

# Keeping the consumer satisfied

Convenience and choice come at the top of the consumer's wish list. So it is great news that shoppers can now turn to ready meals in alufoil trays for use in the microwave oven.

Evidence dispelling the myth that alufoil packs are unsafe to use in the microwave has been established in a study from the Fraunhofer Institute (IVV) in Freising, Germany.

Recent surveys conducted in Germany show just how important convenience is to the consumer. Research found that some 90% of consumers occasionally or frequently purchase precooked meals.

So the news that consumer convenience can actually be improved by the use of alufoil trays in the microwave is already creating great interest among food manufacturers.

Among the many advantages is their dual-ovenability plus the ability to use alufoil trays on the barbecue.

This is proved by several new products launches emphasising the multiplicity of uses for alufoil trays that



*Culinary delights - from oven to table for quick and easy enjoyment*

have recently hit Europe's supermarket shelves. These include a range of nine special recipes from Charcuterie des Flandres (France) and 13 from BUSS (Germany).

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**“The Fraunhofer Institute conducted the heating procedures with the microwave ovens set at maximum power and there was not a single case of damage to the microwave ovens or danger to the users.”**

*Thomas Pfeiffer, the study's author*

## Alufoil Trophy at interpack 2008

The winners will be showcased on the EAFA stand during interpack 2008, (Dusseldorf 24-30 April), Hall 11, D11.

Entries for the Alufoil Trophy 2008 must be submitted by 30 November 2007.

Details of how to enter: [www.alufoil.org](http://www.alufoil.org)



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## Sales up for first half of 2007

The sales of aluminium foil rose by 2% in the first half year of 2007. Data from the European Aluminium Foil Association (EAFA) shows that sales reached 452,000 tons compared with 443,200 tons in the first half of 2006.

Usage inside the EAFA region grew by 4.4% but exports fell by almost 10%. Tonnage based volume for thinner gauges, used mainly for flexible packag-

ing, increased by 1.6%. But thicker materials used for containers and technical applications rose by nearly 10%.

“The installation of new or updated capacities and the closure of older facilities by the European foil industry over the last 12 months will ensure quality and production efficiency.” said EAFA Executive Director Stefan Glimm.

More details on [www.alufoil.org](http://www.alufoil.org)

# Microwave

## Presenting the cool look of alufoil for ready meals

Charcuterie des Flandres has prepared a series of nine special meals suitable for the microwave oven and the barbecue.

Manufactured by Ecopla France, the 113µ foil trays feature a PET film lid and cartonboard sleeve.

placed over hot coals but by placing the tray with plastic film lid on the rack the products will “steam” cook.

Charcuterie des Flandres is not the only Ecopla's customer for alufoil trays for use in the microwave. Le Petit Cuisinier, Marie Surgelés and Piriot



BUSS - leisure time maker

### Classic variety

In Germany BUSS is producing a range of 13 ready meals ranging from curry, tortellini and risotto to steaks and hamburgers under the title “Freizeitmacher”, which in English means “leisure time maker”.

The meals are packed in lacquered rectangular-shaped alufoil trays supplied by EAFA Container Group members. BUSS is part of “fine food alliance” and sells the ready meals in domestic and international markets.



One of nine special recipes

Charcuteries Des Flandres' raison d'être for use on the barbecue rests on the fact that many foods dry out when

have also launched microwaveable ready meals in aluminium foil containers this autumn.

## A few tips for the perfect meal

Whether it is a lunchtime snack in the office, a delicious evening meal for one or a creative time-saving dinner with

friends – with proper handling all conventional ready meals can be prepared in aluminium trays for microwave use.

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Stefan Glimm EAFA's Executive Director, explains: “The ability to use an alufoil tray to heat food in a variety of ways is a real advantage for the consumer. Once heated in the microwave, or cooked in a standard oven or in combined appliances, food in an aluminium foil tray looks very appetising. A lasagne, for example, has a particularly tasty crust.”

