

Aluminium foil: totally 'on trend' for a modern world

— Judged against the 'Top Global Consumer Trends 2019' identified by Euromonitor International, aluminium foil scores high marks for performance and relevance to modern consumer needs.

Today's consumers expect much more from the products they buy, and the packaging it comes in. With over 100 years of service as a material which protects and preserves, aluminium foil is now being scrutinised to meet a new set of criteria. On investigation foil seems to meet many of these new challenges.

Before we see how aluminium foil is doing, it is worth taking a look at some of the challenges being set by consumers of all ages and backgrounds. The Euromonitor report highlights several key aspects of modern living and changing attitudes: age agnostics – older people want to feel, behave and be treated the same as younger persons; Back to Basics for Status – put simply, less is more; Conscious Consumers – more mindful, respectful and compassionate consumption; Digitally together – more interactive and connected experiences; Everyone's an Expert – the power has moved from the retailer to the consumer; I want a Plastics Free World – taking positive action on recycling and rejecting single-use packaging; I can Look after myself / Live alone – new ways of dealing with being single.



Like most trends, a lot of these are interconnected and, at least on the surface, some can seem incompatible. For example living alone, by definition, means not buying large amounts of any one item and wanting to spend less time on food preparation, so exercising a degree of 'portion control' which brings up the issue of convenience and small format packaging.

Likewise older people may want to feel less age conscious, but it is a fact of life that as one gets

older you become less dextrous, so appreciate easier opening or simple recloseable features on packs. They also tend to use more medicines than younger generations and must have packs which work for their particular health needs. For designers of all types of packaging these are very real challenges, as consumers are much more 'savvy' and connected with their environment and want to know a lot more about what they are buying. Here we take a look at how the aluminium foil sector is responding. ///

Looking for winners!

Don't miss your chance to participate in the Alufoil Trophy 2020. The final closing date for entries is 12 December 2019. The annual competition rewards excellence and celebrates the creativity and flexibility of aluminium foil and aluminium closures across all market sectors and applications.



An added attraction for the awards is that winning products will be showcased at interpack 2020 in Düsseldorf on EAFA's stand throughout the exhibition. There will also be a special awards presentation ceremony for the winners. So don't miss this golden opportunity to ensure the widest possible exposure for your products. **Enter NOW!** www.trophy.alufoil.org ///

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Top Global Consumer Trends 2019



Age Agnostics

One of the strengths of aluminium foil is that it is truly 'age blind'. Thanks to its versatility foil can come in all sorts of formats; shapes and sizes; rigid or flexible; hard to puncture but easy to tear; highly printable and even capable of being embossed with Braille! It can serve all ages equally and has an ageless quality all of its own. ///



Everyone is an Expert

Consumers are no longer complacent about buying the same generic product repeatedly. So brands and packaging designers constantly need to innovate. There is now a strong product review culture, meaning it has never been truer that the Customer is King. Alufoil has always been at the cutting edge of innovation, for example in the last decade coffee pods and aluminium closures have turned two industries on their head. It is the consumer who is the key to this success as he or she has seen the strong benefits and changed to the better format. ///



The Conscious Consumer

The Conscious Consumer is a more mindful, respectful and compassionate. He or she wants to know more about the origin of the product, is it produced ethically, or aligned with animal welfare and healthier lifestyles for example. An important part of this is environmental impact and sustainability, of both product and pack. Alufoil packs are very light and effective as the industry has worked tirelessly to reduce the weight of material used, whilst maintaining performance to ensure the product is safe and in perfect condition. Aluminium material is infinitely recyclable and is unique in terms of barrier properties, so cutting food spoilage and reducing risks of food waste. ///



Top Global Consumer Trends 2019



Digitally Together

One of the strongest trends for packaging in recent times is to make it smart. Connected or interactive packaging, via a smart phone or App, is becoming more and more common. The power of Social Media to bring a product to market is beyond doubt and it can be the difference between

success and failure. Much of this interaction is triggered from packaging related components. Aluminium foil packaging and aluminium closures has not been slow to see the advantages of incorporating intelligent devices into some formats already. Others are sure to follow. ///

