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Greater Awareness Takes Alufoil Container Recycling to New High

New data released by EAFA, the European Aluminium Foil Association, confirms that recycling rates in Europe for alufoil trays and semi-rigid containers in 2013 reached about 55%. The previous reporting period (2010) saw that figure rise above 50% following concerted efforts by the industry to promote the benefits of resource efficient and sustainable packaging options.

The Association says continued work by the industry to promote the value of collection and recycling; along with national campaigns are having significant effects. Increased awareness has seen consumers recognise all aluminium foil trays and containers, not only those used as primary packaging, can be recycled, as well as other kitchen products, such as disposable alufoil BBQ and oven trays.

EAFA's Container Group Chairman Peter Wallach commented, "We appreciate these positive developments, accentuating the environmental credentials of alufoil containers, in addition to their advantages for fillers and consumers."

"The diversity of alufoil containers means it is hard sometimes to target individual product areas. But, thanks to greater consumer awareness and highly innovative national and local campaigns, the message that alufoil is perfectly recyclable, from whatever source, is having positive results across Europe," he added.

The recycling rates are calculated on the basis of publicly available national aluminium recycling rates and consumption data. This data also shows the considerable extent to which consumption volumes and recycling rates vary from one country to another. Depending on the instructions to the consumers and the collection and sorting infrastructure in place, estimated recycling rates for alufoil container vary significantly and range from over 85% in Germany to exceeding 65% in Italy, above 40% in the UK and 35% in France and Spain. Aluminium recycling saves up to 95% energy use compared to its primary production, with the corresponding savings in greenhouse gas emissions. It can be recycled over and over without any loss of quality.

Alufoil trays and semi-rigid containers are used in markets such as ready meals; ready-to-cook meat, poultry and fish; bakery products; pet foods; and takeaway foods. But they are increasingly used in foodservice and event catering where their qualities of hygiene, convenience and disposability are widely recognised.



Further information:

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The European Aluminium Foil Association is the international body representing companies engaged in the rolling and rewinding of alufoil and in the manufacture of aluminium closures, alufoil semi-rigid containers and of all kind of flexible packaging. Its more than 100 members include companies in Western, Central and Eastern Europe.