently exposed. Widespread use of plastics threatens the planet and all who inhabit it. Plastic use is directly linked to climate change: 98% of chemicals used in plastic production are derived from fossil fuels, which accounts for nearly 4% of greenhouse gas emissions.

In order to protect the lives of our dear neighbors, we must ensure transparency from food producers and allow them the opportunity to protect consumers in order to build trust and promote health for all who call Minnesota home.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Hannah Resendiz Olson
Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate

Climate and
Health Equity Leaders

March 19, 2025

Minnesota House
Agriculture Finance and Policy Committee

Dear Chair Hansen and Committee Members,

We, the undersigned parents, grandparents, and individuals, support SF188/HF44 the Test and Report Phthalates in Packaged Food bill.

We are concerned about toxic chemicals called phthalates that have been found in food that we purchase for our families every day. A Consumer Reports (CR) investigation from January 2024 found that 84 of the 85 grocery items tested contained phthalates, some at concerning levels. An organic product, Annie's Organic Cheesy Ravioli, had 53,579 nanograms of phthalates in a single serving, the highest level of any food tested. Also, the well-known family favorite Cheerios had 10,980 nanograms per serving.

Phthalates are chemicals that can leach out of plastic and get into food. Plastic, like tubing, conveyor belts and gloves, used during food manufacturing could also be a source of phthalates in our food.

Without investigations like the one done by CR, we as consumers have no way of knowing what toxic chemicals are inadvertently ending up in our food. This bill, authored by Senator Heather Gustafson and Representative Brion Curran, will provide important information to help us minimize our exposure to a chemical that could impact the health of our families. It will also help companies identify which of their products contain phthalates so that they can eliminate it.

A growing body of research has shown that phthalates are endocrine disruptors that interfere with the production and regulation of hormones. Even minor disruptions in hormone levels can contribute to an increased risk of health problems, including diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular disease, certain cancers, birth defects, neurodevelopmental disorders, and infertility. Fetuses and young children are most at risk because their bodies are going through rapid development.

As parents, we want to provide nutritious food for our families. Consumers have the right to know that the food they buy is safe. Food manufacturers must provide nutrition and calorie information for their products. They should share the amount of phthalates in their food as well. Without that information, we can't make safe choices.

We all want food that is safe to eat, especially for our kids. This bill is one important step to make that happen. We support this bill and we hope you will too.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Peter Kelly
Rachel Braaten
Judy Lissick
Donald Sonsalla
Rebecca Schoenecker
Diane Edson
Andrea Mrozek
Shelby Hauge
Barbara Clark
Lori Olinger
Jeff Kolstad
Lizbeth Stein
Don Luce
Nancy Dennis
Valerie Hanson
Maerin Renee
Kelly Miller
Nikki Karnopp
Megan Stafki
Bonnie Beckel
Alice J. Belden
Kelly Wittmann
Sue Quast
Bob Graves
Maureen Anderson
Dana Strande
Merrin Baker
Paula Hoff
Maggie McGann
Daniel Matus
Ava VanValkenburg
Whitney Wildman
Elizabeth Flynn
Dino Schipper
Jaci Christenson
Kimberly Oleary
Susan Strom
Leah Dunlevy
Anna Steiner
Ayodele Famodu
Elizabeth Bonin
Marcus Strom
Sarah Silbernagel
Gina Corcoran

Joe Crowe
Lois Norrgard
Greg Lissick
Verna Sonsalla
Kathy Pittelko
Jane Dow
Roxanne Britz
Debra Ann Beck
Sherry Hastings
Cathy Missaghi
Peter Border
Valerie Rolstad
Amy Varner
Joanna Winship
Diane Kroll
Andrea West
Laurence Winship
Steve Olinger
Kathie Dormanen
Nancy Sathet
Raven DeFilippo
Christine Popowski
Steven Jorissen
Anna White
Fern Panda
Lucy Mullany
Katherine Boyce
Reka Leeaphon
Trish Kanous
Drake Myers
Eve Hanson
Tracy Molm
Anne Sugnet
Theresa Crow
Laura Gannon
Krista Morey
Courtney Gildersleeve
LuAnn Johnson
Rachel Wormer
Kathy Sallstrom
Mike Ferguson
Katy Wortel
Hunter Cantrell
Rollie Wellington

Shehla Kamal
James Bush
Sarah Ebeling
JoAnn Winter
Courtney Remes
Maggie Yauk
Gayla Hallquist
Katie Meyers
Diane Dobitz
Julia Hupperts
Matt Lapiro
Diane Edson
Daniel Trajano
Rhonwen Tas
Nathan Dawson
Toya López
Bob Wellington
Rafia Omer
Darnella Wade
Kelly Karstad
Claire Lienesch
Caroline Goodroad
Julia Battern
Kate Winsor
Jessica Lapiro
Adaline Shinkle
Judy Gregg

Minnesota RETAILERS
driving innovation, succeeding together

March 19, 2025

Chair Anderson, Chair Hansen and Members of the House Agriculture Committee:

On behalf of Minnesota Retailers and the 1,200 store fronts we represent, I am writing to express our opposition to HF 44, which would require food manufacturers and brand owners to conduct ortho-phthalate testing and disclose results before selling packaged food in Minnesota. While we support transparency and consumer safety, this bill creates significant challenges for retailers and could have economic consequences.

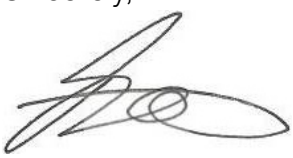
Retailers rely on a broad and diverse supply chain, including local, regional and national suppliers. The proposed testing and reporting requirements will likely increase costs, reduce product availability, and create compliance burdens that will disproportionately impact our small businesses. Many manufacturers, especially those from out of state, may choose to stop selling in Minnesota rather than absorb the additional regulatory costs—limiting consumer choice and raising prices.

Furthermore, this bill places compliance responsibility on manufacturers, yet retailers may still face supply chain disruptions and potential liability if suppliers fail to meet reporting standards. Retailers should not bear the consequences of a requirement that does not align with national standards.

Rather than implementing a standalone state-level regulation that isolates Minnesota's market, we urge the Committee to consider alternative approaches, such as federal alignment, or other approaches that balance consumer protection with economic sustainability.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss this further and find a solution that protects both Minnesota consumers and its vital retail industry. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Bruce Nustad
bruce@mnretail.org

Test and Report Phthalates in Packaged Food Bill

SF 188 – Author Sen. Heather Gustafson
HF 44 – Author Rep. Brion Curran

Plasticizers called phthalates are showing up in the foods we eat — sometimes at very high levels.

What are phthalates and how are they getting into our food?