Back to Basics for Status

Consumers are searching for authentic, differentiated products and experiences which allow them to express their individuality. A sign of status today is how far some have moved from materialism to simplicity. In essence: Less is More. Aluminium foil has been achieving more with less material for many years (thinner lids, lighter but stronger containers, and general lightweighting in most areas of foil usage.) Plus, what could be simpler than wrapping lunch or food from the BBQ in everyday household foil which can be shaped to perfectly contain whatever needs to be wrapped – and then recycling everything. ///



FOOTNOTE: Not all foil is used in packaging applications. As an insulation for buildings and in car engines it plays a significant role in reducing energy consumption and making heating systems and engines work more efficiently. As consumers are increasingly environmentally aware, this is clearly 'on trend' too! ///

It's a star! The friendly and sustainable container

A new video, highlighting aluminium foil containers as a versatile packaging format and underlining their sustainability features, has been released by EAFI.

The animated video illustrates aluminium foil containers' excellent barrier properties to light and oxygen, as well as their heat conductive qualities, making them ideally

suited to the food service and petfood industries. In particular the video reminds us all of aluminium foil's credentials as a fully recyclable material. ///



Sustainability

New toolkit conveys key sustainability messages

Earlier this year our colleagues at Flexible Packaging Europe (FPE) created a new toolkit offering visual formats to explain the benefits of flexible packaging and how it offers a sustainable packaging solution. Of course it is highly relevant to aluminium foil, which is one of the original flexible packaging materials. Today, whether all aluminium or as part of a laminate, alufoil is still at the forefront of the flexible packaging agenda. So the toolkit has much to offer.

It contains key messages about sustainability for all stakeholders in the industry. In addition to a comprehensive website, there are downloadable infographics, posters, a fact sheet and a pocket guide. Since its launch earlier this year it has proved to be very popular. Indeed some Human Resources departments now use it as part of their interview process to explain the benefits. To make it even more accessible it is now available in ten languages, with plans to roll out more.

“With our comprehensive information package we want to highlight how flexible packaging, including flexible packaging with alufoil, supports sustainable consumption and production of food. Flexible packaging offers many advan-

Flexible Packaging plays a minor part of a food product's environmental footprint but a major role in preservation



Saving important resources

Flexible Packaging helps in reducing food waste, thus saving important resources - more than needed to produce the packaging itself.

Flexible Packaging saves much more resources than it consumes.

Small part of carbon footprint

When considering the lifecycle of a food product, Flexible Packaging makes for only a small part of the carbon footprint on average less than 10%.

Production of the food contained in the pack often represents the major use of resources and major environmental impact.



Above: One of 14 infographics available for download

tages when it comes to sustainability – backed by scientific facts,” explains Jean-Paul Duquet, FPE’s Director of Sustainability. “Still sustainability in packaging remains a complex matter and we have tried to reduce that by providing a practical overview with facts and figures at European level over much-debated key issues like the circular economy or food waste,” he added. ///

- > Infographics / Posters / Roll-up banner / Fact Sheet / Pocket Guide
 - > Available free of charge to anyone interested in the subject
 - > Comprehensive website
- www.sustainability.flexpack-europe.org

Industry initiative results in harmonised labels for uncoated food containers

Following increased pressure for harmonised labelling for uncoated aluminium food containers the industry has responded with the design of a series of icons. This follows the Council of Europe (CoE) recommendation that storage of acidic (e.g. fruit juices), alkaline (e.g. lye dough products) or salty, liquid foodstuffs in uncoated aluminium utensils should be limited in order to

minimize release. Guidance should be available from producers of uncoated aluminium utensils regarding the use of their product with strongly acidic, alkaline or salty foodstuffs.

In the absence of any harmonised EU legislation the CoE recommended producers provide specific labelling of uncoated aluminium

containers. It said, with regard to retail packs, the suppliers must ensure that these are labelled with appropriate information for the end consumer.

As the labelling of these products differed widely across Europe, EAFA members producing household foil and containers decided to harmonize labels as described in these recommendations. The results (illustrated) meet the objectives of being clear about the safe use of these containers, are easy to understand and unthreatening for the consumer, as well as capable of being produced in several languages, including language specific examples of salty and acidic foods. ///



DO NOT USE FOR:

- **ACIDIC FOOD**
(e.g. peeled fruit, tomatoes, pickles, salad dressing)
- **VERY SALTY FOOD**
(e.g. pretzel, white herring, cured meat)

www.label.alufoil.org

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The international body representing aluminium foil rollers and converters of aluminium foil.