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Domestic recovery boosts European aluminium foil deliveries in first half of 2021

Following solid first quarter growth, led largely by exports, the second quarter of 2021 saw domestic deliveries of aluminium foil accelerate rapidly (+8,8%) as European demand recovered from the pandemic crisis. Exports declined slightly but were more than offset by growing internal demand. At the halfway point of the year total deliveries reached 488.900 tonnes, 3,4% ahead of the first six months of 2020, according to figures released by the European Aluminium Foil Association (EAFA).

Production of thinner gauges, used mainly for flexible packaging and household foils, was slightly ahead in Q2, compared to the year before, contributing to an overall H1 increase of 2,5%. Thicker gauges, used for semi-rigid containers, technical or other applications, put in a strong performance, with double digit growth of 12% for the April-June quarter and a half year result 5% ahead. This is a dramatic turnaround compared to the -13% of Q2 2020 and -4,4% seen at the halfway point last time.

The ups and downs of the exports with YTD figures showing a drop of 4,6% are primarily caused by logistical difficulties to supply abroad.

Bruno Rea, Chairman of the EAFA Roller Group believes the figures are encouraging for the sector, but some headwinds remain, "The strong demand for aluminium foil products continues and even accelerates in Europe after the opening up of many markets after the pandemic. This growth is very broad across all categories. While our core market of packaging remains very strong, also the construction sector is growing once again, combined with a solid demand for automotive applications such as e-mobility."

"However, the supply chain disruptions and shortages of raw materials in terms of metal and foil stock are affecting production and deliveries. The European foil rollers are using all their capacities to meet the demands of their domestic customers. Overall, the trend is encouraging, but we will remain vigilant and react accordingly," concluded Mr Rea.

The European Aluminium Foil Association (EAFA) is the main trade association, specifically representing companies engaged in the rolling and rewinding of aluminium foil and the manufacturing of semi-rigid alufoil containers and household foil in Europe. With its more than 40 members, the organisation represents the total aluminium foil rolling market in Europe. www.alufoil.org

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