



April 2019

Alufoil Trophy 2019: Winning entries focus on more convenience and a better environment

The most important competition for innovation and new technological advances in aluminium foil, the Alufoil Trophy 2019, once again attracted a strong field of entries. In total nine awards were made across the five categories, including a discretionary award for overall excellence for one outstanding product. The Alufoil Trophy is an annual event, organised each year by the European Aluminium Foil Association (EAFA).

The judges, led this year by Laura Fernandez, senior packaging technologist at Marks & Spencer, noted strong social elements running through entries this year, particularly in terms of convenience for the consumer and social or environmental aspects of the product development. One example of these themes is an alufoil lid with the capability to emboss braille – offering information to shoppers with poor vision. Another enables sensitive pharmaceuticals to be used in very humid and tropical areas of the world safely.

“We were very taken with many of the entries working effectively on more than one level. So while it was clever technically, or offered energy or material savings, there were also other aspects which made it special, such as easier opening or with the potential to reduce food waste. In particular we should mention the discretionary award winner, an intelligent and ‘connected’ aluminium wine closure which simply takes this device and its functionality to a new level,” Ms Fernandez remarked.

“Another winner was not from the packaging sector, but was an outstanding entry in the category of Resource Efficiency. It clearly demonstrated better efficiencies and reduced consumption in energy recovery rotors, made possible by very clever use of alufoil,” she continued.

Speaking about the awards Guido Aufdemkamp, executive director of EAFA said, “Again we see aluminium foil manufacturers and converters stepping up to, and meeting, the challenges of an increasingly socially aware and sustainable environment. At the same time they are addressing the real needs of consumers for smarter and more convenient packaging. The Alufoil Trophy is a very effective way to highlight how the aluminium foil sector is leading such developments,” he explained.

The competition is open to products which are either made from aluminium foil or contain aluminium foil as part of a laminate, structure or packaging system, as well as aluminium closures. Categories cover every aspect of aluminium foil usage across many diverse markets. The classifications are Consumer Convenience; Marketing + Design; Product Protection; Resource Efficiency; and Technical Innovation.

THE WINNERS

Consumer Convenience

- Constantia Flexibles: EasyOpenLid^{retort}

Marketing + Design

- Constantia Flexibles and saturn petcare: DecoTainer for Premium Pet Food
- i2r Packaging Solutions: Shelf Ready Smoothwall Container

Product Protection

- Amcor Flexibles and GSK: Formpack® Dessiflex Ultra for Augmentin®

Resource Efficiency

- Ardagh Group and Orkla Foods Norway: Hansa Can for Stabburet
- Italc oat: Hygrosieve®

Technical Innovation

- ConSeal: Braille Embossing Lid
- Selig Group: GlassFuze™

Discretionary Award

- Guala Closures Group: e-WAK®

Summary text of all winners follows on pages 3 – 5

The Alufoil Trophy is organised by the European Aluminium Foil Association. There are five categories – Consumer Convenience, Marketing + Design, Product Protection, Resource Efficiency and Technical Innovation. For 2019 there were 9 winners.

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

Further information:

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The European Aluminium Foil Association 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

Summary (more details available at trophy.alufoil.org)

Consumer Convenience

New lidding material offers consumers better opening experience

The **EasyOpenLid^{retort}** from **Constantia Flexibles** is a newly developed solution for alufoil-based food container systems, used for in-pack sterilization processes, allowing easier and more convenient opening. It addresses the challenges often identified by consumers using containers with peelable alufoil lids, such as the force needed to open them or torn lidding material during the opening process.



The PP composition has been optimized to greatly reduce opening forces without compromising the mandatory seal-integrity for sterilisation. The peel-force reduction is significant for all container geometries. In addition, the optimization of sealing-parameters, which is applicable for sealing against PP-based trays, is possible.

Marketing + Design

Pet food and vegetable containers making a big on-shelf impact

The **DecoTainer** from **Constantia Flexibles** and **saturn petcare** offers modern styling for premium pet food products. The round, alufoil container was designed to communicate a high quality packaging appearance by printing 100% of the surface, fully visible at the point of sale (POS). The design also improves stability while the ergonomic bowl shape supports the easy removal of the contents.



