



The capper has up to five double workstations

FachPack 2007

From September 25th to 27th, 2007, the triple exhibition (FachPack for packaging solutions, PrintPack for packaging print and production, and Logintern for internal logistics) opens its doors in Nuremberg, Germany. 1,300 exhibitors are expected, and over 33,000 visitors. As an appetiser COSSMA brings you here news of some of the latest trends in plastic and bioplastic packaging and looks at a few of the new products that will be on show.

Plastics enjoy a boom

As usual at least one third of the exhibitors will be medium sized manufacturers of packaging, packaging materials and packaging aids. They will be sited together with packaging machinery manufacturers in a high profile location. Historically two out of three visitors said that they were particularly interested in this aspect of the exhibition.

Single-trip plastic packaging is still growing in popularity. It is lightweight, adaptable, easy to handle, and can be made in almost any shape. R&D work in the chemicals and plastics industries is regularly resulting in the development of new materials with new properties, and now bioplastics are enjoying rapid growth rates and carving out for themselves a firm place in the packaging market.

Plastics are probably the most successful packaging materials. According to the German plastic packaging federation they have a 40 percent share and are the most widely used packaging materials. In the last 30 years the use of plastics has more than doubled.

Bioplastics usage growing right across Europe

The high price of crude oil is once again bringing bioplastics into the spotlight. Previously most developments were not cost effective for mass applications in the packaging industry. When talking about bioplastics it is

important to distinguish between biodegradable plastics and plastics made from replenishable resources. There are plastics made from replenishable resources which are not biodegradable, and on the other hand there are biodegradable materials made from fossil materials. Biodegradability or biological raw materials alone do not automatically confer an ecological advantage. About 4 percent of total oil and gas consumption goes today into the manufacture of plastics. Replenishable resources are already being used in the plastics industry where they offer economical and technical advantages.

In Europe the worldwide annual usage of plastics is 48.5 million tonnes. Bioplastics, at 0.05 million tonnes, are almost insignificant. Nevertheless their share doubled from 2005 to 2006. The use of replenishable resources to manufacture bioplastics is limited by the availability of land to grow the necessary crops. Government subsidies for certain crops – such as rapeseed for bio-diesel – can restrict the reliable production of replenishable raw material resources to other areas.

Leading retailers in the UK, Italy, Switzerland and the Netherlands are already using packaging made from bioplastics. The companies concerned also believe that offering this type of packaging to their customers gives them a marketing advantage. Al-

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FachPack 3007

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though the materials are based on starches, polylactic acid and other replenishable resources and can be processed on conventional plastics converting machinery they are still only treated as an extension of more conventional materials such as PE, PP or PET. The barrier properties of the new materials still do not meet those of more conventional plastics.

New products on show

We have picked out for our readers some of the more interesting ideas from among the new products that can be seen at Fachpack:

The **Linocap** capping machine from **Kugler** is suitable for applications in cosmetics manufacture. It has up to five double workstations and a modular construction that allows the fitting of stoppers, screw caps and spray pumps

as well as the placing and heat sealing of aluminium foil discs, which are sometimes used in combination with the closure. Various monitoring systems in the form of sensors and cameras ensure reliable operation, and carry out checks such as counting the number of containers, checking for skewed assembly and checking the torque that has been applied top the closure. When a format change is required all of the appropriate parameters are called up from the machine's memory bank. The capper runs at up to 120 cpm.

To produce high quality self-adhesive labels, which place high technical demands on the production equipment, the machinery at **Ulrich Etiketten** includes 16 printing machines. For clients who require to display large amounts of text, such as product descriptions in various languages, de-

tailed instructions or prize draw conditions, Multi Labels are the answer. A **Multi Label**, also known as a Twin label, a Peel-and-Reseal label or a Peel-and-Read label, consist of at least two layers, one on top of the other. Using a pull-tab the top layer is partially lifted to expose the details on the lower layer. This top layer can be opened and resealed several times.

Etifix will be presenting the new Etimat labelling range, which is used for labelling very narrow cylindrical containers or other articles. The **Etimat EV Twin** for tubes and bottles allows two different product types to be labelled with the same kind of label, and with extremely rapid changeover times. Also new are the **Twinkling** and **Metallic labels**. Here special pigments are used to produce striking shimmer and glitter effects. AM



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