



# lucky cow

a family of yogurt products  
with a radically low impact  
on the environment

My role: **Research Lead | Content | Strategy**

My team: **Buck Sleeper, Nicole Nassif, Adam Afzali,**

Extended Team: **Santiago Caicedo, Frank Rauss, Megan Welker and Catherine Yochum**

# lucky cow

## the challenge

Create a low-waste and low-impact service, supply chain, and packaging experience for a family of yogurt products

## the opportunity:

A conceptual yogurt brand, Lucky Cow with a family of yogurts - dry, solid, and fresh - that redefine how we produce, buy, consume and discard our yogurt products

# our approach



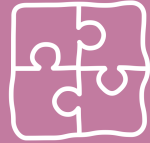
market research



interviews and  
survey



co-creation  
session



final concept  
development

## so, why **yogurt**?

The topic of sustainability is buzzing around in many business circles but what does it mean and what are we supposed to do about it?

We thought yogurt would help us answer that question. It's enjoyed by many people who love it for its taste, versatility and health impact. However, it's typically packaged in one of sustainability's worst offenders: single-use plastic.



# market research: yogurt

we scoped our research to understand yogurt, it's typical forms and the kinds of packaging you can expect to find it in. We also looked into sustainability innovations broadly in the food and consumer goods industries.

**yogurt, (the food and packaging) hasn't changed much.**

It's also typically found in a type five plastic tub (indicated by the #5 in the recycling symbol on the bottom of your yogurt or other plastic goods)

**Types of Yogurt**

Food

Savory

Sweet

ingredient

**Adjacency Sustainability Inspo**

New behaviors

Less work

More work

oatly

Existing behaviors

**Innovation in Yogurt**

- Edible Pearls: Storyfield Organic
- Unpainted plastic for recycling, separate paper label for recycling
- Vintage Dannon yogurt looking more sustainable than modern packaging
- Freeze-dried yogurts for snacking or baking
- Reusable pouches for yogurt like foods
- GTS Pouches that are shelf stable and have an "easy" open top

**Innovation in Food**

- Crazy Hay packaging for eggs
- waxed paper packaging "old, but used in new ways"
- Compostable for
- Next steps: why companies are in love with plastic (part 1) business case and identify value (part 2)

# market research: plastic

Yogurt is a \$88 billion industry but the wide use of plastic for packaging, especially type 5 plastic, is producing a greater loss. The global economic loss due to 95% of plastic having short, single use life span is between \$80-120 billion (2016) annually.

HOW ITS MADE | WHY ITS MADE

## Why Do We <3 Polypropylene

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HOW ITS MADE | WHY ITS MADE

### Plastic Tubs

**FOIL SEAL**  
Process: Die Cut  
Material: Co-extruded aluminum foil  
Material: Polypropylene plastic  
Weight: TBD

**LABEL**  
Process: Separate wrap or in-mold graphics  
Material: Paper, PVC or PETG  
Weight: N/A

**CUP**  
Process: Injection Moulded or thermoformed  
Material: Polypropylene  
Weight: TBD

**LID**  
Process: Thermoformed  
Material: PP  
Weight: N/A

**WAX PAPER**  
Process: Die Cut  
Material: paper and paraffin-wax  
Weight: N/A

Fun Fact: This wax paper is made up of 2 layers to keep yogurt fresh and prevent it from spoiling. It should be discarded.

01

## type five plastic: polypropylene (PP) -

PP is perfect for yogurt because it's:

- durable for packaging and shipping
- keeps yogurt fresh
- cost-effective

**only 3% of PP is ever recycled because our current habits and processes don't allow us to meet the ideals of recycling**

# our research: **surveys and interviews**

We conducted interviews with some co-workers in Boston and also distributed a survey to our global team. They helped us uncover why people buy yogurt, how they make these purchasing decisions, and where sustainability fits in

Meredith



Allan



Duncan



Christine



Tim



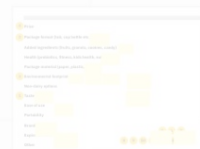
Yogurt Buying ...



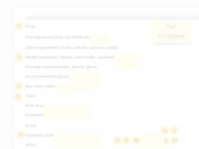
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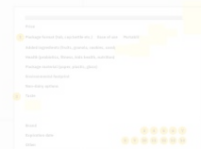
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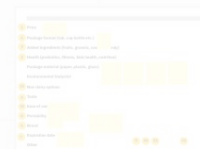
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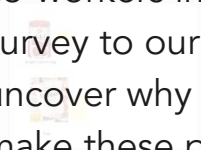
Copy of Yogurt...