Phthalates are chemicals that are added to plastic to make it more flexible and durable. But these chemicals don't stay in the plastic. They leach out and get into our food and drinks.

Phthalates can get into food through packaging but also from exposure to plastic in tubing, conveyor belts, and gloves used during food processing. Phthalates can even enter directly into meat and produce via contaminated water and soil.

How will this bill help?

This bill will encourage companies to reduce phthalate levels in their food products and help consumers avoid food with high levels of harmful plastic chemicals. The bill requires food manufacturers to:

1. **Test their packaged food for phthalates**
2. **Post results to their website so they are available to consumers**

A recent Consumer Reports investigation of supermarket staples found phthalates in almost every one of the 85 items tested. Despite growing evidence of the potential health risks posed by phthalates, the tests found that these chemicals remain widespread in our food.

- Annie's Organic Cheesy Ravioli, made by General Mills, contained **53,579 nanograms of phthalates in a single serving**, the highest level of any food item tested.
- Other General Mills products also had concerning levels of phthalates: Cheerios Original (10,980); Yoplait Original Low Fat Yogurt (10,948); Green Giant Cream Style Sweet Corn (7,603); Progresso Vegetable Classics Vegetable Soup (2,888).

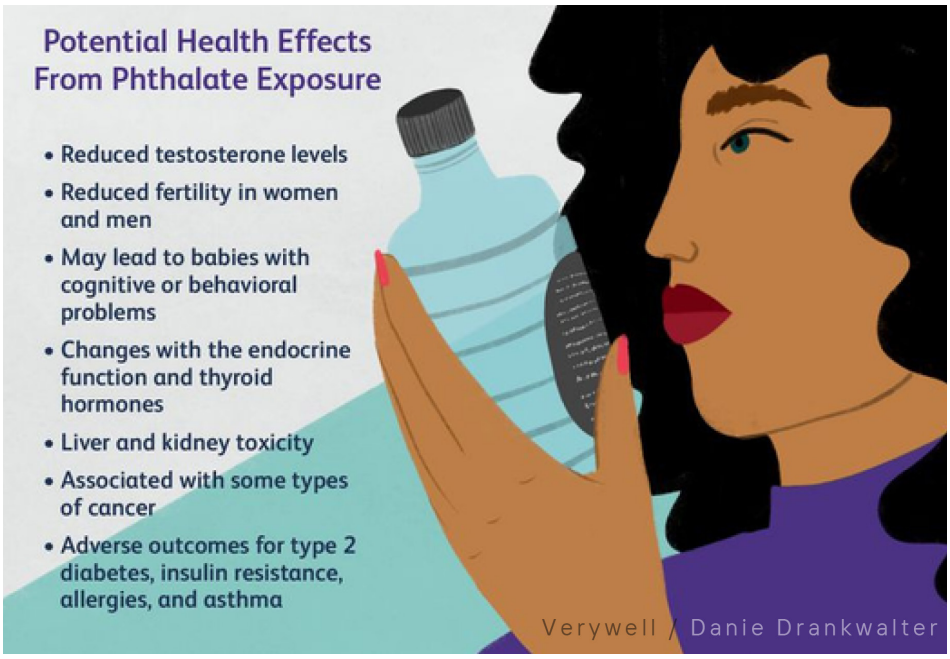
Why should we be concerned about phthalates?

A growing body of research has shown that plasticizers are endocrine disruptors. Even minor disruptions in hormone levels can contribute to an increased risk of several health problems.

Human exposure to EDCs is particularly concerning during vulnerable periods of life, such as pregnancy.

Growing concerns about the health risks posed by phthalates have led U.S. regulators to meaningfully curtail the use of these chemicals in several products, but not yet food.

There are no substantive limits on plastic-related chemicals in food packaging and production.



"The serious health risks posed by phthalates are particularly concerning for children, who are at greater risk as their bodies are still developing."

Dr. Zeke J. McKinney, Occupational and Environmental Medicine Physician and Faculty in the University of Minnesota School of Public Health.

SUPPORTERS

BEYOND PLASTICS GREATER MANKATO AREA

CR Consumer Reports™

CLEAN WATER ACTION

Coalition for Plastic Reduction

MN ZERO WASTE COALITION

NORTHEAST METRO CLIMATE ACTION TWIN CITIES, MN

SIERRA CLUB NORTH STAR CHAPTER

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

astarck@cleanwater.org • brian.ronholm@consumer.org • coalitionforplasticreductionmn@gmail.com

March 18, 2025

Minnesota House
Agriculture Finance and Policy Committee

RE: HF44 – Test and Report Phthalates in Packaged Food

Dear House Chair Anderson and Members of the Committee,

Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate (HPHC) supports HF44. HPHC is a multidisciplinary network of hundreds of health professionals across Minnesota working to protect and improve human health by promoting climate health. We recognize that human health is integrally connected to the health of our planet, including the food we eat and how it is produced and packaged.

This bill requires food producers to test for and inform consumers of the presence of health harming phthalates in packaged food. Providing this information on producer websites will allow consumers to evaluate the food products they buy, giving them the information they need to avoid products with hormone-disrupting phthalates. Requiring testing and disclosure will also incentivize food producers to identify and eliminate phthalates in their food production and packaging, further protecting public health.

Phthalates are well-documented endocrine disruptors that interfere with the body's natural hormone functions, leading to serious health consequences. Phthalates are commonly found in a wide range of products, from shower curtains to IV tubes to nail polish[1]. Research has linked phthalate exposure to heart disease, cancer, diabetes, reproductive and neurological disorders, and compromised immune function[2]. While harmful at any age, these chemicals pose an even greater risk to infants and children, who's developing bodies are more vulnerable to endocrine disruption[3]. Recognizing these dangers, some phthalates have already been banned in children's products. Yet, despite these known risks, phthalates remain present in food manufacturing and packaging—directly contaminating the food we eat[4].

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[1] Zero Breast Cancer. (2007, August 31). Phthalates: The Everywhere Chemical. National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences.
https://www.niehs.nih.gov/sites/default/files/research/supported/translational/peph/resources/assets/docs/phthalates_the_everywhere_chemical_zero_breast_cancer_508.pdf

[2] Gore, A. C., La Merrill, M. A., Patisaul, H., & Sargis, R. M. (2024, February). Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals: Threats To Human Health. The Endocrine Society and IPEN.
https://www.endocrine.org/-/media/endocrine/files/advocacy/edc-report2024finalcompressed.pdf

[3] Minnesota Department of Health Biomonitoring Program. (2024, May 28). *Healthy Kids Phthalates Information*. Minnesota Department of Health.
https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/biomonitoring/docs/enphthinfohkmn.pdf

[4] Friedman, L. F. (2024, January 4). *The Plastic Chemicals Hiding in Your Food*. Consumer Reports.
https://www.consumerreports.org/health/food-contaminants/the-plastic-chemicals-hiding-in-your-food-a7358224781/

There is no safe level of plasticizers in food, yet Minnesotans are unknowingly exposed to them daily. Consumers deserve transparency about the chemicals present in their food, and HF44 ensures this by requiring food producers to test for and disclose the presence of phthalates. Making this information accessible on producer websites will empower consumers to make informed choices while also incentivizing companies to eliminate these harmful substances from their packaging and production processes.

