

Greenpeace Raises Alarm over Microplastics Detected in Plastic-Packaged Baby Food

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New research commissioned by Greenpeace International has found microplastics in baby food sold in plastic pouches by two of the world's largest food companies, Nestl  and Danone, raising urgent concerns about the products marketed for babies.

The report, *Tiny Plastics, Big Problem: The Hidden Risks of Plastic Pouches for Baby Food*, detailed the laboratory testing of popular baby food brands, Nestl 's Gerber and Danone's Happy Baby Organics, where microplastic particles were found in every sample analysed. The test conducted also suggests that a range of chemicals were present in both the packaging and the food. This suggests that the plastic packaging itself may be a source of contamination, potentially exposing babies to thousands of microscopic plastic fragments with every pouch consumed.

Graham Forbes, Global Plastics Campaign Lead from Greenpeace USA, said, "This study is a wake-up call for parents everywhere, who trust these brands to put their kids first. Plastic-dependent companies like Nestl  and Danone owe families a clear answer: what are they doing to eliminate microplastics and chemicals from the products they sell to babies?"

Key findings are:

For every gram of baby food tested, researchers found up to 54 microplastic particles in Gerber pouches and up to 99 particles in Happy Baby Organics pouches, on average. That's equivalent to as many as 270 (Gerber) and 495 (Happy Baby Organics) microplastics per teaspoon.

The study estimated a total of more than 5,000 particles in each Gerber pouch and more than 11,000 particles in each Happy Baby Organics pouch.

The study also identified a range of plastic-associated chemicals present in both the packaging and the food, including the presence of a potential endocrine disruptor in the Gerber samples tested.

The study suggests a link between polyethylene, the plastic the pouches are lined with, and some of the microplastics found in the baby food tested.

Plastic squeeze pouches have rapidly become the dominant packaging format for baby food worldwide, driven by aggressive marketing and a lack of options. It is the fastest-growing form of packaging at 8.18 per cent year on year up to 2031, making up 37.15 per cent of the 2025 global market by volume, exceeding all other forms of packaging, including traditional glass jars. Today, millions of these single-use pouches are purchased daily, meaning that millions of babies could be ingesting microplastics alongside their food. Babies may be particularly vulnerable to such exposures due to their rapidly developing organs and higher intake of food relative to body weight.

This trend is part of a broader surge in plastic production and use, much of it driven by major consumer goods companies. Packaging alone accounts for around 40 per cent of global plastic production. One of its fastest-growing segments is flexible, multilayer plastics like baby food pouches and sachets, which are notoriously difficult to recycle and a major source of pollution in some regions.

Nestlé and Danone have repeatedly ranked among the world's top plastic polluters in global brand audits conducted by the Break Free From Plastic movement.

Greenpeace is calling on Nestlé, Danone, and all baby food producers to urgently investigate their products, prove they are not putting young children at risk of exposure, and commit to phasing out plastic packaging in favour of non-toxic, plastic-free, reusable alternatives.

As governments negotiate the UN Global Plastics Treaty, Greenpeace is demanding negotiators act with urgency to ban these products, reduce plastic production and end uncontrolled and unregulated plastic and chemical contamination that threatens human health.

“Plastic pollution is not just wrecking our environment; it’s entering our bodies, starting from infancy. How our food is packaged is designed for profit, not for people’s health. Cutting plastic production and eliminating harmful chemicals is essential to protect human health, especially the health of our children,” Forbes said.