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Beer bottle neck foil is greener and thinner

An Alufoil Trophy 2015 for Resource Efficiency has been presented to **Constantia Haendler & Natermann** for a neck foil label for **Chang Beer** which uses an 8.8µm aluminium foil, soft tampered, aluminium alloy. This not only offers material savings, but also downstream advantages during the recycling/reuse process, says the company.

Glass bottles for the returnable beverage market and particularly the beer industry traditionally use aluminium neck foil to enhance the brand's premium image. Since the 1990's the thickness of foil has been reduced constantly from something like 13µm to 10.5µm and most recently down to 9.5µm. Now the latest advance from Constantia has further reduced the thickness to just 8.8µm.

Speaking for the Alufoil Trophy judges, Jean-Paul Duquet, global packaging eco design manager of Bel Group, commented, "This is a clever and well thought out development which not only reduces material usage by 8%, but also has a positive impact on wastewater treatment, as the aluminium foil completely dissolves in the caustic bath. Extending the caustic wash efficiency up to 10% leads to lower emissions of hydrocarbon and thus less heat dissipation from the washer. Resource efficiency all round!" he concluded.

"The Thai Beverage Company takes environmental issues seriously and has developed sustainability programs throughout the value chain. Chang Beer is our number one brand and is recognized for its unique qualities all over the world. It is our pleasure to be a part of this initiative program with Constantia Haendler & Natermann to pioneer such a sustainability development to the aluminium foil industry," explained Dr Pisanu Vichiensanth, Director and Executive Vice President-Technology and Engineering.

"Material efficiency is a fundamental part of our and our customers' business focus and the recognition of these sustainability efforts by the judges will help us promote aluminium foil for beer bottle decoration globally. From a business perspective this Alufoil Trophy emphasizes the importance of sustainability even in a niche market such as aluminium bottle neck foil usage," says Gerd Blecken head of R&D Constantia H&N.

The foil is one side lacquered and rotogravure printed, embossed and partially de-embossed, perforated and then die-cut into individual labels. Inks and coatings also dissolve in the caustic solution without any residuals. As sodium hydroxide needs to be replaced regularly to maintain cleaning effectiveness, any extended use is a critical cost factor for breweries. In addition, the thinner foil generates more labels per batch, reducing transport and storage costs.

The Alufoil Trophy is organised by the European Aluminium Foil Association. There are five categories – Consumer Convenience, Marketing + Design, Product Preservation, Resource Efficiency and Technical Innovation. Judges also gave an award for cross-category excellence. For 2015 there were 12 winners.

High resolution pictures can be downloaded and all winning entries can be viewed at www.alufoil.org

Further information:

Guido Aufdemkamp, Executive Director



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.