Beyond individual health impacts, the widespread use of plastics is a direct contributor to climate change. An estimated 98% of chemicals used in plastic production come from fossil fuels, and plastics account for nearly 4% of global greenhouse gas emissions[5]. Reducing phthalate exposure is not just a consumer protection issue—it is a necessary step in addressing environmental and public health crises.

In order to protect the lives of Minnesotans, we must demand transparency and accountability from food producers. HF44 provides an opportunity to safeguard public health, rebuild consumer trust, and promote a healthier future for all who call Minnesota home.

HPHC appreciates the opportunity to support HF44.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Schuler, MPH
Policy Director, Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate
Kathleen@hpforhc.org

[5] Ong, H., Thiel, C. L., & Singh, H. (2024, September 23). Health Care Actions for Reducing Plastic Use and Pollution. Climate Change and Health. https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/article-abstract/2823860

4407 E Lake St, Minneapolis, MN 55406

March 19, 2025

Minnesota House Agriculture Finance and Policy
Room G3 of the Capitol Building
75 Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard.
St Paul, MN 55155

Regarding: Testimony in Support of HF44

Thank you, Chair Hansen, and House Agriculture Finance and Policy Members, for allowing me to provide this written testimony today,

I am writing to express MN350's strong support for House File 44 (Curran).

MN350's mission is to unite Minnesotans with the global movement to end the pollution damaging our climate, speed the transition to clean energy, and create a just and healthy future for all.

Healthy food is a right of all citizens and the more transparency we have in our food systems and products the better for our families and communities. We support HF 44 which will require food manufacturers and brand owners to report ortho-phthalate testing results of packaged food products to the commissioner of agriculture, provide labeling of products and publish the results of this testing in a publicly available format.

Ortho-phthalates, commonly called phthalates, are **chemicals used as plasticizers to make plastics, particularly polyvinyl chloride (PVC), flexible**. They are found in food packaging, cosmetics, and other products, and there are concerns about their potential health effects.

The health effects are many:

- **Endocrine Disruption:**

Some phthalates have been linked to endocrine disruption, which can affect the hormone system.

- **Reproductive and Developmental Toxicity:**

There is evidence suggesting that phthalates can have adverse effects on reproductive and developmental health.

- **Neurodevelopmental Risks:**

Some studies suggest that phthalates may be associated with neurodevelopmental risks, including impacts on children's learning and behavior.

- **Ubiquitous Exposure:**

Human exposure to phthalates is widespread, with a large percentage of the population showing the presence of phthalate biomarkers in their urine.

A better-informed citizenry can create a healthier citizenry, parents can know in advance if these toxic materials are in products and make informed decisions about what products they purchase for their households and children.

In closing I urge you to support HF 44 – this important legislation will lead to healthier outcomes for Minnesotans.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Noelle Cirisan
Political Manager
MN350 Action

March 18, 2025

Minnesota House
Agriculture Finance and Policy

RE: HF44 – Test and Report Phthalates in Packaged Food

Dear Chair Hansen and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Minnesota Zero Waste Coalition and our community partners listed below, we are writing in support of HF44.

We are committing to addressing our state's growing waste crisis, including eliminating toxics in packaging. HF44 takes an important step in addressing phthalates in food packaging by requiring manufacturers to test for this group of chemicals used to make plastic and provide transparency to consumers by reporting their findings.

Phthalates are endocrine disruptors that can interfere with hormone regulation and increase the risk of diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular disease, and more with children being especially vulnerable. They can leach into food during manufacturing and packaging. Additionally, when disposed of, this toxic packaging and food containing phthalates breaks down into microplastics that infiltrate our soil, water, and air. These chemicals have been detected in drinking water, aquatic life, and even human blood and breast milk, demonstrating their persistence and potential long-term harm.

A recent Consumer Reports investigation found phthalates in nearly every food item tested, including some products from Minnesota-based General Mills. Without mandated testing and disclosure, consumers are unaware of how much of this chemical is in their kitchen staples and remain blind to potential harm. HF44 addresses this by requiring food manufacturers to test for and report the number of phthalates, allowing Minnesotans to make informed decisions around purchasing decisions.

HF44 creates an incentive for companies to explore safer alternatives to consumer packaging. Food manufacturers could shift toward safer materials but without strong policy measures, these changes remain inconsistent and voluntary. Public reporting requirements help drive industry-wide improvements, encouraging innovation in safer, reusable, and non-toxic packaging solutions.

We urge you to support HF44 and take action to protect Minnesotans from avoidable exposure to harmful plastic chemicals in their food.

The following Minnesota Zero Waste Coalition Members & Partners sign-on to this letter:

Beyond Plastics Greater Mankato Area
Clean Water Action
Climate Generation
Coalition for Plastic Reduction
Elder Climate Action Twin Cities
Eureka Recycling
Lakeville Friends of the Environment
Mankato Area Zero Waste
Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy
Northeast Metro Climate Action
Recycling Electronics for Climate Action
Rusty & The Crew
Sierra Club North Star Chapter
Vadnais Heights Green Team

How to Eat

CR tested popular fast foods and supermarket staples for some of the chemicals used to make

by LAUREN F. FRIEDMAN photograph by SARAH ANNE WARD

Less Plastic

plastic, which can be harmful to your health. Here's what we found—and how to stay safer.

By the time you open a container of yogurt, the food has taken a long journey to reach your spoon. You may have some idea of that journey: From cow to processing to packaging to store shelves. But at each step, there is a chance for a little something extra to sneak in, a stowaway of sorts that shouldn't be there.

That unexpected ingredient is something called a plasticizer: a chemical used to make plastic more flexible and durable. Today, plasticizers—the most common of which are called phthalates—show up inside almost all of us, right along with other chemicals found in plastic, such as bisphenols like BPA. These have been linked to a long list of health concerns, even at very low levels.

Consumer Reports has investigated bisphenols and phthalates in food and food packaging a few times over the past 25 years. In our new tests, we checked a wider variety of foods to see how much of the chemicals Americans actually consume.

