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Winner of an Alufoil Trophy 2009

Peelable ends provide mass market appeal

The first commercial application of a new opening system able to withstand the continuous retort process for Bonduelle canned vegetables has earned an Alufoil Trophy for Alcan Packaging and the IMPRESS Centre de Recherche de Crosmières.

The innovative system, which features the Alufix® continuous retort membrane and the Impress Easip® peelable easy-open system not requiring overpressure, has been developed for high speed food processing lines where overpressure during processing is not possible. The companies worked closely with Bonduelle to determine the best combination of Alcan Packaging's Alufix® retort specification for the membrane, and the ring design and geometry.



Part of a shared strategy to bring peelable ends to the mass market, the combination of Easip® and Alufix® retort provides significant potential to tackle new markets like canned vegetables, and provides significant growth potential for both companies.

“The easy-open, child-friendly a lightweight system provides a real alternative to standard, mostly sharp, can ends for the food industry thus opening up substantial new markets for alufoil and proving just how successful technical developments can be when companies work together,” said head judge Hilka Bergmann, director packaging research at EHI Retail Institute in Germany.

Based on the Impress Easy Peel® end which required overpressure in the retort process, the new Easip® with the Alufix® Retort membrane can be sterilised without overpressure and will withstand pressure differentials of up to 1.2 bars in continuous retort processes used commonly by international food groups.

This is made possible by the bond strength of the membrane structure together with the structural and geometrical adapted ring material. To compensate for the pressure differences during sterilisation the membrane is designed to flex, accommodating pressure changes which occur between the can and the retort during processing.

Currently available only in France, Bonduelle is planning to introduce the pack to European markets on a much larger scale.

In a joint statement Dr. Christoph Dietrich, Product Development and Product Management Manager - Food Container, Alcan Packaging Singen, and Philippe Gimenez, Research and Development Director IMPRESS Centre de Recherche de Crosnières said “The utilisation of Easy Peel® & Alufix Retort® was so far limited to retort processes with overpressure, which are not the most widespread type of retort processes. Easip® generates really new potential applications because more retort processes are now compatible with this type of peelable system. Winning an Alufoil Trophy 2009 has added to the confidence we have in bringing easy-open the Easip® and Alufix® retort concept to the mass market.”

The annual Alufoil Trophy is organised by the European Aluminium Foil Association.

High resolution pictures of all winners are available at www.alufoil.org.

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