

A PALLETABLE FUTURE?

PLASTIC AND WOOD ARE GOING HEAD TO HEAD IN THE PALLET SECTOR. **HAMISH SMITH** QUIZZES BOTH SIDES ON THEIR VIABILITY

If the human palate is the most valued instrument of the drinks industry, the load-bearing pallet is one of the most undervalued. These humble structures perform a crucial role – they allow us to move heavy loads of alcohol around the world. But with technology advancing in logistics, might the low-tech wooden pallet one day be replaced? We spoke to plastic pallet manufacturer Goplasticpallets, and the wooden pallet association, EPAL, to get the arguments for and against.

WHICH ARE SAFER?

Goplasticpallets: Plastic pallets have no nails or splinters.

EPAL: Our experience is the risk of breakage is higher with plastic pallets.

WHICH ARE BEST ENVIRONMENTALLY?

Goplasticpallets: Questions regarding the sustainability of forestry have encouraged many users to move away from traditional wooden pallets to plastic pallets manufactured from recycled materials which are recyclable.

EPAL: We use renewable resources of untreated wood. The reusability of EPAL pallets in the open pool (450m EPAL pallets worldwide) reduces logistics costs and CO₂. EPAL pallets are readily recyclable.

WHICH IS THE MORE CONSISTENT?

Goplasticpallets: Plastic pallets are moulded under extreme pressure in

highly polished moulds, ensuring consistent dimensional accuracy and loading capacities. In contrast, wooden pallets do not have stated loading capacities.

EPAL: Our pallets have fixed dimensions and fixed load-bearing capacities. The load-bearing capacity of a plastic pallet is highly temperature dependent. They are only offered in a few standard measures as a mass product.

WHICH PALLET LAST LONGEST?

Goplasticpallets: A plastic pallet has a potential life span of up to, and often exceeding, 10 years. This could be up to 10 times longer than a wooden pallet.

EPAL: The EPAL pallet is easy to repair with low material and energy costs. Plastic pallets are usually not repairable.

CAN THEY BE CLEANED?

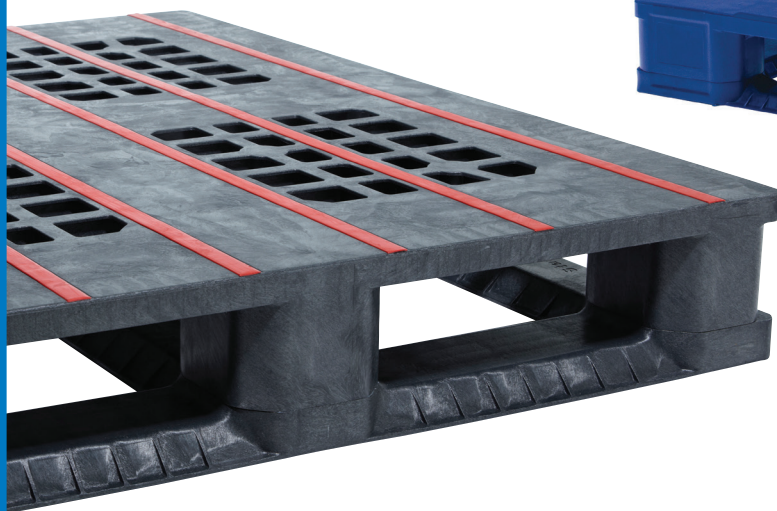
Goplasticpallets: Plastic pallets are inherently more hygienic than wooden ones as they can be easily cleaned without the risk of damaging the product.

EPAL: We have a prescribed drying process, which reduces mould and eliminates all kinds of insects. The viability of bacteria is higher on plastic (polyethylene) than wood. **DI**

Long-Life Beverage Pallets

Our plastic pool and beverage pallets offer a more durable, safe and long-life solution for drinks handling and logistics, as well as an excellent ROI!

We offer expert advice, a solution catered to meet your needs and planned delivery.



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01323 744057 | sales@goplasticpallets.com