

Milk and Milk Alternatives

Packaging POM in
2022



Introduction

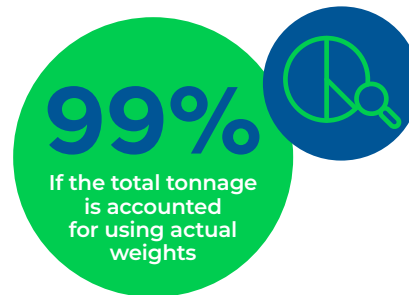
This report determines the total flow of milk products onto the market. This includes the tonnage of bottles and cartons, the size of the containers and the type of milk.

Methodology

In this study, 99% of the total tonnage is accounted for using actual weights (collected for Valpak’s EPIC¹ database using various weighing activities), while 1% is accounted for using average packaging weights.

Components, such as caps and seals, were not separated from the tonnage of bottles and cartons, therefore the tonnage presented below is inclusive of all additional packaging components associated with the bottle or carton.

Total UK figures have been calculated by scaling up from 3 major UK retailers (selling to consumers).



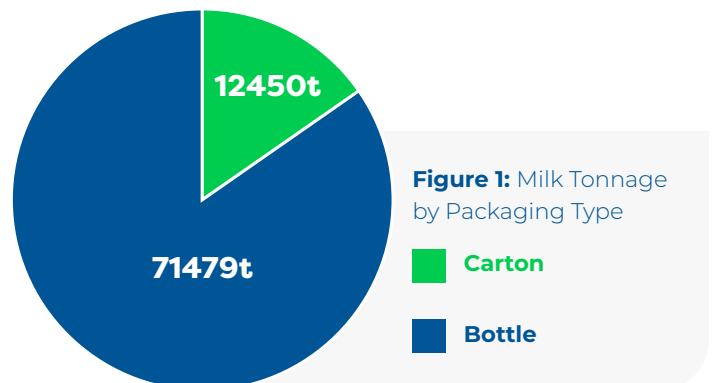
The businesses considered within the sample accounted for 51% of the UK’s retail market share.

2022 data was used for this study, as this gives the most recent and accurate representation of the market.

Milk and milk alternative cartons and bottles placed onto the market in 2022

This section of the report presents the finding of the data analysis of the milk and milk alternative products.

Figure 1 shows that most milk products, approximately 85%, are sold in plastic bottles. The tonnage of cartons sold is 12,450t and the total tonnage of bottles is 71,479t.



¹EPIC is the Environmental Product Information Centre – Valpak’s database containing over 44 million SKUs from some of the UK’s biggest businesses.