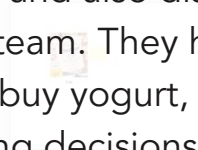
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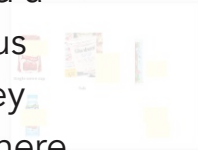
Meredith



Allan



Duncan



Yogurt Packaging



Tim



Disposing yogurt cont...



Disposing yogurt cont...



Disposing yogurt cont...



Disposing yogurt cont...



Disposing yogurt cont



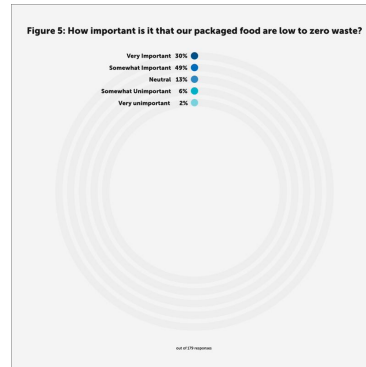
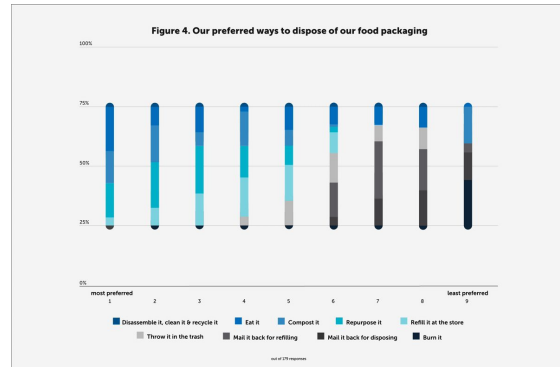
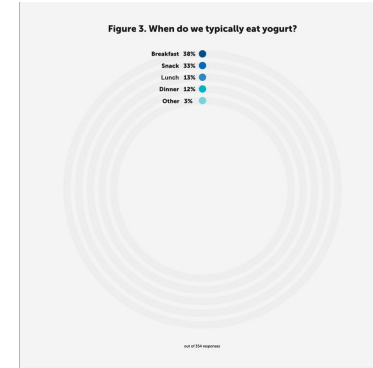
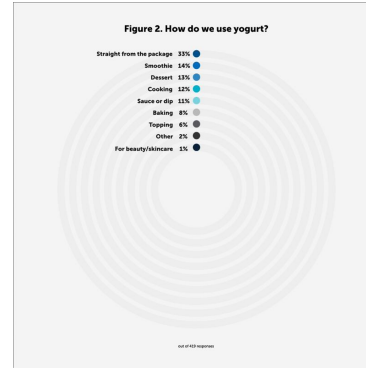
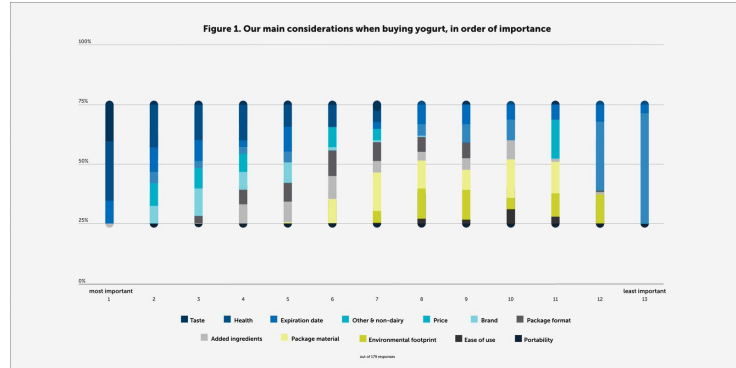






# survey results

179 people surveyed



## topline learnings

- People's main consideration when buying yogurt is taste (40%) and health (26%)
- Most people eat yogurt straight out of the package. Otherwise they used it for other things like cooking, baking or making smoothies
- Nearly 80% of people said sustainability was somewhat important to them, although sustainable packaging ranked low in their buying considerations



# co-creation workshop

With all our findings in mind, we conducted a workshop with some of the people in our interviews and other colleagues to co-create ideas for our final product concept