The answer? Quite a lot. Our tests of nearly 100 foods found that despite growing evidence of potential health threats, bisphenols and phthalates remain widespread in our food.

The findings on phthalates are particularly concerning: We found them in almost every food we tested, often at high levels. The levels did not depend on packaging type, and no one particular type of food—say, dairy products or prepared meals—was more likely than another to have them.

For example, we found high levels in, among other products, Del Monte sliced peaches, Chicken of the Sea pink salmon, Fairlife Core Power high-protein chocolate milkshakes, Yoplait Original French vanilla low-fat yogurt, and several fast foods, including Wendy's crispy chicken nuggets, a Chipotle chicken burrito, and a Burger King Whopper with cheese. Organic products were just as problematic: In fact, the highest phthalate levels we found were in a can of Annie's Organic cheesy ravioli.

Yet some products had much lower levels than others. A serving of Pizza Hut's Original Cheese Pan Pizza, for example, had half the phthalate levels of a similar pizza from Little Caesars. Levels varied even among products from the same brand: Chef Boyardee Big Bowl Beefaroni pasta in meat sauce had less than half the level of the company's Beefaroni pasta in tomato and meat sauce.

"That tells us that, as widespread as these chemicals are, there are ways to reduce how much is in our foods," says James E. Rogers, PhD, who oversees product safety testing at CR.

The trouble is, there are so many ways these chemicals enter our food.

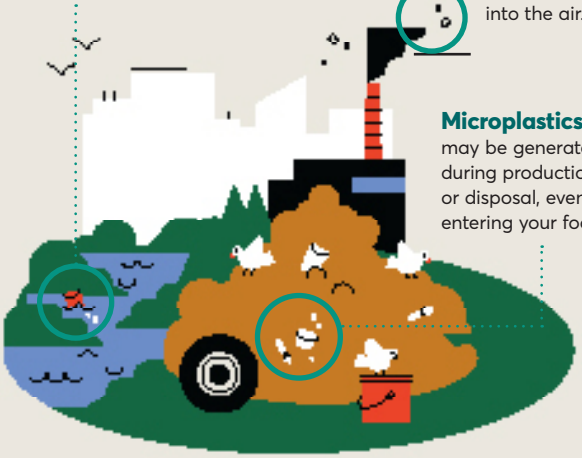
HOW PLASTIC CHEMICALS GET INTO FOOD

ENVIRONMENT

Plastic trash in landfills can degrade, allowing chemicals to leach into water and soil.

Incineration and production of plastic can release chemicals into the air.

Microplastics may be generated during production, use, or disposal, eventually entering your food.

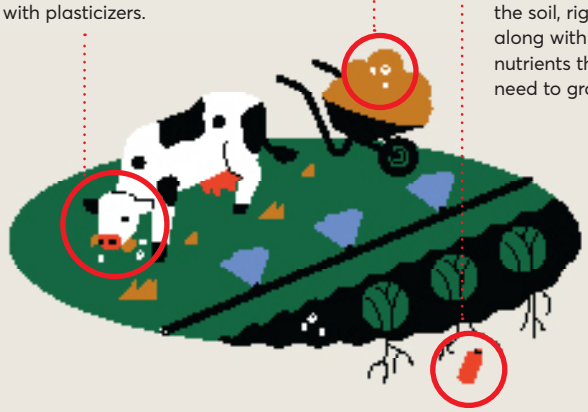


AGRICULTURE

Plastic mulch is sometimes used to suppress the growth of weeds, then plowed right into the fields.

Animals such as cows may consume water and plants contaminated with plasticizers.

Plants can drink up plasticizers from the soil, right along with the nutrients they need to grow.



Early efforts to limit exposure to them focused on packaging, but it's now clear that phthalates in particular can also get in from the plastic in the tubing, conveyor belts, and gloves used during food processing, and can even enter directly into meat and produce via contaminated water and soil.

There are few regulations restricting the use of these chemicals in food production, or requiring that manufacturers test foods for them. But our guide can help you learn how plasticizers get into your food, how to reduce your exposure, and how key changes by industry and regulators could make our food safer.

The Problem With Plastic Chemicals

Bisphenols and phthalates in our food are concerning for several reasons.

To start, growing research shows that they are endocrine disruptors, which means that they can interfere with the production and regulation of estrogen and other hormones. Even minor disruptions in hormone levels can contribute to an increased risk of several health problems, including diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular disease, certain cancers, birth defects, premature birth, neurodevelopmental disorders, and infertility.

Those problems typically develop slowly, sometimes over decades, says Philip Landrigan, MD, a pediatrician and the director of the Program for Global Public Health and the Common Good at Boston College. "Unlike a plane crash, where everyone dies at once, the people who die from these die over many years."

Another concern is that with plastic so ubiquitous in food and elsewhere, the chemicals can't be completely avoided. And though the human body is pretty good at eliminating bisphenols and phthalates from our systems, our constant exposure to them means that they enter our blood and tissue almost as quickly as they're eliminated. And plasticizers in particular can easily leach out of plastic and other materials. In addition, the chemicals' harmful effects may be cumulative, so steady exposure to even very small amounts over time could increase health risks.

All that makes it difficult to trace any particular bad health outcome—say, a heart attack or breast cancer—to the chemicals. And it makes it hard for regulators to set a limit for what is considered safe for any food. "As a first step, the key is to determine how widespread the chemicals are in our food supply," Rogers says. "Then we can develop strategies, as a society and individually, to limit our exposure."

High Risks Even at Low Levels

To help figure out the scope of the problem, CR tested a wide range of food items, in a variety of packaging.

PHOTO, PREVIOUS SPREAD: PROP STYLING BY SOPHIA PAPPAS

ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE TOM AGENCY

Specifically, we tested 85 foods, analyzing two or three samples of each. We looked for common bisphenols and phthalates, as well as some chemicals that are used to replace them. (For more information on these chemical substitutes, see "Why Chemical Substitutes May Not Be Better," on page 30.) We included prepared meals, fruits and vegetables, milk and other dairy products, baby food, fast food, meat, and seafood, all packaged in cans, pouches, foil, or other material.

The news on BPA and other bisphenols was somewhat reassuring: While we detected them in 79 percent of the tested samples, levels were notably lower than when we last tested for BPA, in 2009, "suggesting that we are at least moving in the right direction on bisphenols," says CR's Rogers.

But there wasn't any good news on phthalates: We found them in all but one food (Polar raspberry lime seltzer). And the levels were much higher than for bisphenols.

Determining an acceptable level for these chemicals in food is tricky. Regulators in the U.S. and Europe have set thresholds for only bisphenol A (BPA) and a few phthalates, and none of the foods CR tested had amounts exceeding those limits.

