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European foil rollers maintain production amid disrupted supply chains

Total deliveries of aluminium foil products from Europe in Q3 2021 slowed slightly compared to the previous quarter, but remain ahead of the same period last year, according to figures released recently by the European Aluminium Foil Association (EAFA). Shipments were 1,3% ahead, year on year, at 236,500 tonnes (Q3 2020: 233,400). In the first nine months of the year production of 723,000t is a healthy 2,7% above 2020 levels (706,500t), driven by continuing increased domestic consumption, which is offsetting export volume declines.

Demand in European markets continues to recover strongly, at +7%. Deliveries of thinner gauges, used mainly for flexible packaging and household foils, were up 6% from the previous year. Thicker gauges, used for semi-rigid containers, technical or other applications, were also well ahead in these domestic markets, improving by 9%.

Exports were decreases by continuing global supply chain and trade issues and other pandemic related factors but also due to more focus on domestic deliveries.

Overall deliveries of thinner gauges continue to maintain an increase of over 1% in the first nine months. Thicker gauges put in a strong showing of more than 5% increase when compared to 2020.

Commenting on the figures Guido Aufdemkamp, Executive Director of EAFA said, "Demand remains high in all foil consuming sectors, both packaging and technical applications, and European foil rollers continue to do their utmost to satisfy customers using all the capacity at their disposal. The year on year increase in deliveries this quarter is a very good performance when one considers the headwinds being encountered."

"Challenges caused by a general aluminium material shortage, difficulties in logistics, as well as many other production issues, which include shortage of packaging materials such as wood but also exploding energy costs, mean that rollers must be highly adaptable to changing circumstances. The outlook is good but the last few months have shown that small things can have great effects, so we must continue to be vigilant," he added.

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

Further information:

Patrick Altenstrasser, Manager Communications
communications@alufoil.org