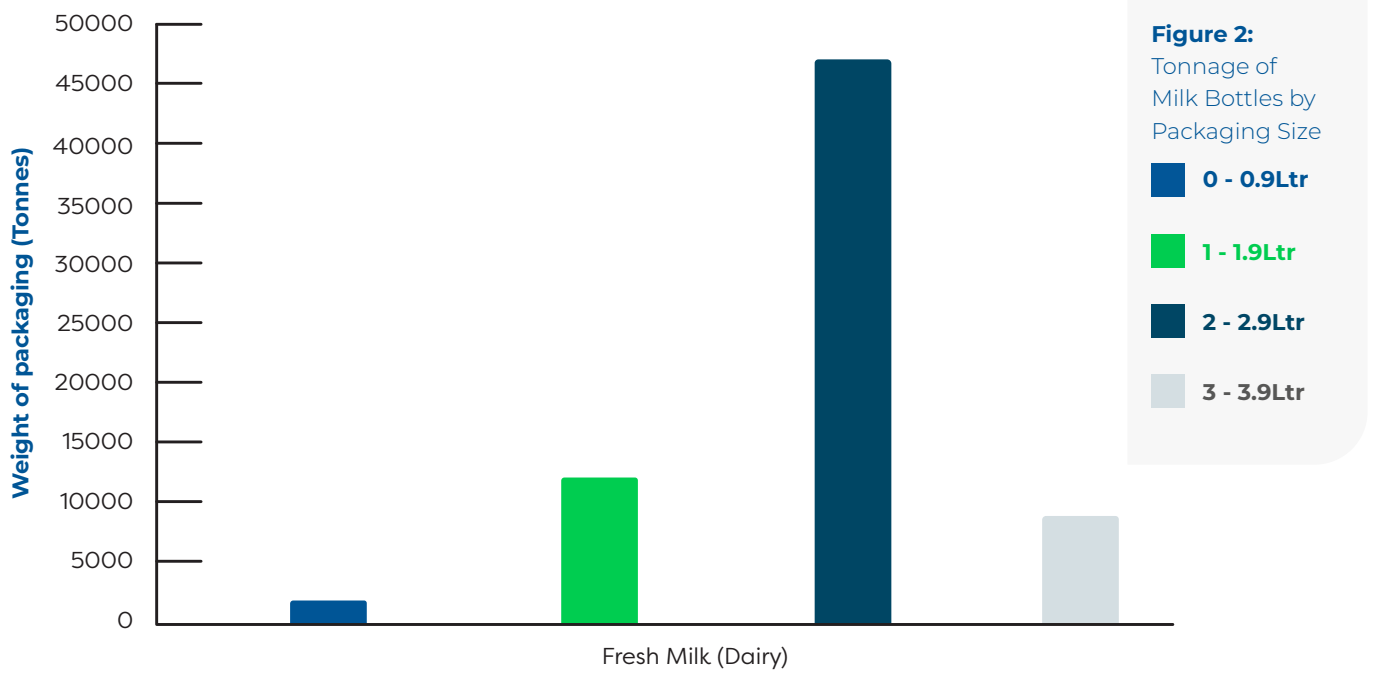


Figure 2 shows the tonnage for fresh milk bottles. The largest category of fresh milk is 2-2.9Ltr bottles, which is 47,225t. The next largest tonnage is 1-1.9Ltr, which is 11,720t. The tonnage for the 3-3.9Ltr category is 10,399t. The smallest tonnage for bottles is 0-0.9Ltr, which is 2,085t.

Though the tonnage is smaller, some of the bottles are used for alternative milk products. Fresh Milk (Alternative) has 50t of bottles for packaging.

