

Memo

TO: To whom it may concern
FROM: Resource Recycling Systems (RRS)
RE: United States Access to Carton Recycling as of 12/31/2025

OVERVIEW

Resource Recycling Systems (RRS) is a consulting firm specializing in sustainability, recycling, and waste management. RRS was hired by the Carton Council to track and measure household access to recycling for refrigerated and shelf-stable cartons. RRS tracks access to carton recycling by obtaining documentation of cartons' inclusion in community curbside and drop-off recycling programs. This documentation can consist of a program website or other materials such as flyers or posters that are intended to communicate to residents the items they can recycle in their program.

RRS records program and documentation information in an access tracking database containing a table of all communities in the U.S. with their corresponding population and number of households. RRS then totals the population and number of households in the US in communities with these documented carton recycling programs. For nationwide consistency, all data on households and population is drawn from the most recent decennial US Census (2020), Redistricting Data. The measurements presented by RRS are thus the actual total of population and households in communities with documented carton recycling programs, rather than an estimate extrapolated from a random sample. The totals are updated each month to account for changes in local recycling programs.

As of December 31st, 2025, the total households and total population in the U.S. with access to carton recycling are shown in the table below:

VARIABLE	TOTAL WITH ACCESS TO CARTON RECYCLING	TOTAL WITHOUT ACCESS TO CARTON RECYCLING	TOTAL IN U.S.	PERCENT WITH ACCESS TO CARTON RECYCLING
Households	79,601,479	47,221,688	126,823,167	63%
Population	208,496,273	122,901,300	331,397,573	63%