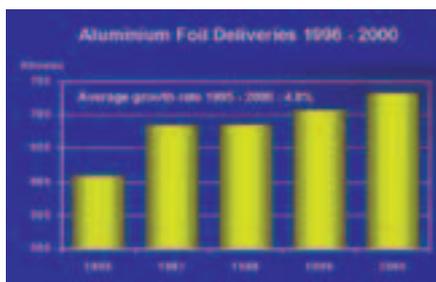




Radical revision of EAFA statistics results in greater accuracy

As part of its practice of continual improvement and service to members and to user industries, the EAFA has completed a full re-examination of statistical data collected and published during the past five years concerning alufoil production and use. As well as a higher degree of accuracy, the result of the study has revealed a significant historical under-estimation of both the tonnages recorded and of the average growth rate which has been revised upwards to 4.8% for the 1995-2000 period.



“With the majority of European foil rollers in membership of the association, EAFA is the only authority qualified to calculate and issue statistics on the European foil market,” states Stefan Glimm, EAFA’s

Secretary General. *“Increases in the number of members during recent years have resulted in more reliable figures becoming available. Also, in order to give a more accurate picture of the whole territory covered by EAFA members, estimates of non-member activities will now be included.”*

Continued growth in first half of 2001

The figures for aluminium foil deliveries for the first six months of 2001 show continuing growth. The total tonnage reflected a 4.2% increase over the same period of 2000 – 390,000 t compared to 374,000 t.

Within the European countries covered by EAFA members, the increase amounted to 3.3% – 335,000 t compared to 324,000 t – but exports achieved a 10% growth.

Commenting on the latest set of figures, EAFA Secretary General, Stefan Glimm, was cautiously confident. *“Taking into account the current economic climate in Europe and, increasingly, in export markets, sales during the first semester have held up well,”* he said. *“We will be satisfied if, at the end of the year, we can record a slight tonnage increase for the whole of 2001 in spite of the general economic downturn.”*

The countries now included in the total production figures are: member countries of the EU, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Switzerland and Turkey.



inside...

- Shelf-stable foods in alufoil packs
- CRU study confirms lower price volatility
- Website news



– the international body representing foil rollers, converters and container manufacturers
www.alufoil.org
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RECYCLING

New recycling plant gathers energy, recovers aluminium

The Varkaus Ecogas Energy Plant set up by the Finnish fibreboard core-makers Corenso United Oy Ltd. and first announced last year, is now in full production. In a very ambitious and successful process, 85,000 tonnes of used packaging materials – alufoil lined beverage cartons, alufoil and other flexible and composite laminates are processed annually to provide 52,000 t of reusable fibre for further coreboard

production. An enormous side benefit is the 165 GW/h of energy in the form of electricity and heat created every year from the waste and which goes back to fuel the production of coreboard and provides heat for other Storenso Group factories.

Very valuable are the 2,100 tonnes of aluminium foil separated and recycled from the used cartons and laminates, which can be re-melted and returned to the production cycle again and again.

Further information: Corenso United Oy Ltd.
E-mail: pekka.harkki@storaenso.com
www.corenso.com



Innovation: the keynote for success

The standard of the entries for this year's EAFA Packaging Trophy Awards was very high. Thirteen companies from nine European countries participated.

Once again the judges were uncompromising in their assessment and selected four entries for awards.

Chairman of the judges, Pierre Labat, explains: *"The quality of entries was excellent, and it was tempting to make more awards. The imaginative use of alufoil to create packaging solutions in all entries was much admired by the judges but, because the EAFA Trophy has always been respected as one of the most prestigious awards on the European packaging scene, we were once again obliged to eliminate all but the very best in terms of innovation."*

The three selected Foil Packs of the Year are outstanding in terms of their innovative content and are also the most significant in terms of the

future potential of alufoil in packaging. The pack selected for a Commendation has been instrumental in the development of a very innovative manufacturing and packaging technique."

Rauch Fresh Menu ready meals

Recently introduced in Germany, the products are packed in compartmented smoothwalled foil dishes developed by Alcan Deutschland, part of Alcan Packaging.

The gold and black alufoil dishes break new ground in the packaging of chilled meals and are a direct challenge to the CPET alternative. These alufoil trays outperform their plastic counterparts in



terms of strength, heat resistance, heat conductivity and environmental acceptability.

The smooth and level shoulder and bridge of the tray enable hermetic sealing with a special anti-fog clear Mylar film and use of modified atmosphere packaging (MAP), so extending the retail shelf life under chilled conditions to between two and three weeks.

Source reduction and cost advantages for filler and consumer

A sealed lid of this nature also adds to the strong format of the aluminium tray, and eliminates the need for an outer carton. A simple slip-on label gives all the necessary information.

As well as extended product shelf life, the benefits of light weight, durability and stackability are real advantages for the filler. The trays can be used on conventional filling and closing lines, and require no special adaptations of handling equipment.

