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Emmanuel Baber, CEO  
Danone N.A.  
12002 Airport Way  
Broomfield, Colorado  
80021

September 30, 2021

Good day Mr Baber:

As a citizen who is very concerned about the plastic pollution disaster unfolding in lakes and oceans, I am writing to you to express my disappointment with the cartons Silk and other beverages are offered in. I find their plastic spouts and caps particularly troublesome.

I live in Toronto, walking distance to the shores of Lake Ontario. I regularly participate in organized plastic debris removal efforts and I am always aghast at the amount of plastic to be found. Among the identifiable plastic items we find, plastic caps rank very high in terms of numbers. On any given day, I am able to collect hundreds of caps within a very small area. In order to reverse the plastic catastrophe we must stop producing and using plastic.

In an effort to deal with the waste, many companies trying to be good corporate citizens will turn to carton recycling, as Danone has done. But as a society we now understand that we can't recycle our way out of the plastic crisis. Indeed, this fact is borne out by real life evidence; while Toronto does have facilities to "recycle" cartons and caps, we nevertheless find thousands on our local beaches. Recycling appears to be a very poor solution.

In order to understand how it's even possible to recycle a carton constructed with mixed materials, I turned to the Carton Council's website which provides videos on the topic. I learned that in some cases the fibre is separated from the plastic spout and reformed into paper products, while In other instances, the entire carton with its plastic spout is shredded and made into fibreboard used in the construction industry. The problem with these approaches is the amount of energy used, and, crucially, the fact that one of the component parts is plastic. Since plastic never, ever biodegrades, that plastic will remain on the planet forever no matter what form it takes.

Danone and other beverage purveyors could easily improve their packaging by:

- offering their products in returnable and reusable glass bottles (best solution)
- redesigning the carton to have a pull-out paper spout to replace the current plastic one

I am returning some of the caps I've amassed as a result of having purchased your products in the past or that I've collected on the shore. I surely would have bought more of your product were it packaged more sustainably. As a consumer I look forward to improvements in Danone's packaging, as a citizen, I look forward to a time when shorelines, lakes and oceans are free from plastic.

Best regards,

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cc Carton Council  
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