But "many of these thresholds do not reflect the most current scientific knowledge, and may not protect against all the potential health effects," says Tunde Akinleye, the CR scientist who oversaw CR's tests. "We don't feel comfortable saying these levels are okay," he says. "They're not."

The decision to allow these chemicals in food "is not evidence-based," says Ami Zota, ScD, an associate professor of environmental health sciences at the Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health in New York City, who has studied the risks of phthalates.

For example, one of the most well-studied phthalates is called DEHP. Studies have linked it to insulin resistance, high blood pressure, reproductive issues, early menopause, and other concerns at levels well below the limits set by American and European regulators. It was the most common phthalate that we found in our tests, with more than half of the products we tested having levels above what research has linked to health problems.

In addition, Akinleye says that with exposure to these chemicals coming from so many sources—not only food but also other products, such as printed receipts and household dust—it's difficult to quantify what a "safe" limit would be for a single food. "The more we learn about these chemicals, including how widespread they are, the more it seems clear that they can harm us even at very low levels," he says.

Making Food Safer

Growing concerns about the health risks posed by these chemicals have led U.S. regulators to meaningfully curtail the use of these chemicals in a number of products—but not yet food.

For example, the federal government has banned eight phthalates in children's toys. But—with the exception of a 2012 ban on BPA in baby bottles (extended in 2013 to infant formula cans)—there are no substantive limits on plastic-related chemicals in food packaging or production. Just last year the Food and Drug Administration rejected a petition from multiple groups calling for a ban on more than two dozen phthalates used in materials that come into contact with food.

An FDA spokesperson told CR that in 2022 it asked the food industry and others to provide the agency with additional data about the use of plasticizers in any material that comes into contact with food during production, and might use that information to update its safety assessments of the chemicals.

CR's food safety scientists and others say such a reassessment by the FDA and other agencies is overdue and essential.

Supermarket and fast-food chains, as well as food manufacturers, should also be required to take action, Rogers says, and should set specific goals for reducing and eliminating bisphenols and phthalates from all food packaging and processing equipment throughout their supply chains.

CR contacted certain companies in our tests that had products with the highest phthalate levels per serving, and asked them to comment on our results. Annie's, Burger King, Fairlife, Little Caesars, Moe's Southwest Grill, Wendy's, and Yoplait did not respond to our requests for comment.

Del Monte, Gerber, and McDonald's emphasized that they abide by existing regulations. Gerber added that it requires its suppliers to certify that its food packaging is free of BPA and phthalates. Chicken of the Sea said it requires its suppliers to certify that neither products nor packaging has intentionally added BPA or phthalates, but it acknowledged that fish live in water that is often polluted with phthalates.

More chemical companies need to step up, too, by creating safer, more sustainable materials. "We want things to be functional, but also nontoxic and biodegradable and renewable," says Hanno Erythropel, PhD, at the Center for Green Chemistry and Green Engineering at Yale University in New Haven, Conn.

That may be tough, he acknowledges, but it should be possible: An entire field called green chemistry is working to develop just these sorts of alternatives.

In the meantime, see the facing page for tips on what you can do now to limit your exposure to these chemicals in your food, and elsewhere.

Less Plastic in Your Food …

Limiting exposure to phthalates isn't as simple as avoiding particular types of packaging, because these chemicals can enter your food long before it is packaged. The best solution, says Maricel Maffini, PhD, a chemical safety expert and the author of a recent study of phthalate risks, would be for manufacturers and regulators to ensure that our food was safe, so we wouldn't "have to make these decisions when we go to the grocery store." But that doesn't mean you're powerless now. Reducing your overall exposure to the chemicals in plastic—including bisphenols and phthalates—may help you avoid some of the risks. These six steps can help.

Avoid plastic food storage containers.

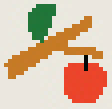
If you do use them, don't heat them in the microwave, and avoid using them to store hot food, because heat can increase leaching. You can see CR's top picks for glass and steel food storage containers at **CR.org/foodstorage**. And keep your food below the top of the container to avoid contact with the lids, which are often plastic.

Steer clear of fast foods.

Plasticizers are one more reason to limit consumption of fast food. Our testing found some of the highest levels of phthalates and phthalate substitutes in fast food. Although we can't say exactly why, one possible explanation is that fast foods are often prepared by people wearing vinyl gloves, which are known to be extremely high in these chemicals.

Limit high-fat foods.

Another reason fast foods may be high in plasticizers is that they tend to be fatty, and some research has found higher levels of plasticizers—many of which are known to be fat-soluble—in foods with higher fat content. One 2020 review, for example, reported that levels of DEHP were often almost five to 10 times higher in cream than they were in milk.

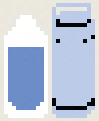


Eat fresh, minimally processed food.

Make sure your diet includes plenty of unpackaged fruits and vegetables, which have fewer chances to have contact with phthalates. A study based on 2013 to 2014 data found that people who ate more ultraprocessed foods—such as french fries and ice cream pops—had higher levels of certain phthalate byproducts in their urine.

Choose wood, stainless steel, and silicone for kitchen tools.

Chopping on a plastic cutting board can generate microplastics, so consider a wood or silicone board instead. Some plastic uses are probably riskier than others—dumping hot food into a plastic bowl and using plastic wrap for leftovers may expose you more than giving your lettuce a quick dry in a plastic salad spinner, for example.



Use water bottles made of glass or steel.

Avoid plastic bottles and cups, which are often made with bisphenols. Carrying around your own stainless steel straws can also make it easy to say no to plastic straws. As a bonus, you'll reduce the amount of trash you generate.

… And in Your World

Food is not the only way you're exposed to bisphenols and phthalates, so if you want to reduce your exposure to endocrine-disrupting chemicals, you have to think broadly. Phthalates, for example, which are a viscous liquid in their raw form, are also a common ingredient in perfumes, cleansers, shampoos, and other cosmetics, and are sometimes used in flooring and furniture. Bisphenols and phthalates are also often found in household dust. Here are a few smart steps you can take.

Go fragrance-free.

Soap, cosmetics, and cleaners with fragrances often use phthalates, especially DEP, as a solvent.

Open your windows.

Because phthalates can be used in furniture, shower curtains, and flooring, they can accumulate in household dust, which you can then inhale. "Ventilation is important," says Akhgar Ghassabian, MD, PhD, at the NYU Grossman School of Medicine. "And if you're vacuuming, make sure you do that with the window open."

Refuse paper receipts.

Go for the digital ones instead; thermal paper receipts (the ones that are a little glossy) are often coated in bisphenols.

Limit your use of vinyl.

