

PRESS RELEASE

Market launch

Sustainable partnership: KHS and Eckes-Granini launch bottles made of 100% rPET

- Production on a tried-and-tested block from the systems supplier
- Interior FreshSafe PET coating can still be easily applied
- KHS satisfies customer's container quality requirements

Dortmund, June 8, 2021 – Eckes-Granini is making its packaging portfolio even more environmentally friendly with the help of the KHS Group. Since the middle of May its one-liter hohes C juice bottle has consisted entirely of recycled plastic (rPET). KHS' Bottles & Shapes experts in Hamburg were responsible for optimization of the bottle. The new containers will continue to be produced on the tried-and-tested InnoPET FreshSafe block. With KHS as its long-term partner, Europe's leading fruit juice producer is making a further relevant contribution to the expansion of the circular economy.

Eckes-Granini has been using 25% rPET in its hohes C PET juice bottles since 2018. "Bearing the EU's plastic strategy in mind and the increase in recycle quotas this prescribes, we've now decided to switch to using recycled PET only. We want to be a pioneer as regards the circular economy and set a good example for the beverage industry," states Hermann Naumann, plant manager for Eckes-Granini in Bad Fallingbostal in Lower Saxony. Europe's leading producer of fruit juice beverages has pursued an ambitious sustainability strategy for years, Naumann continues. "We aim to continue steadily reducing our carbon footprint in production and in our

packaging. This means not only cutting down on the amount of material used but also closing the recycling loop.”

4,000 tons of new plastic and 8,000 tons of CO₂ saved

These are the exact issues KHS addressed first when implementing the current project. With its holistic Bottles & Shapes consultancy program customers benefit from over 40 years of expertise in container design and production. Here, beverage producers state their preferences regarding the weight, shape or stability of the container, for instance, upon which the systems supplier assesses the feasibility of the design with the help of laboratory tests and simulation. In the case of Eckes-Granini the specifications were clear: switch to 100% rPET while maintaining the homogeneous quality of the container. According to Eckes-Granini, the changeover of the one-liter hohes C bottle to rPET will save over 4,000 metric tons of new PET per annum. This in turn means that the bottler will cut its carbon emissions by about 8,000 tons a year.

Efficient and sustainable: the InnoPET FreshSafe block

Finding ways of saving on resources was not the only focus of the ambitious project. The ability to do so on the KHS InnoPET FreshSafe block in operation at Eckes-Granini since 2017 also had to be investigated. “One of the concerns was whether either the preforms or machine needed adapting,” explains Dr. Matthias Kruse, head of PET Technology at KHS. “We thus assessed the quality of the recycled PET material. This is crucial, for large variances in color, molecular length and inhomogeneity quickly reduce the efficiency of production.”

The fact that Eckes-Granini procures its preforms from two different suppliers presented an added challenge, Kruse adds. The geometry of the preform is essential for efficient processing, especially when a high percentage of rPET is used. Through extensive testing it was established that both makes of preform function soundly on the block system. All that was needed for

optimum bottle production were minor adjustments to the heater on the stretch blow molder. KHS' NIR or near infrared technology especially provides a wide processing window for rPET, allowing preforms to be heated prior to the stretch blow molding process with pinpoint accuracy, for example. No major changes to the machinery or geometrical properties of the preforms were required. "This enabled us to achieve a very high level of process efficiency while retaining the container quality, thus fully meeting our customer's requirements," Kruse smiles.

rPET bottle also has barrier properties

Eckes-Granini will continue to benefit from FreshSafe PET barrier protection also after converting to 100% rPET. The company has relied on the environmentally-friendly system from KHS since 2006. The oxygen barrier of chemically pure glass, a wafer-thin coating on the inside of the PET bottle, not only effectively protects the juice from oxygen pickup but is also fully recyclable. The coating can be easily washed off Eckes-Granini bottles during the recycling process. The sustainable packaging alternative therefore permits pure-grade bottle-to-bottle recycling. "By combining rPET and future-proof product protection Eckes-Granini and KHS are again demonstrating their pioneering role for the circular economy," claims Kruse.

Furthermore, by the end of 2022 Eckes-Granini Deutschland intends to only use PET bottles made entirely of rPET for all brands, saving approximately 9,000 metric tons of new plastic per year by doing so. Partner KHS is only too pleased to help.

For more information go to: www.khs.com/en/media

Subscribe to our newsletter at:

<http://www.khs.com/en/media/publications/newsletter.html>

Pictures and captions

(Source: KHS Group/ Eckes-Granini)

Image download: <https://KHS.dphoto.com/album/a5b59l>

Picture captions

hohes C (Source: Eckes-Granini)

Eckes-Granini has made its packaging portfolio even more environmentally friendly with the help of the KHS Group. Since the middle of May its one-liter hohes C juice bottle has consisted entirely of recycled plastic (rPET).

InnoPET FreshSafe block

An InnoPET FreshSafe block from KHS has been in operation at Eckes-Granini since 2017.

FreshSafe PET

Eckes-Granini will continue to benefit from FreshSafe PET barrier protection also after converting to 100% rPET. The oxygen barrier of chemically pure glass, a wafer-thin coating on the inside of the PET bottle, not only effectively protects the juice from oxygen pickup but is also fully recyclable.

Hermann Naumann

“We want to be a pioneer as regards the circular economy and set a good example for the beverage industry,” states Hermann Naumann, plant manager for Eckes-Granini in Bad Fallingbostel in Lower Saxony.

Dr. Matthias Kruse

“By combining rPET and future-proof product protection Eckes-Granini and KHS are again demonstrating their pioneering role for the circular economy,” claims Dr. Matthias Kruse, head of PET Technology at KHS.

About Eckes-Granini

The Eckes company was founded in Nieder-Olm, Germany, by Peter Eckes in 1857. 1994 saw the takeover of Granini and withdrawal from the spirits business. The brand now focuses on juice, fruit beverages and smoothies. Each year 800 million liters of beverage are filled into PET and glass bottles, Tetrapak, bag-in-box and cans. According to the company's own information, Eckes-Granini pursues a long-term strategy of sustainable value creation and exports to 80 countries worldwide. Furthermore, all of the company's European facilities have been climate neutral since January 1, 2021.

About the KHS Group

The KHS Group is one of the world's leading manufacturers of filling and packaging systems for the beverage and liquid food industries. Besides the parent company (KHS GmbH) the group includes various subsidiaries outside Germany, with production sites in Ahmedabad (India), Waukesha (USA), Zinacantepec (Mexico), São Paulo (Brazil) and Suzhou (China). It also operates numerous sales and service centers worldwide. KHS manufactures modern filling and packaging systems for the high-capacity range at its headquarters in Dortmund, Germany, and at its factories in Bad Kreuznach, Kleve, Worms and Hamburg. The KHS Group is a wholly owned subsidiary of the SDAX-listed Salzgitter AG corporation. In 2020 the KHS Group and its 5,085 employees achieved a turnover of around €1.130 billion.

PR contact

KHS GmbH
Sebastian Deppe
(external PR consultant)
Phone: +49 251 6255 61243
Fax: +49 251 6255 6119
Email: presse@khs.com
Website: www.khs.com

Media contact

KHS GmbH
Eileen Rossmann
(external media consultant)
Phone: +49 711 26877 656
Fax: +49 711 26877 699
Email: eileen.rossmann@mmb-media.de
Website: www.khs.com