Ideation - Most Bang for your buck	Ideation - Bragging rights	Ideation - Cleanest yogurt ever
<p><b>MOST BANG FOR YOUR BUCK</b></p> <p><b>How might we help people get the most of their yogurt?</b></p> <p>THOUGHT STARTERS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How might we create a flexible package that can work for bulk ingredient use AND single snack use?</li> <li>How might we make sure that yogurt expires before you eat it?</li> <li>How might yogurt take up less space in the fridge, in particular when the yogurt is half-used?</li> <li>How might we help people find the most delicious yogurt?</li> <li>What can we learn from "edible packaging"?</li> </ul> <p><i>(Note: The actual workshop content for this section is partially obscured by the other sections in the image.)</i></p>	<p><b>BRAGGING RIGHTS</b></p> <p><b>How might we brag about the story of sustainability that happen in production?</b></p> <p>THOUGHT STARTERS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How can yogurt companies communicate their sustainability efforts?</li> <li>How can we make sustainability claims more credible?</li> <li>How can we make consumer's lives easier?</li> </ul> <p><i>(Note: The actual workshop content for this section is partially obscured by the other sections in the image.)</i></p>	<p><b>CLEANEST YOGURT EVER</b></p> <p><b>How might we reduce the time it takes to clean up after eating yogurt?</b></p> <p>THOUGHT STARTERS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How might we make it easier to clean yogurt containers?</li> <li>How could eating yogurt be less messy, especially when given to unmonitored kids?</li> <li>How could we make it more intuitive to recycle/reuse/refill yogurt packaging?</li> </ul> <p><i>(Note: The actual workshop content for this section is partially obscured by the other sections in the image.)</i></p>

Synthesized results and voted on what topics matters most, based on our learning goals

<p>★ <b>NEVER WASTE ANOTHER DROP</b></p>	<p>★ ★ ★ How might we create a flexible package that can work for bulk ingredient use AND single snack use?</p>	<p>How do we make sure that yogurt doesn't expire before you eat it?</p>	<p>How could the yogurt buying/eating/disposal process have zero waste</p>
<p>★ <b>NO MORE MESS EVER</b></p>	<p>★ ★ ★ How might we reduce messiness, even when given to un-monitored children</p>	<p>How can you make disposal a cleaner process?</p>	<p>How might we borrow from nature (fruit is a great package-free food!)</p>
<p><b>TAKE UP AS LITTLE SPACE AS POSSIBLE</b></p>	<p>How might we save space in the fridge, in particular when the yogurt is half-used?</p>		
<p><b>MOST DELICIOUS YOGURT</b></p>	<p>How might we help people find their preferred yogurt (taste, consistency, additives, dairy/non-dairy)</p>		
<p>★ <b>HOLISTIC STORY</b></p>	<p>★ ★ ★ ★ How might the yogurt buying/eating/disposing experience tell the holistic story of sustainability efforts in production?</p>		
<p><b>GREATER TRUST</b></p>	<p>How does your packaging give you more faith in the waste-processing process?</p>	<p>How might we make the recycling/compost processing more clear?</p>	<p>How might we make the waste-processing system more transparent?</p>
<p><b>NO EXTRA JUNK</b></p>	<p>How might we ensure a quality and economic option that's also healthy?</p>	<p>How might we communicate the transparency of our ingredients?</p>	

# what does this all mean?

For us to create value for yogurt consumers, we must meet the tablestake requirements of yogurt and go beyond just creating a more sustainable material for packaging.

## yogurt table stakes

Whatever new yogurt product we create has to satisfy 3 core principles that meet our respondents needs:

### TASTE

The yogurt is above all tasty, delivering on the most important factor for yogurt purchase.

### CLEAN

It is also clean to consume, and doesn't introduce additional barriers to use or dispose of.

### MINDLESS

The packaging and its materials are thoughtfully considered to ensure recycling is mindless and fit into existing behaviors.

## sustainability, simplified

While sustainability matters to consumers, that alone isn't enough to make a product desirable.

Consumers feel a compelling desire to do their part for the environment, but it's not always clear just what that part is. Environmental impact is defined broadly and the impact of any individual consumer action is hard to see. For this reason, most consumers are hesitant to give up any existing core values of the current yogurt experience.