Plasticizers are generally a key ingredient in vinyl products. When possible, choose alternate materials for shower curtains, flooring, car interiors, and clothing, says Amy Ziff, the founder of Made Safe, an organization that has partnered with CR to identify potentially harmful ingredients in products. She says vinyl is sometimes called "vegan leather."

Plastic Chemicals in Popular Foods: What Our Tests Showed

The grocery store foods and fast foods CR tested are listed in order of total phthalates per serving. While there is no level that scientists have confirmed as safe, lower levels are better. Our results show that although the chemicals are widespread in our food, levels can vary dramatically even among similar products, so in some cases you may be able to use our chart to choose products with lower levels. (Not all tested foods are shown in this chart.)

BEVERAGES	TOTAL PHTHALATES PER SERVING (NANOGRAMS)*
Lipton Brisk Lemonade *(can)*	7,467
Coca-Cola Original *(plastic)*	6,167
Lipton Diet Green Tea Citrus *(plastic)*	4,433
Poland Spring 100% Natural Spring Water *(plastic)*	4,217
Juicy Juice 100% Juice Apple *(plastic)*	3,348
Pepsi Cola *(can)*	2,938
Juicy Juice 100% Juice Apple *(cardboard box)*	2,260
Gatorade Frost Thirst Quencher Glacier Freeze *(plastic)*	1,752
Polar Seltzer Raspberry Lime *(can)*	0

*Includes the 10 phthalates we tested for: BBP, DBP, DiBP, DCHP, DEP, DEHP, DnHP, DMP, DiNP, and DNOP. We also tested for three chemicals used as phthalate substitutes (DEHA, DEHT, and DINCH), and three bisphenols (BPA, BPS, and BPF), which are not shown in this chart.

CANNED BEANS	TOTAL PHTHALATES PER SERVING (NANOGRAMS)*
Hormel Chili With Beans *(can)*	9,847
Bush's Chili Red Beans Mild Chili Sauce *(can)*	6,405
Great Value (Walmart) Baked Beans Original *(can)*	6,184
Bush's Baked Beans Original *(can)*	3,709

CONDIMENTS	
Mrs. Butterworth's Syrup Original *(plastic)*	1,010
Hunt's Tomato Ketchup *(can)*	574
Sweet Baby Ray's Barbecue Sauce Original *(plastic)*	22

DAIRY	
Fairlife Core Power High Protein Milk Shake Chocolate *(plastic)*	20,452
SlimFast High Protein Meal Replacement Shake Creamy Chocolate *(plastic)*	16,916

DAIRY *continued*	TOTAL PHTHALATES PER SERVING (NANOGRAMS)*
Yoplait Original Low Fat Yogurt French Vanilla *(plastic)*	10,948
Tuscan Dairy Farms Whole Milk *(plastic)*	10,932
Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream Vanilla *(paperboard carton)*	6,387
Wholesome Pantry (ShopRite) Organic Whole Milk *(carton)*	4,620
Great Value (Walmart) Ice Cream Homestyle Vanilla *(plastic)*	3,068
Jell-O Pudding Snacks Original Chocolate *(plastic)*	1,756
Sargento Sliced Natural Cheddar Cheese Sharp *(plastic)*	1,481
Land O'Lakes Butter Salted *(paper wrap/cardboard)*	581

FAST FOOD	
Wendy's Crispy Chicken Nuggets *(paperboard)*	33,980
Moe's Southwest Grill Chicken Burrito *(aluminum foil)*	24,330
Chipotle Chicken Burrito *(aluminum foil)*	20,579
Burger King Whopper With Cheese *(paper)*	20,167
Burger King Chicken Nuggets *(paper bag)*	19,782
Wendy's Dave's Single With Cheese *(aluminum foil/paper wrap)*	19,520
McDonald's Quarter Pounder With Cheese *(cardboard)*	9,956
Wendy's Natural-Cut French Fries *(paperboard)*	8,876
Burger King Classic French Fries *(paperboard)*	8,512

WHY CHEMICAL SUBSTITUTES MAY NOT BE BETTER

WHILE CR FOUND high levels of phthalates in many foods, we found even higher levels of several chemicals that have been developed to replace those phthalates. Researchers say that although little is known about these substitutes, some may pose similar risks. This phenomenon—industry replacing a dangerous chemical with a newer one that might not be any safer—is so common that it has its own name: regrettable substitution.

In our tests, we found both phthalates and their replacements in many products, with the alternatives often at much higher concentrations. That was especially true for fast foods. For example, a chicken burrito with rice and beans from Moe's Southwest Grill had 48 parts per billion (ppb) total phthalates—and 15,351 ppb phthalate substitutes. That's 320 times as much.

Environmental health experts have seen this scenario play out before. It happened when research about the risks of BPA led to public outcry that prompted manufacturers to replace it with similar chemicals like BPS and BPF, while declaring their products "BPA free." It's happening now with phthalates, as growing awareness of their potential harms have led to increased use of alternative plasticizers.

"When a spotlight is shined on a particular phthalate or bisphenol, the manufacturer quickly moves on to a first cousin chemical," says Philip Landrigan, MD, of Boston College. "Oftentimes we have little or no information on the substitute,

FAST FOOD *continued*	TOTAL PHTHALATES PER SERVING (NANOGRAMS)*
McDonald's Chicken McNuggets *(cardboard)*	8,030
Little Caesars Classic Cheese Pizza *(cardboard box)*	5,703
McDonald's French Fries *(paperboard)*	5,538
McDonald's Quarter Pounder Hamburger Patty *(varied)*	5,428
Taco Bell Chicken Burrito *(paper wrap)*	4,720
Domino's Hand Tossed Cheese Pizza *(cardboard box)*	4,356
Wendy's Dave's Single Hamburger Patty *(varied)*	3,629
Burger King Whopper Hamburger Patty *(varied)*	2,870
Pizza Hut Original Cheese Pan Pizza *(cardboard box)*	2,718

GRAINS

General Mills Cheerios Original *(paper/cardboard)*	10,980
Success 10 Minute Boil-in-Bag White Rice *(paper/cardboard)*	4,308
Pepperidge Farm Farmhouse Hearty White Bread *(plastic bag)*	2,184

INFANT FOOD

Gerber Mealtime for Baby Harvest Turkey Dinner *(glass with lined lid)*	4,267
Similac Advance Infant Milk-Based Powder Formula *(can)*	4,202
Beech-Nut Fruities Pouch Pear, Banana & Raspberries *(pouch)*	2,826
Gerber Cereal for Baby Rice *(plastic)*	1,599
Happy Baby Organics Clearly Crafted Banana & Strawberries *(glass with lined lid)*	1,300