For the consumer, the new Rauch range offers advantages at several levels – the attraction of a quickly prepared yet high quality meal, full visibility of the food without a carton to hide it, a choice of heating method – microwave or convection oven – and quick, even heating thanks to the rapid conductivity of aluminium. After use, the empty dish is easily recycled or it can become a useful container for reuse in the kitchen.

New 'Pure-Aluminium' tablet packs for Bayer Animal Health

This newly-developed all-aluminium blister pack (branded 'Pure-Aluminium') was developed by Teich AG of Austria for Bayer veterinary drugs.

The pack eliminates the need for any plastics materials such as PVC or OPA yet it totally protects the pharmaceutical tablets from light, water vapour and every other potentially damaging contamination.



All the usual consumer convenience of a push-through blister is provided and it can be printed with identifying information and dosage instructions. The principal advantages of the 'Pure-Aluminium' blister are for the brand owner who benefits from a material cost saving. Also, supply lead times are shorter thanks to a reduction in converting processes.

Innovation and easier mono-material recyclability by correct alloy choice

The EAFA judges admired the innovative way in which an aluminium alloy with the correct forming characteristics has been combined with solvent-free coatings to arrive at a pack which makes significant savings in materials while maintaining all the protection and convenience of the blister pack format and enhancing recyclability.

The packs submitted are for the range of Bayer Droncit, Drontal and Drontal Plus drugs for dogs and cats.

New Bell marinade 'Softube' pack

The judges considered that the combination of functions of a sachet and a tube brought together by the Softube developed by Pacovis AG and designed by Obrinova AG Packaging, represents a valuable new packaging format for a large variety of products. In the case of the Marinades by Bell AG of Switzerland, the combination of complete product protection, provided by the alufoil layer, consumer convenience and high quality appearance makes the most of the pack's new format.



The multi-layer flexible laminate, supplied by Tscheulin Rothal of Germany, is heat-sealed like a traditional

Full details on the EAFA website . . . www.alufoil.org

Among the other high quality entries there were portion drinks packs and other products with novel peel-off lid systems, a 3 kg energy-saving multi-portion sachet of tuna, also sardines in a peel-open foil container. Further alucontainer applications included paté in printed and lidded alufoil containers, and ready-to-cook foods. Innovative foil sachet packs, the first baby foods in foil-lidded plastic pots and chocolate 'hearts' wrapped in a sparkling holographic foil were also entered.

As editorial space allows, these and other entries will be illustrated in the following editions of Infoil. In the meantime, all the entry summaries made for the judging as well as the complete details of the winning entries and the companies involved are shown on the EAFA website in the Trophies section and the Reference Library.

sachet, but a flat-topped screw cap is also welded into one end providing easy opening and re-closure as well as a stable base. The slim sachet format provides an excellent 'stand-up' display surface. The result is a pack which shows up well on retail shelves, is easy to use and is convenient to store in the refrigerator.

The alufoil/film laminate is very strong and can be hot filled or retort sterilised. This strength eliminates the need for any outer protection as the pack

withstands all normal handling hazards in distribution and retailing.

Tscheulin Rothal, part of VAW Flexible Packaging, calculate that this tube in sachet format can save between 14 and 40% of raw materials compared to traditional laminate tubes, without any loss of protection. The sachets are formed, capped, filled and conduction sealed at speeds of about 100 units per minute.

This innovative solution is also suitable for many other applications, for example in the dairy industry for 'ready-to-eat' yoghurt, yoghurt drinks, butter and spreads.

Commendation for blister pack for new Pepdine dissolving tablets

A laminated aluminium foil blister pack has been instrumental in the successful development of a new departure in the delivery of drugs designed to dissolve immediately in the mouth of the patient.

This innovative 'DDS-Zydis' system pack has been awarded a Commendation. It is the result of close collaboration between the foil laminate supplier, Lawson Mardon Neher AG, part of Alcan Packaging, the contract packing company, R P Scherer (UK), and the machinery manufacturer, Klöckner AG.

Taking a totally new approach compared with the traditional tablet or capsule manufacturing processes, the drug formula is prepared as an aqueous solution and is dosed into the alufoil laminated tray portion of the blister pack. The tray containing the solution is then freeze-dried - forming tablets which take the shape of the blister pockets. The alufoil laminate on both the lid and tray sides fully protects the highly hygroscopic and sensitive individual doses.

The aluminium layer in the blister provides an additional function. As the resulting individual tablet takes the

exact shape of the blister, it can be identified by embossing a design into the alufoil pocket. For example, the tablets can be numbered or given identifying shapes. This overcomes the impossibility of printing or marking a tablet which has been created in the pack from a liquid.

