



Study shows value of natural-looking packaging for organic, premium brands

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HARTSVILLE, S.C., Oct. 10, 2018 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Sonoco (NYSE: SON), one of the largest diversified global packaging companies, has released new consumer research about shopping trends related to organic and all-natural foods. The study showed that the distinctive natural look of EcoTect packaging board enhances product attributes like *organic* and *natural* to help brands stand out on the retail shelf.

According to the USDA, since it set formal standards for organic foods the market has taken off, posting growth of 10 percent or more each year for most years since 2000. Sonoco focus group research revealed that 89 percent of consumers purchase organic or all-natural products at least once a month, and one in three buys these products at least once a week. This consumer preference is driving market growth and increased competition – making factors that affect purchase decisions, like packaging, increasingly important.

In addition to focus group research, Sonoco conducted a study at Clemson University's CUshop™ that evaluated three product categories packaged using Sonoco's natural-brown, 100% recycled fiber, EcoTect Uncoated Recycled Paperboard (URB). Eye-tracking data in a simulated grocery setting, as well as survey response data, were collected from 60 participants. On average, the EcoTect-packaged products captured consumers' visual attention faster, longer and more frequently than the control products. Participants purchased EcoTect packaged brands more often, showing that heightened visual attention correlated with which products ultimately ended up in shoppers' carts.

Brands can access the study at www.sonoco.com/ecotect/eyetrack or at Booth S-1509 at Pack Expo 2018 in Chicago, Oct. 14-17. Sonoco will feature a variety of new and customer-tested innovations at the show, including its e-commerce packaging solutions (and Amazon APASS certification), expanding fresh food packaging portfolio, consumer-driven center-store innovations, and wide-ranging foodservice packaging solutions.

About Sonoco

Founded in 1899, Sonoco (NYSE: SON) is a global provider of a variety of consumer packaging, industrial products, protective packaging, and displays and packaging supply chain services. With annualized net sales of approximately \$5 billion, the Company has 21,000 employees working in approximately 300 operations in 33 countries, serving some of the world's best known brands in some 85 nations. Sonoco is committed to *Better Packaging. Better Life.*, and ranked first in the Packaging sector on Fortune's World's Most Admired Companies 2018 list. For more information, visit www.sonoco.com.

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