INFANT FOOD *continued*	TOTAL PHTHALATES PER SERVING (NANOGRAMS)*
Happy Baby Organic Milk-Based Infant Powder Formula With Iron *(plastic)*	977
Gerber Organic for Baby Pouch Apple Zucchini Spinach Strawberry *(pouch)*	706

MEAT AND POULTRY

Perdue Ground Chicken Breast *(foam tray with plastic wrap)*	9,985
Trader Joe's Ground Pork 80% Lean 20% Fat *(foam tray with plastic wrap)*	5,503
Premio Foods Sweet Italian Sausage *(foam tray with plastic wrap)*	4,725
Libby's Corned Beef *(can)*	4,088
Bar S Chicken Jumbo Franks *(plastic)*	3,295
Stop & Shop Ground Beef 80% Lean 20% Fat *(paperboard with plastic wrap)*	2,729
Applegate Naturals Oven Roasted Turkey Breast *(plastic)*	2,295
Swanson White Premium Chunk Chicken Breast *(can)*	1,376
Johnsonville Smoked Sausage Beef Hot Links *(plastic)*	912

PACKAGED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Del Monte Sliced Peaches in 100% Fruit Juice *(can)*	24,928
Green Giant Cream Style Sweet Corn *(can)*	7,603
Del Monte Fresh Cut Italian Green Beans *(can)*	5,264

PACKAGED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES *continued*	TOTAL PHTHALATES PER SERVING (NANOGRAMS)*
Progresso Vegetable Classics Vegetable Soup *(can)*	2,888
Birds Eye Steam Fresh Cut Green Beans *(plastic bag)*	907
Hunt's Tomato Sauce *(can)*	680

PREPARED MEALS

Annie's Organic Cheesy Ravioli *(can)*	53,579
Chef Boyardee Beefaroni Pasta in Tomato and Meat Sauce *(can)*	13,628
Banquet Chicken Pot Pie *(plastic/paperboard)*	12,494
Campbell's Chunky Classic Chicken Noodle Soup *(plastic)*	6,768
Chef Boyardee Big Bowl Beefaroni Pasta in Meat Sauce *(plastic)*	5,064
Campbell's Chicken Noodle Soup *(can)*	2,848
Red Baron Brick Oven Cheese-Trio Pizza *(paperboard)*	1,707

SEAFOOD

Chicken of the Sea Pink Salmon in Water Skinless Boneless *(can)*	24,321
King Oscar Wild Caught Sardines in Extra Virgin Olive Oil *(can)*	7,792
Snow's Chopped Clams *(can)*	4,380
StarKist Wild Caught Light Tuna in Water *(pouch)*	1,735
StarKist Chunk Light Tuna in Water *(can)*	1,687
Season Brand Sardines in Water Skinless & Boneless *(can)*	1,258

and this speaks to a much bigger problem: Chemicals are allowed to come on the market in this country with almost no premarket safety testing."

That gap is why safety advocates say regulators should apply the "precautionary principle" when new, related chemicals come on the market, and assume them to be unsafe until proven otherwise. And they say that chemicals should be regulated as classes rather than individually. "Otherwise, regulators are just playing whack-a-mole as they try to keep up as industry creates new, potentially toxic chemicals, without adequate testing," says Michael Hansen, PhD, a senior scientist at CR. "We need to get ahead of the problem, not play catch-up."

—Lauren Kirchner

Moe's Southwest Grill chicken burrito has very high levels of phthalate substitutes, which may be as harmful as the chemicals they replace.

PHOTO: SCOTT MEADOWS/CONSUMER REPORTS

TESTIMONY

Dr. Michael Hansen, Senior Scientist
in support of HF 44

Committee on Agriculture Finance and Policy
Minnesota House of Representatives

March 19, 2025

Dear Chairman Hansen/Anderson and Committee members,

My name is Michael Hansen, Senior Scientist at Consumer Reports (CR). We appreciate the opportunity to comment on House File 44, which would require food manufacturers and brand owners to test packaged food for levels of ortho-phthalates and publicly report those results on their websites. We strongly support HF 44.

Founded in 1936, Consumer Reports (CR) is an independent, nonprofit and nonpartisan organization that works with consumers to create a fair and just marketplace. Known for its rigorous testing and ratings of products, CR advocates for laws and company practices that put consumers first. CR is dedicated to amplifying the voices of consumers to promote safety, digital rights, financial fairness, and sustainability. The organization surveys millions of Americans every year, reports extensively on the challenges and opportunities for today's consumers, and provides ad-free content and tools to 6 million members across the U.S.

Ortho-phthalates are chemicals that are plasticizers, substances added to plastic to make it more flexible and durable. But these chemicals don't just stay in the plastic, they can leach out and get into our food and drinks. Ortho-phthalates can enter not only through packaging but also throughout the entire food chain, via exposure from plastic in tubing, conveyor belts, and vinyl gloves or from meat and produce via contaminated soil and water.

Growing research has shown that ortho-phthalates are endocrine disruptors, e.g., chemicals that interfere with the production of various hormones, including estrogen. Even very small changes in hormone levels can lead to increased risk of diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular disease, certain cancers, birth defects, premature birth, neurodevelopmental disorders, and infertility.

Given the increased concerns over health effects of ortho-phthalates, and the fact that 8 ortho-phthalates were banned for use in children's toys due to the health concern, Consumer Report conducted a study of phthalate levels in packaged foods, which was published in January

2024. We tested samples of 85 different foods for 10 different ortho-phthalates. We included prepared meals, fruits and vegetables, milk and other dairy products, baby food, fast food, meat, and seafood, all packaged in cans, pouches, foil, or other material. We found ortho-phthalates in 84 of the 85 items we tested, with many products having levels above which research has linked to health problems.

Given the potential health problems associated with consumption of ortho-phthalates, and our own findings of ortho-phthalates in 84 of 85 foods tested, we strongly support HF 44, which would require the companies to test packaged food products for ortho-phthalates and post those results to their website so they are available to consumers. By posting the levels of ortho-phthalates in their food products, consumers can use this information to make more informed choices about the packaged foods they consume, which would encourage companies to reduce phthalate levels.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony today. Consumer Reports urges the committee to approve this bill.

Dr. Michael Hansen, Ph.D.
Senior Scientist
Consumer Reports

Attached: Consumer Reports study: The Plastics Hiding in Your Food.

March 19, 2025

Minnesota House
Agriculture Finance and Policy Committee

Re: **HF44 Test and Report Phthalates in Packaged Food**

Dear Chair Hansen and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in **support** of HF44. This bill will require food companies to test their products for phthalates and make the results public.

