

Brussels, February 20th 2014 > PACKAGING CAN REDUCE GLOBAL FOOD WASTE, SAYS EUROPEAN CORRUGATED INDUSTRY

The United Nations estimate that over a billion tons of food is wasted globally every year, a figure that could be significantly reduced with the right packaging, according to [the European Federation of Corrugated Board Manufacturers \(FEFCO\)](#).

In the industrialised world 40% of food at retail and consumer level is thrown away, while a similar figure is wasted in developing countries during post-harvest handling and processing (source UN). FEFCO is convinced that appropriate food packaging can help tackle the problem and reduce the huge impact this is having in environmental and financial terms.

Some may see packaging as contributing to waste, but FEFCO is resolute that this is misleading: far more resources are used in creating the product than the packaging. Therefore product and packaging should be viewed together and appropriate levels of packaging, not less, should be used to protect food.

FEFCO's Secretary General, Angelika Christ, said: "Downsizing packaging makes no sense if product loss occurs as a consequence. Packaging should be optimised according to the requirements of each and every product. Sometimes increasing packaging significantly reduces impact on the environment."

Vitacress, one of Europe's leading growers of watercress, asked for a corrugated packaging solution that would increase shelf life and reduce product loss in distribution. The result included a drain tray of crushed ice that sits on the top rim of the pack and trickles melting water over the watercress to keep it fresh for up to 48 hours.

Corrugated packaging can also be tailored to fit each product precisely and hold it securely during transport. It can be designed to ensure easy opening and handling without product damage. The flexibility exists to introduce bespoke solutions quickly, and cost-effectively.

A vital role is played by corrugated packaging throughout the supply chain: It protects 75% of European goods in transit and ensures that more food reaches the consumer's table as safely and efficiently as possible.

In Germany ethylene absorbing corrugated board is being developed for fresh produce to

slow down unwanted ripening. Ethylene triggers the ripening process in certain fruits and vegetables.

Food packaging ensures food security and safety, enhances both logistics management and product identification. Corrugated's versatility, 100% recyclability and protective qualities makes it an integral part of the range of measures needed to solve the problem of food waste.

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See <http://www.corrugated-ofcourse.eu> for the latest news and stories from across the supply chain

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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 20 active members, all European national corrugated packaging organisations. The role of the Federation is to investigate economic, financial, technical and marketing issues of interest to the corrugated packaging Industry, to analyse all factors which may influence the industry, and to promote and develop its image.