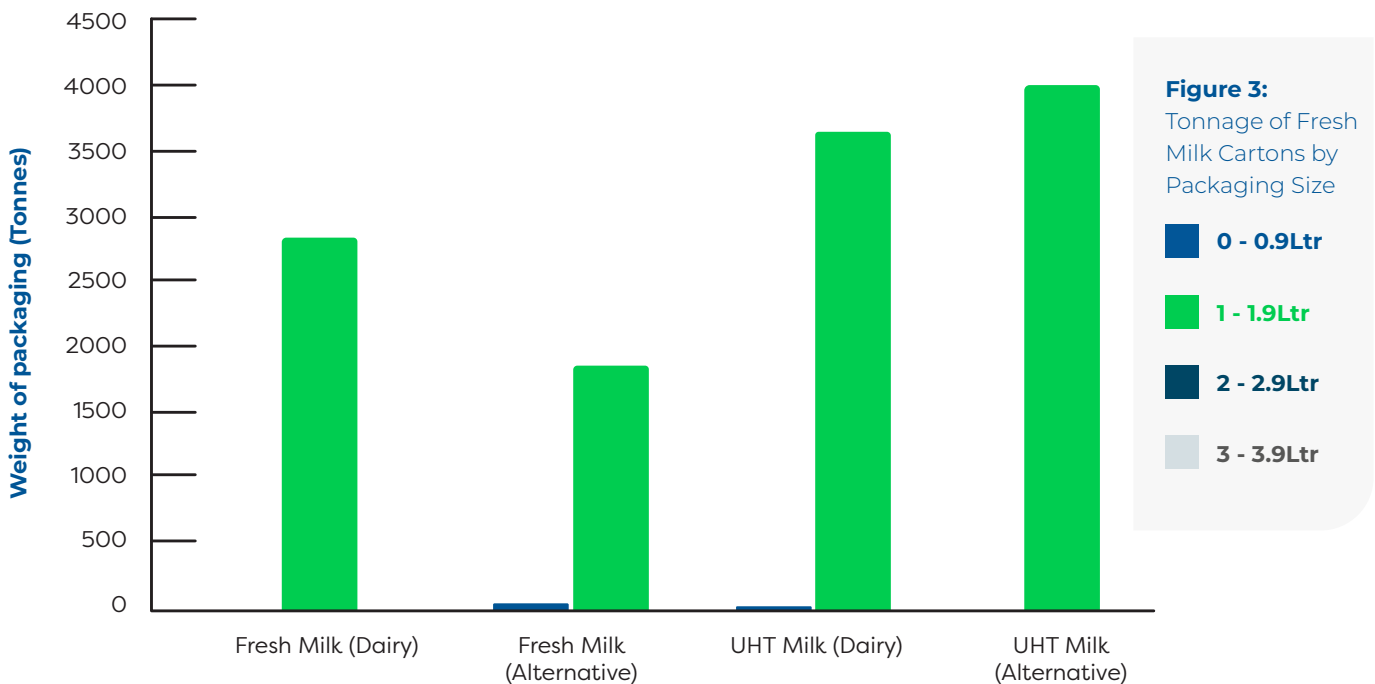


Figure 3 shows the tonnage for milk cartons across different categories. From the graph, it shows the total tonnage for cartons is mostly from 1-1.9Ltr cartons. This includes 1 litre and 2-pint (1.137 litre) cartons. This can be expected, as most cartons are a standard size. There is a small number of cartons in the 0-0.9Ltr category sold, with 8t for Fresh Milk (Dairy), 38t for Fresh Milk (Alternative), 25t for UHT Milk (Dairy) and 1.8t for UHT Milk (Alternative). There is no packaging associated with 2-2.9Ltr and 3-3.9Ltr cartons.

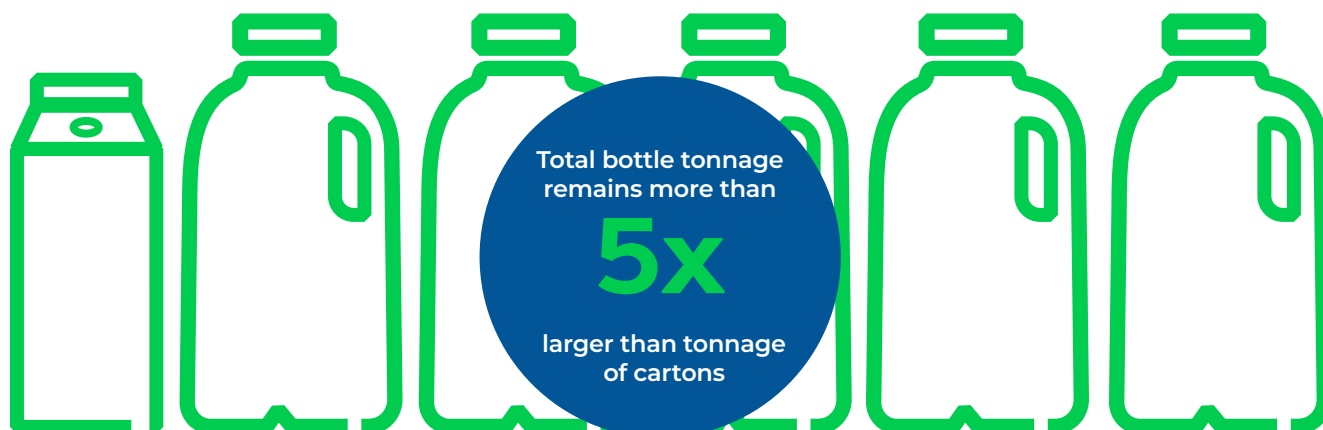
The largest tonnage associated with cartons is UHT Milk (Alternative) with 3,945t. The second largest category is UHT Milk (Dairy) with 3,683t. Fresh Milk (Dairy) has a slightly lower tonnage, which is 2,910t. The size category with the lowest tonnage is Fresh Milk (Alternative), which has a tonnage of 1,839t.



Summary

From the analysed data, it shows the tonnage of plastic bottles is much higher than for other milk types. This is expected, as these cartons can be sterilised more easily, which makes cartons more suitable for UHT milk products.

The most common size for cartons is 1-1.9Ltr, which is expected as 1 litre cartons are standard across many companies. The tonnage for UHT products is higher, but the tonnage of fresh milk cartons is quite high. This shows how a few suppliers have moved products from bottles to cartons, much involve less plastic and are more sustainable. However, the total bottle tonnage remains more than 5 times larger than the tonnage of cartons, showing how much bottled milk is still the dominant product and how much plastic is placed onto the milk market.



Limitations

Some items were excluded from this report. The main category of products excluded was flavoured milk, as the main goal of the report was to investigate Milk and Milk alternatives, so these were excluded to maximise accuracy of the data



Types of milk have been determined through product descriptions provided by Valpak's For this report, weights associated with components, such as caps, lids and seals, were not separated from the bottles and cartons due to the focus of the report being the tonnage of packaging around milk products. The caps, lids and seals of both bottles and cartons will be similar across the various sizes of container (0-0.9 to 3-3.9Ltr) so weights of bottles/cartons and lids have been combined for the purposes of this report.

This focus of this report was on tonnage associated with milk products using within the grocery sector. Doorstep deliveries and wholesale were not included, as this was not in the scope of the report.

Types of milk have been determined through product descriptions provided by Valpak's members and associated suppliers. When the status of the milk was not available, refrigerated milk was labelled fresh and non-refrigerated milk was labelled UHT.

**For more
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