**The ideal path forward is through the value of the product.**

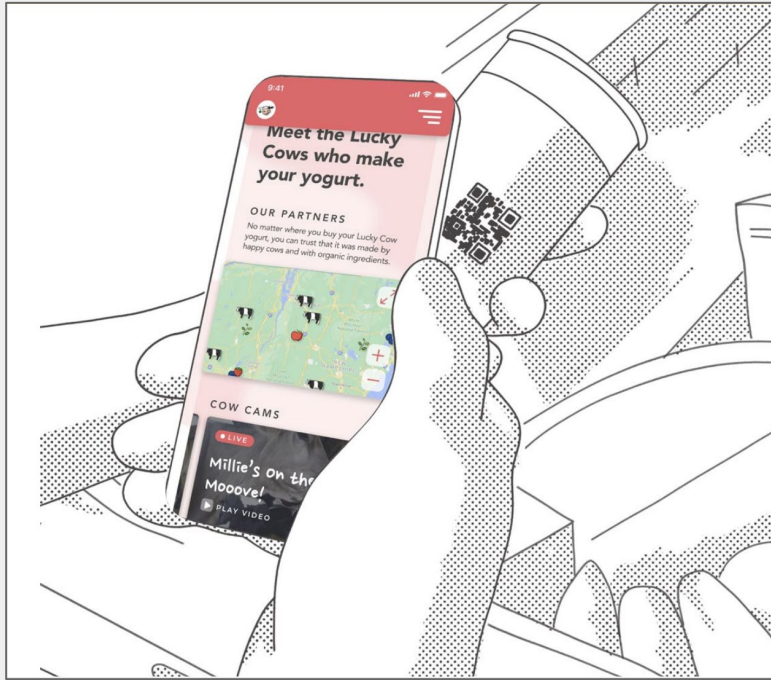
# the final concept lucky cow

three formats of yogurt, and one united platform that meet the needs of what people want in yogurt, while also addressing its impact on our planet



rendering by Nicole Nassif

# the platform: digital ecosystem



rendering by Santiago Caicedo and Catherine Yochum

## what?

A digital platform that augments the human experience of buying yogurt in-store

## how?

Find the Right Yogurt - We offer an updated view of which stores have what yogurt flavors so that there isn't so much hassle in finding the right yogurt.

Understand Lucky Cow's Brand Values - Customers can learn about the local farmers and the ethics that go into making Lucky Cow yogurt, whether it's milk, seasonal fruit, etc.

Return My Yogurt Containers - Technology incentivizes customers to return glass containers. At the return station kiosk, customers can see right away the positive environmental impact they have by returning containers.

Carbon Footprint Labeling - QR codes shows consumers that Lucky Cow is accountable for its business practices, from production to commercialization.

## why?

When done right, technology unlocks exceptional experiences especially when integrating digital and physical worlds. This holistic approach ultimately helps customers build a relationship with the Lucky Cow brand, establish a new routine and provides the reward critical in establishing new habits

# glass jars: bottomless refills



rendering by Nicole Nassif

## what?

A service ecosystem inspired by the Milk-Man model. Centered around refillable, durable jars that can be reused at home or returned to the store for a discount on the next purchase.

## how?

Rinse out and return to the store where it will be sanitized or keep it at home a To manage logistics, the Lucky Cow loyalty platform tracks usage, rewards, and personal preferences. We also incentivize a rinse out with QR codes, jokes, and stories that can be revealed at the bottom of the jar once empty.

## why?

Eliminates the plastic we don't need in service of reducing the growth of plastic use by 50% by 2040.

Easy-to-understand choices to avoid creating more waste.

Globally, replacing 20% of single-use plastic with reusable alternatives represents a conservative estimated USD \$10 billion savings.



# dry morsels: long-life versatility



## what?

Freeze-dried dollops of yogurt that can be combined with water, milk, or cream and reconstituted to use as a snack or an ingredient ( they're tasty enough to eat as is). Measure out the right amount in the gradated cap, or eat straight from the can. Ditch the tub, grab a tin.

