

Brussels, 9 June 2011 > EHEC bacteria cannot survive in Corrugated Packaging

Corrugated packaging is clean and hygienic, because of very high temperatures applied during the manufacturing process and because each package is used for only one delivery. These are important factors in the light of recent tragic incidents involving EHEC (Enterohaemorrhagic Escherichia coli) bacterial contamination of food whose source is yet to be identified.

Corrugated packaging has for many decades been, and still is, the preferred transport packaging for food products. It is storage, transport and display-friendly and able to carry important handling and branding messages.

EHEC is a strain of E. coli (Escherichia coli) which belongs to the bacteria group called Enterobacteriaceae. The optimum environment for these bacteria is a temperature between 25 °C and 40 °C, combined with sufficient moisture. However, they are not able to survive temperatures above 70 °C.

Corrugated board is manufactured by combining layers of paper in a unique structure that gives the packaging its lightness and strength. The manufacturing process uses heating elements with temperatures between 180 °C and 200 °C. The material itself reaches temperatures of at least 100 °C three times, once during the manufacture of the paper itself, and twice during the process of conversion to corrugated board.

Contamination of one product with another is impossible because each packaging is used only once. After use the packaging is sent for recycling back into new paper during which the material is again heated to temperatures exceeding 100 °C.

With temperatures far above levels than those at which EHEC bacteria can survive occurring three times during the manufacturing process, the corrugated board industry offers an efficient solution for a safe food logistics chain and can give reassurance that the current serious outbreak will not be spread by the use of corrugated packaging.

For additional information please contact:

Ben Blydenstein, Marketing and Environment Director at: ben.blydenstein@fefco.org

Phone: +32 2 626 98 39.

Note to the editors

FEFCO (European Federation of Corrugated Board Manufacturers) was established in 1952 and represents the interests of the European Corrugated Board Manufacturers. Headquartered in Brussels, FEFCO has 24 active members, all European national corrugated packaging organizations. The role of the Federation is to investigate economic, financial, technical and marketing issues of interest to the corrugated packaging Industry, to analyze all factors which may influence the industry, and to promote and develop its image.