Using rotogravure ensured overall printing quality to further increase the appearance of packaging. The POS system comprises the round alufoil containers in corrugated display trays, all in a harmonized design, to create a high-end look for consumers.

The **Shelf Ready Smoothwall Container** from **i2r Packaging Solutions** is designed particularly for 'ready to cook' vegetables and is able to stand in the upright position on a supermarket shelf, giving consumers a direct view of the product. Most containers used for this type of packaged food are merchandised on their bases, limiting the product visibility.



By designing a combination of strengthening features below the rim, and ribs which flow into the base of the packaging, there is no need for an outer cardboard sleeve/carton. Both design features allow for an additional gauge reduction, reducing the packaging weight significantly.

Product Protection

New blister pack improves protection for antibiotic

A joint development by **Ancor Flexibles** and **GSK**, the **Formpack® Dessiflex Ultra for Augmentin®** replaces a glass container with a new blister pack, offering enhanced protection for this antibiotic, which is very moisture sensitive. The desiccated patient blister pack combines a Formpack® Dessiflex Ultra Blister System with a specific lidding foil.



Exposing tablets to moisture when a bottle is opened is far more likely, as are breakages. The blister also meets GSK's criteria to protect medical operators and patients. In addition, due to the specific colour (green) of the Dessiflex product contact layer, it is far harder to counterfeit.

Resource Efficiency

Enhanced energy recovery and iconic brand makes material savings

Ardagh Group and **Orkla Foods Norway** have developed a new **Hansa Can for Stabburet**, which is a printed, easy open, alufoil-based container for a traditional fish fillet pack, with a 10% reduction in material use.

The challenge was to reduce pack weight without altering the can format, performance, or iconic printed branding on this national Norwegian product. The reduction in material thickness from 0.21mm to 0.19mm, was achieved without loss of performance during the retorting process. In addition the aluminium lid improves easy opening and, due to the thickness reduction, less force is required to open it.



Hygrosieve®, is an innovative lacquered aluminium foil developed by **Italcoat**. The hygroscopic lacquer, with a molecular sieve effect, improves the performance in terms of selective vapour adsorption/desorption, resulting in a 15% energy saving. The product has been specifically developed for energy recovery rotors.



The aluminium foil is chemically degreased and lacquered both sides with the hygroscopic formulation and anticorrosion primer. The formulation is applied through coil coating. An additional benefit is a reduction of the flow rates of refrigerant fluid, which also contributes to higher efficiency of the rotor.

Technical Innovation

Lid embossing breakthrough and groundbreaking hermetic seal

The **Braille Embossing Lid**, an advanced aluminium foil lid manufactured by **ConSeal**, with patented technology from Austrian company **Gerhard Rauch**, has been specifically developed for vision-impaired people. In addition, it guarantees to industrial manufacturers the easy separation of stacked lids on the line.



Through the application of an adjustable, innovative stamp on the punching machine, the braille reading system is applied directly onto the aluminium foil lid. Developed for dairy product lidding, these manufacturers now have the possibility to inform the visually impaired about details of their products, with variable information for each product in the range.

Selig Group has developed a unique sealing technique, called **GlassFuze™**, using aluminium foil as a key material to create a hermetic seal to glass containers. This is the first and only induction heat sealing technique for an alufoil membrane that provides a complete hermetic seal that withstands liquid and high oil content substances, says the company.



The use of the aluminium foil is key to the process. Not only does the foil create a barrier to oxygen and moisture, it also heats up to create the actual seal. Without the use of aluminium foil, this hermetic seal would not be possible.

Discretionary Award

New connected closure offers multiple benefits

e-WAK® from **Guala Closures Group** is the first patented NFC (Near Field Communication) closure dedicated to wineries, allowing them to start a one to one relationship with consumers. This new intelligent technology has been integrated in a WAK aluminium closure, which can also carry brand personalisation.



The NFC chip allows any bottle of wine to become a “connected bottle”. Positioned in the cap, it sends a signal to enabled mobile phones, offering four potential benefits. The wine owner gets marketing data acquisition and logistics track & trace, while the consumer receives authenticity certification and direct engagement with the brand.