## how?

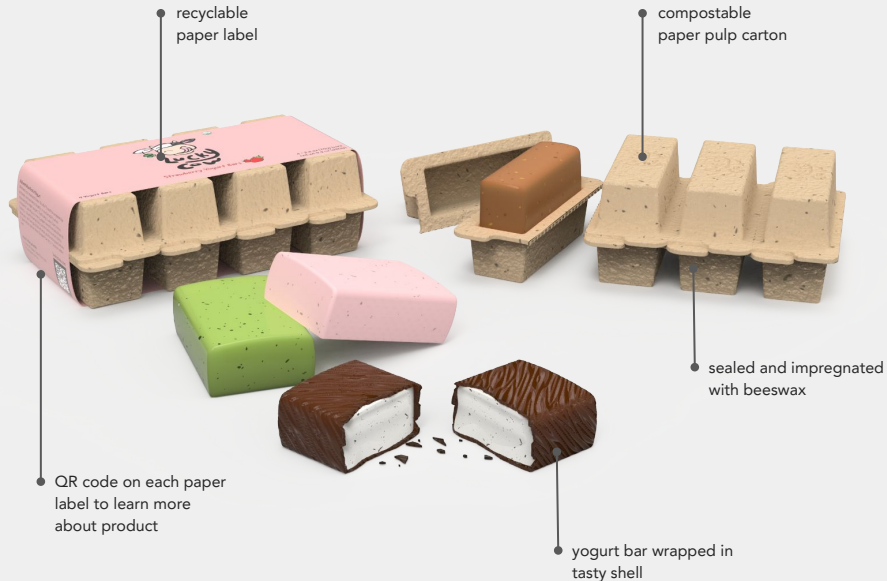
Recycling as it should be, easy and efficient. All you have to do is throw it in the recycling bin without worrying about rinsing.

## why?

Aluminum has the highest recycle rate at 74% and it can be infinitely recycled which has allowed for 75% of all produced aluminum to remain in circulation. This means metal tins will seamlessly integrate into existing behaviors, habits and processes.

Making a new aluminum can from old cans results in 90-97% energy savings, compared to making a new can from bauxite and other raw materials.

# yogurt bars: a solid choice



rendering by Nicole Nassif

## what?

A high-density yogurt bar with the same nutrients and taste that you expect from traditional formats. The yogurt bar is a mess-free treat or meal on the go, packaged in an easily compostable, dairy-safe container.

## how?

A solid format with packaging that doubles as a holder reduces smears and fears.

The packaging is 100% compostable— when you're done, just drop it in with your other food scraps. No rinse necessary. It saves time from start to finish. Since the carton is perforated it can be bought in bulk and disposed of individually with no additional steps or waste.

## why?

Regardless of its final destination, compostable packaging has the least amount of impact throughout its entire lifecycle. Even if this package winds up somewhere other than a compost bin, the benefits of it being created from natural, renewable resources exceed the downsides of recycling.

# challenges and reflections

## **'friends and family' bias**

We conducted our research with our colleagues who are wealthy, sustainability-minded folks which potentially skewed our findings

## **diverse recruit**

if lucky cow were made real, it would be important to test our concepts with a wider demographic of people

## **holistic perspective**

Our design process was consumer centric, focusing a lot on the customer's experience, and not so much on other stakeholders like farmers, manufacturers, grocery retailers.

## **bridging the gap**

the next step would be to talk to yogurt manufacturers, grocery giants, etc. to understand how yogurt is produced, manufactured and sold to retailers and how this would impact our proposed concepts.

# find out more!

This was an internal sales effort that includes an article written by myself and a whitepaper of all the work that went into creating this project. To view these assets, click each image

## article

RESTAURANTS & RETAIL

### Creating a Culture of Sustainable Packaging: Families and Their Attitudes Towards Yogurt

An EPAM Continuum Research Report

April 8, 2021  
by Clara Aumadu

RELATED PROJECTS

Daily Brand  
Squeezed Sour Cream  
Cherry Blossom  
Pillows of Ice



Sustainability. It's a trendy buzzword currently flying around in business circles, but what exactly does it mean for our organizations, our consumers, and our planet? To answer this complicated question, we conducted ethnographic interviews and an anonymous survey with our global EPAM community. We wanted to understand what matters most to them when shopping for packaged foods, so we zeroed in on one food in particular: yogurt.

## white paper

EPAM CONTINUUM

WHITEPAPER

### Lucky Cow: The Future of Zero-Waste Packaging

Lucky Cow redefines the way in which we create food, packaging, and services to reduce—dramatically—the environmental footprint of consumer packaged goods (CPG). Our goal is to create great products that people need and want, engineer packaging that is simple to reuse or dispose of responsibly, and help shoppers better understand the conservation steps taken by manufacturers throughout their supply chain.