For the patient, the advantage of the drug format is its immediate solubility in the mouth. In the case of Pepdine the pack is lidded with a child-proof peel-open security laminate which adds a further element of safety to a system which is a successful combination of pack and tablet technology.



**Why not enter next time?
If your product missed the
competition this year -
watch the EAFA website
for details early next year.**



Twenty years of EAFA Trophy Awards

The original 1980/81 EAFA Packaging Trophies were circular aluminium plates embossed with the details of the winning entries.



Alufoil: 'the ultimate barrier solution'

The technologies, market projections and economics facing flexible barrier packaging are the topics examined in a fresh study – Barrier Films and Coatings: 2001-2005 – produced by Allied Development Corporation and published by Packaging Strategies. The study analyses factors in selecting a specific barrier material such as packaging cost, environmental impact, appearance and the barrier level required. It makes estimations of the growth during the five year period of various flexible packaging materials. For alufoil it estimates growth at nearly 3% – a figure which is borne out by other recent independent studies.

The study states that: 'Aluminium foil is still considered to be the 'ultimate' barrier solution and is seen as the standard of performance for moisture and oxygen barrier'.

(Contact: Karen Vaillancourt, Packaging Strategies, e-mail: orders@packstrat.com)

WEBSITE NEWS

New acquisition for the Reference Library

An illustrated technical paper: Aluminium Foil's Contribution to Flexible Packaging Materials by Stefan Bogoll, Technical Department Manager, Business Unit Foil, VAW aluminium, has been added to the Reference Library. This excellent study covers alufoil manufacture, conversion and application, and details the reasons for the very high barrier and other properties of the material and how these are being put to use in packaging today.

Excess Stock Mover Service now active

Already, over 60 separate lots of material are on offer including plain alufoil, lacquered and coated alufoil, metallized paper, and various types of flexible films.

See you at Interpack?

If you plan to visit Interpack (Düsseldorf, 24-30 April, 2002), make a note that you can make personal contact with EAFA at the GDA stand D/11 in Hall 11 (??)

Flexible packs gaining in popularity for new 'shelf stable' food products

There is growing evidence on Europe's supermarket shelves of the increasing use of aluminium foil-lined stand-up pouches and cartons for interesting new long life food products.

The retortable pouch is now a well-established part of the modern



packaging scene. It uses a minimum of materials yet it is extremely robust. Its thin walls coupled

with a slim shape allow the heat in a retort to penetrate and to cool quickly. This means full control over temperature and processing time which is needed to ensure the maximum of quality and food value of the contents. The broad format of the pack offers excellent opportunities for colourful display.



For the consumer, the pack is tough without being heavy and is therefore easy to carry home.

Opening requires no tools, kitchen scissors are optional, and the empty pack is flat



and uses very little space in the waste system.

Recycling

The technology is now available to separate and recover the aluminium from flexible pouches and cartons through pyrolysis techniques – as reported in Infoil editions 8, 10 and 11. See also the report on the new Ecogas plant on the front page.

Tetra Recart puts 'canned food' into cartons

Now competing in the growing market for flexible containers for sterilised and aseptic fillings is one of the world's leading processing and packaging companies, Tetra Pak. This company has launched Tetra Recart, a new alufoil-lined carton packaging system which uses retorting technology for the extended preservation of a variety of food products traditionally packed in tinplate cans or glass jars. These include fruits, vegetables and pet foods.

The Tetra Recart pack is convenient to open and is light, easy to empty and safe. From a storage and distribution point of view this pack also has the advantage of being rectangular and therefore very space-efficient and stable on the display shelf.

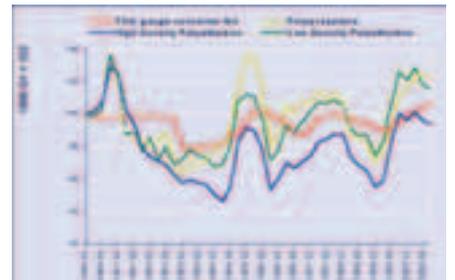


New comparative study by CRU builds on EAFA's own 'Price Volatility' findings

CRU, the world's leading consultancy firm in the international mining and metals industries, has completed a major multi-client study: "The Global Market for Foil". The outcome of this work provides a unique and authoritative source of global information and analysis for producers and buyers of foil products. The analysis shows, among other statistics, how foil prices are markedly less volatile than other flexible packaging materials on a quarter-to-quarter basis and validates the original EAFA-sponsored study completed in 1999 and subsequently updated every six months.

Broadly in line with industry predictions, the CRU study estimates potential global growth for alufoil at around 3.5 - 4% p.a.

Further information: Nick.Collier@crugroup.com Tel: +44 20 7903 2106



This CRU graph shows how the price fluctuation of thin gauge converter foil (the red line) has remained within a relatively narrow band compared with other packaging materials during the past decade.



– the international body representing foil rollers, converters and container manufacturers
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