



PACKAGING  
CORPORATION  
OF AMERICA

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# Supermarket

Supermarkets remain a cornerstone of U.S. grocery shopping, but the landscape is evolving. There are 45,575 supermarkets across the U.S. – from conventional stores to supercenters and natural/gourmet markets. The average store size has slimmed down to 42,453 sq. ft., down from over 51,000 sq. ft. just a few years ago.<sup>1</sup>

## Major Impacts:

- **Supermarkets are no longer just physical stores.** Retailers are investing heavily in click-and-collect, same-day delivery, and micro-fulfillment centers to meet consumer expectations for convenience.<sup>2</sup>
- **Store brands have shed their “budget-only” image.** Premium private-label lines from major chains like Walmart, Aldi, and Kroger are competing head-to-head with national brands.

## Top Grocers<sup>4</sup>:

- WalMart
- Amazon
- Costco
- Kroger
- Albertson's



## Trends & influences within this segment:

- **Extended producer responsibility (EPR)** is one of the most influential changes in 2025. Four states began reporting in 2025. Many others are expected to join in 2026.<sup>5</sup>
- **A renewed focus on recyclable and compostable packaging material solutions.** California's SB 343 aims to clarify recycling labels by restricting the use of recycling symbols to materials accepted by at least 60% of the state's programs.<sup>5</sup>
- The use of **Electronic Shelf Labels (ESLs)** grew in 2025 as retailers like Walmart and Kroger embraced them to tackle pricing volatility and labor shortages. While headlines focused on the ability to change prices hundreds of times a day, the real story is efficiency and flexibility at scale.<sup>3</sup>
- **Stores are reimaging the front end**, moving beyond traditional checkout lanes. Those impulse buys? They haven't vanished—they've been relocated into "grab-and-go zones" throughout the store, blending convenience with merchandising to capture attention where shoppers linger.<sup>3</sup>