**Aluminium trays in the microwave oven: The right way to do it\***



-  The aluminium lid must be removed from the tray before use.
-  The meal should cover most of the floor of the tray.
-  Place the aluminium tray in the middle of the turntable in the microwave oven.  
*Attention: If your microwave oven is equipped with a metal turntable, please place a ceramic or glass plate beneath the tray.*
-  The aluminium dish must not come into contact with the walls of the microwave oven. (Minimum distance to the walls: 2cm.)
-  Only **one** aluminium tray may be used in the microwave oven at a time.

\* Not suitable for microwave ovens constructed before 1983

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Another great advantage is that there is no need to decant the meal on to a separate plate or dish as the alufoil tray lends itself to the oven-to-table concept loved by today's busy consumer. And ticking off another major consumer driver: alufoil trays can be easily recycled or re-used.

The study was conducted on behalf of EAFA with the support of the US Aluminium Foil Container Manufacturers Association (AFCMA).

More details at [www.alufoil-cuisine.org](http://www.alufoil-cuisine.org)

## Flexible packs save energy

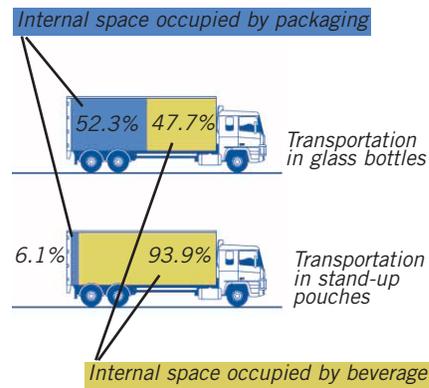
The use of aluminium foil and flexible packaging is good for the environment, something which should whet the appetite of consumers around the world.

A ULS Study of Packaging Efficiency as it relates to Waste Prevention, says that consumer goods manufacturers should be encouraged to develop and aggressively promote flexible packaging options.

Alufoil has a major role to play in flexible packaging as it provides maximum performance from minimum use of material. Its wide range of properties include exceptional barrier properties, which ensure that nutritional value and quality are preserved, make it possible to transport and store food for long periods without refrigeration.

Flexible packaging offers savings in transportation energy generated across the supply chain. Areas which the ULS Study highlights as ripe for flexible

packaging include concentrates and refills, dry mixes, and larger sizes for appropriate applications.



Reducing packaging weight in which alufoil plays a significant role helps save both materials and energy while minimising the generation of greenhouse gases and other pollutants.

## Recycling Rates for aluminium packaging

**Denmark**  
2004: 30.0%  
2005: 66.0%

**France\***  
2004: 46.6%  
2005: 50.8%

**Germany**  
2004: 72.9%  
2005: 76.2%  
Beverage cartons  
2004: 62.5%  
2005: 62.4%

**Italy**  
2004: 51.0%  
2005: 54.9%  
2006: 55.7%

**Spain\*\***  
2004: 63.5%  
2005: 61.7%  
2006: 63.2%

**UK**  
2006: 32.5%  
(a tonnage increase of 17% over 2005)

\*\* Metal packaging

\* Recovery rates



## Green fashion

The latest fashion accessory for the green consumer must be a Doy Bag. This attractive range of bags, purses and accessories is made from recycled foil juice pouches.

Made by the Doy Bag Women's Cooperative in the Philippines, which employs more than 200 women, the pouches are collected from private homes, schools, hospitals, offices, community and convention centres, festivals and parties.

## Ace in the pack for cartons

ACE UK, the Alliance for Beverage Cartons in the Environment has joined forces with Tesco, the UK's largest supermarket chain to increase the number of beverage cartons collected for recycling in the UK.

ACE UK members are: Elopak, SIG Combibloc and Tetra Pak.

Continental Europe achieves a 30% recycling rate for beverage carton recycling and in some countries, like Germany and Belgium, this is as high as 65-70%. But the UK has been slow to catch onto the concept.

Since April 2006, the UK carton industry has made £2.2 million available to help local authorities start up carton collection schemes in more than 100 areas nationally. Tesco was the first major supermarket to join ACE's carton collection network.

Andy Duckworth, Tesco's Head of

Waste, commented, "Cartons are used in almost every home and we can help customers understand they can be recycled."

Tesco will roll-out recycling banks across 100 UK stores and the cartons will be made into items such as kitchen towels, egg cartons and high-strength bags.



ACE has set a target of engaging 70% of UK councils into the scheme by the end of this year.