What are phthalates and how do they end up in food?

- Phthalates are chemicals added to plastic to make it more flexible and durable. However, they are not bound to plastic. Phthalates can migrate from plastic into food from packaging and processing equipment. Food inputs can also be contaminated from plastic exposure.

- A 2024 Consumer Reports (CR) study tested grocery store items and found phthalates in 84 of the 85 items tested, some at concerning levels. Other studies found similar results; phthalates are widespread in our food system. There is currently no information available to consumers on the levels of phthalates in food other than one-time random testing.

Should we be concerned?

- Phthalates are known to interfere with the body's endocrine system. They can have an impact at very low doses. Fetuses and children are most at risk because they are going through rapid development. Endocrine disrupting chemicals can harm those exposed but also their descendants.

- Phthalates are associated with serious health risks, including obesity, diabetes, infertility, cardiovascular disease, asthma, liver disease, kidney issues, and certain cancers.

- Healthy Kids Minnesota is a biomonitoring program that measures urine levels of more than 70 chemicals, including phthalates. The 2022 results showed that 100% of participants had at least one phthalate in their urine. The program provides results to families along with advice on reducing exposure. This bill would provide an additional tool for families to use to reduce their exposure from food.

- The Minnesota Department of Health included 17 phthalates on its Chemicals of High Concern List and 3 phthalates on its Priority Chemicals List, due to high production volumes.

How will this bill make a difference?

- Food manufacturers want to produce food that is healthy and safe to eat. They frequently test their products to ensure they meet promised nutrition and safety requirements. The addition of a phthalate test would provide important information for companies so that they

could take steps to eliminate phthalates if they are detected. Also, this information can help companies reduce the risk of introducing phthalates when making decisions such as equipment upgrades and packaging redesign.

- Consumers have the right to know what is in the food they eat and serve their families. Currently there is no way for them to know what phthalates levels are in the food they buy. Even choosing organic food does not eliminate the risk. In CR's study, the product with the highest level of phthalates was Annie's Organic Cheesy Ravioli. Another family favorite, Cheerios also had concerning levels. This bill will ensure consumers have the information they need to make safer choices for their families.

- Phthalates are known as the "everywhere" chemical because they are used in hundreds of products, including toys, food packaging, shampoo, air fresheners, perfume, building material, vinyl flooring, shower curtains, and PVC. However, food is the most common route of exposure for most people. The good news is that phthalates are metabolized and leave the body quickly, within 24-48 hours, so choosing food with lower levels of phthalates can reduce overall exposure, especially for people who are actively trying to avoid phthalates.

This bill is important to protect the reputation and confidence in our food supply system. Food manufacturers are proud of the food they produce and work hard to ensure their products are safe and healthy to eat. Most are likely not aware that phthalate could be leaching into their products. This is an opportunity for them to discover if phthalates are in their products so they can take steps to eliminate them. This bill also provides a means for consumers to make healthy food choices and reduce their exposure to phthalates. I ask that you support HF44.

Sincerely,

Lori Olinger
Coalition for Plastic Reduction

MINNESOTA GROCERS ASSOCIATION

1360 Energy Park Drive, Suite 110 • St. Paul, MN 55108 • 651-228-0973 • 1-800-966-8352 • mga@mngrocers.com

March 19, 2025

Chair Hansen, Chair Anderson and Members of the House Agriculture Finance and Policy Committee:

The Minnesota Grocers Association (MGA) appreciates the opportunity to express our concerns regarding HF44 (Curran), which would mandate food manufacturers test every packaged food product for ortho-phthalate before distributing the product in Minnesota. While industry shares the goal of reducing the use of ortho-phthalates in food packaging, we believe HF44 represents an overly burdensome approach that could have significant negative consequences for Minnesota's food supply chain, with added costs for consumers.

Minnesota is home to a vibrant culture of independent, locally-owned, multi-generational grocers and convenience stores. The MGA has proudly represented Minnesota's food industry for over 125 years. Today, we represent more than 300 companies with over 1,300 locations statewide, including food producers, manufacturers, brokers, and wholesalers. Our industry provides more than 150,000 jobs in the state, both union and non-union.

The requirement to test every packaged food and make the results accessible via a QR code printed on each package—regardless of whether it has been exposed to ortho-phthalates during production or packaging—is both impractical and will add costs to goods sold in Minnesota. These added costs disproportionately affect smaller food producers and retailers. While large corporations like Walmart can spread these additional expenses across their vast international operations, independent grocers and food producers have no choice but to pass these costs directly onto consumers. Higher costs only further disadvantage small retailers, accelerating industry consolidation and increasing the market share of the largest retailers.

Moreover, HF44 would go beyond existing federal regulations set by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which already imposes strict standards on food packaging materials and conducts regular testing to ensure safety. The FDA's approach is evidence-based and provides a national framework for managing food safety, including the regulation of packaging chemicals. By preempting federal standards, this legislation would out Minnesota on a regulatory island.

In conclusion, while industry fully supports current, voluntary efforts to phase out the use of ortho-phthalates where possible, we believe HF44 is an impractical solution. It would impose unnecessary costs that burden small businesses and consumers, undermine federal regulatory efforts, and position Minnesota as a regulatory outlier.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Steve Barthel
Director of Government Relations
Minnesota Grocers Association

MINNESOTA DFL ENVIRONMENTAL CAUCUS

RE: HF44

March 18, 2025

Dear Chair Rep. Paul Anderson and members of the Agriculture Finance and Policy Committee,

We write on behalf of the DFL Environmental Caucus. Our mission is to educate and mobilize the citizens of Minnesota to address the climate crisis and to protect, preserve, and restore the natural environment. **We strongly support HF44 Curran, Food manufacturers and brand owners required to report ortho-phthalate testing results of packaged food products to the commissioner of agriculture.**

Ortho-phthalates are a class of chemicals used to package food in soft plastics. The chemicals have been shown to leach into the food from the packaging.

A 2021 Consumer Report Fact Sheet states that:

> *A number of studies have found that phthalates can have reproductive, developmental and endocrine health effects, with a particular impact on children's health. More recent research has found that ortho-phthalates can impair child brain development and increase children's risk for learning, attention and behavioral disorders, and have concluded that ortho-phthalates should be banned from a wide array of products. Research has also found that socially vulnerable populations such as communities of color, frequently experience higher exposures to ortho-phthalates.*

The use of ortho-phthalates should end. Until that day HF 44 will allow the consumer to be made aware of their presence in products so they can make informed decisions as to whether to purchase the product or not. Please support the bill.

Veda Kanitz, Greg Laden, Legislative Committee Cochairs
DFL Environmental Caucus