## How beverage cartons are recycled: A step by step process

- 1 Baled cartons are dropped into a pulper, similar to a giant domestic food mixer, filled with water, and pulped for around 20 minutes.
- 2 This breaks down the packaging to produce a grey-brown mixture. The aluminium foil and polyethylene are separated from the fibre, which is recovered to make new paper products.
- 3 The remaining mix of aluminium and plastic can be separated and recovered in a variety of ways for a series of different uses. Examples include furniture manufacture, material recycling (aluminium and paraffin) and energy recovery.

Cartons for the distribution of ambient food and drink contain about: 75% paperboard, 4% aluminium and 21% polymers.

**Aluminium recycling saves up to 95% of the energy used to create the original 'primary' aluminium.**

## Pets take the 'lead' in Europe

It seems that the lifestyle bug is having its influence on the growing market for pet foods with such buzzwords as premium, super-premium, and health becoming increasingly important for owners.

More than one third of German households had pets in 2006 according to statistics released by IVH, Dusseldorf, making it an increasingly important market for the aluminium foil pouch manufacturers.

German sales of dog food were steady at €946million but cat food

sales increased by 3.8% over the same period to €1,145million.

The pet food market in European Union countries was valued at €8.5 billion and the number of European household with pets reached 62 million featuring 60 million cats, 56 million dogs and 35million birds. Some 68% of pet food is bought at supermarkets and drug stores (Source FEDI-AF, Brussels)

The market for flexible packaging in the pet food sector has increased to 6 billion units globally, since the intro-

duction of pouches 15 years ago. Pouches continue to gain volume from cans as well as showing healthy organic growth in the wet food market.

Stand up pouches can weigh as much as 90% less than alternative rigid packs, and are both easy and cheap to transport and store. Marketing experts also recognise the presentation benefits of pouches.



## Laminate perfection

A pioneer in providing laminates for pouches Huhtamaki Ronsberg is continuing to develop its range of retortable, high barrier laminates for the pet food market.

The pouches are made from a PET/ALU/PP or PET/ALU/OPA/PP laminate. Fully sterilisable

the pouches also have easy opening features and maximum barrier properties.

Other advantages include excellent print characteristics and low packaging weights for easy transportation and storage.

The predominant formats are 85g/100g/200g and 300g but pet food pouches can be produced in many different shapes and sizes.



*Re-arranging the cat's ears to create the face is proving a real draw for consumers*

## Fast food for cats

Peel, Feed and Dispose: These are the characteristics of the new anti-slip and disposable, single serve portion pack of cat food.

The dish is topped by an easy peel lid made out of a high barrier laminate PET/ALU/PP manufactured by Huhtamaki Ronsberg.

The lid is fully retortable and has

good puncture resistance.

The brilliant impression bases on reverse rotogravure print on PET do not require any over-print lacquer.



## Dogs on the go

The first ever flexible drink pouch for dogs on the go has been introduced in the US by Wetbone Inc LLC.

The 16 ounce, bone shaped, pouch is manufactured by

Ampac Packaging LLC from a three layer PET/ALU/linear LDPE laminate.

It consists of two compartments: the base contains purified, vitamin enriched water and the top, acts as the drinking 'bowl'. When the pouch is squeezed the patent pending design allows the water to flow along channels which transfer the water to the top compartment to quench the thirst of the dog on the go!

## Exquisite cats

Real differentiation on the retail shelf is provided by single-serve packs in the shape of a cat's head from Constantia Teich.

Consumers are fascinated by the cat's ears featured in the easy-open alufoil/PP laminate lid, which are folded back over the side of the broad-edged containers. Psychological testing has shown that the consumer is immediately attracted to the cat's face and responds by trying to arrange the cat's ears to complete the head. This impulse means the consumer stays longer at the shelf.

The cat's ears ultimately act as an easy-opening device when pulled back from the sides of the alufoil/PP container.

Saturn Petfood uses the packs for its Athena Exquisite range of top quality paté products.



**Find out more about alufoil !**

- visit [www.alufoil.org](http://www.alufoil.org) where you can find out all about every EAFA member, make business enquiries and see the latest news about alufoil applications and the industry.

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