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#prosweetscologne

## Packaging and sustainability: ProSweets Cologne is placing the focus on alternative materials and flexible machine concepts



Biscuits, chocolate or filled chocolates have to be sustainably packaged today. Recyclability and optimum protection are at the top of the priority list regarding the requirements of alternative materials that comprise of renewable raw materials to a large extent. It is therefore all the more important that the packaging systems implemented display the necessary flexibility and process capability. ProSweets Cologne, which is being staged together with ISM at the Cologne fair grounds in the scope of the Sweet Week from 28 to 31 January 2024, demonstrates how this can be achieved.

ProSweets Cologne  
28.01. - 31.01.2024  
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The current packaging development trend is evident at ProSweets Cologne: Wherever it is possible to dispense with plastic for packaging, paper or cardboard are being used instead. There will be many examples of this during the Sweet Week at the Cologne fair grounds, especially in the halls of the co-staged ISM, the world's largest trade fair for sweets and snacks. As a duo, ISM and ProSweets Cologne, represent the entire industrial value chain of the international sweets and snacks industry. Increasing the recyclability and reducing the weight of the packaging are important aspects that are at the top of the agenda of the sweets industry. During the Sweet Week the industry's most important producers, suppliers and decision-makers all engage in an exchange in one location at the same time - to bring about synergies in the areas of networking, knowledge transfer and business.

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### Recyclable and functional alternatives to petrochemical plastics of the linear economy

"We very much welcome the consumers' increased awareness for sustainability," confirmed Prof. Dr. Markus Schmid. "This awareness leads to a heightened interest in environmentally-friendly packaging. However, it is important that well-founded decisions are taken concerning the choice of material. We often see that well-intended initiatives lead to hasty solutions without their functional restrictions and the actual ecological footprint being taken into full consideration. In our work at the Sustainable Packing Institute (SPI) at the Albstadt-Sigmaringen University we strive to develop holistic solutions that are both functional and sustainable. Our aim is to improve the life cycle assessment of bio-based plastics, i.e. by using residual plant matter and thus being able to offer really more sustainable packaging materials." The recent successes achieved in current and completed projects will be presented interactively in the scope of the Sustainable Packaging Special Show in Hall 10.1 during ProSweets Cologne.

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Peter Désilets, Chief Operating Officer of Pacoon Sustainability Concepts GmbH, knows which materials and technical innovations promote the change process. Whether for jelly items, toffee, caramel or bonbons: Whilst the consumers are pleased about the huge variety at the point of sale, the sweets and snacks manufacturers have to find the right interplay between packaging material and the packaging technology for their products. Materials that display the best possible machinability from the start are the prerequisite for this," according to the expert. Especially in the concept phase of a new machine there is a lot of scope for designing the packaging with sustainability in mind. Fibre-based packaging is a preferred and in many respects forward-looking option for Désilets: "As a contact person for the companies we are presenting among others selected samples of fibre-based packaging at the Sustainable Packaging Special Show."

### **Flexible machines for a wide variety of packaging**

The trend towards paper-based packaging and monomaterials made from plastic is clearly noticeable among the machine builders who are exhibiting at the fair grounds in Cologne. They are supporting the producers in switching over to recyclable alternatives with innovative technologies that enable more economical cuts, improved material utilisation and optimised formats. Solutions that are found at ProSweets Cologne also guarantee perfectly sealed packaging in the case of very thin films made of polypropylene or polyethylene. In this way, stand-up pouches for snacks can be recycled as a true "single material solution". Schubert offers its customers more flexibility for transverse sealing with the box motion unit in the Flowpacker, for example. The ultrasonic method makes it possible to seal more hermetically overall because the seam displays a consistent high quality across the entire width. Thick films that require longer sealing times can be easily processed as well as recyclable tubular bags made from monofilms or paper-based films.

In the meantime, sustainable materials can be processed in many other machines - what's more with full format flexibility. An example of this is the Kliklok ACE by Syntegon. The carton erector folds paper trays without glue and thus enables conventional plastic trays to be replaced by paper-based materials. Moreover, sustainable packaging is demonstrated in concrete form by the FPC5 of Theegarten Pactec. The modular packaging machine for the production of bars in a tubular bag has been further developed so that paper-based packaging can be processed: On the one hand using a conventional cold seal process, but on the other hand also using a much more complex heat seal process. The machine has a capacity of 90 metres per minute for paper-based packaging. That corresponds to 600 larger 40-gram bars of chocolate per minute. And Loesch's LTM-DUO fold wrapping machine is both flexible regarding the choice of format and the packaging material: From smaller bars through to 300-gram bars, from biofilm, to monofilm and composite material, through to aluminium foil, everything can be processed unproblematically. The outer wrapper of the bar of chocolate can be designed as a paper label from the stack or reel or also as a carton label. The examples show how the machine builders unite the themes sustainability and process integration with one other.

### **A look into the biocircular future**

Hence the turnaround towards sustainable packaging solutions is in full progress - this will also be demonstrated in the Cologne exhibition halls from 28 to 31 January

2024. Hon. Prof. Dr. Sascha Peters, founder of the Haute Innovation Agency will be addressing scenarios for the markets of the future at ProSweets Cologne in his lecture entitled "Biocircular packaging for the sweets industry." The solutions will also be presented in the scope of the Sustainable Packaging Special Show. The potential of regrowing alternatives to plastics is nowhere near exploited, he explained. Packaging that is made out of regrowing raw materials and residual organic materials are in demand. As a resource-saving alternative to conventional paper made of fresh fibres, grass paper is for instance developing into an ever-increasingly important packaging material. Depending on the usage it can replace the wood fibre content by up to 50 percent. "One can achieve an innovative advantage with alternative packaging," according to Peters.

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ProSweets Cologne is a trade fair for the entire industry-specific supply spectrum of the sweets and snacks industry. This ranges from the packaging of sweets and snacks and packaging technologies, to the raw materials and ingredients needed especially for the production of sweets and snacks, through to process technology. Secondary sections like refrigeration and air conditioning technology, operating and auxiliary equipment as well as the themes food safety and quality management for the sweets and snacks industry round off the portfolio.

**Koelnmesse - industry trade fairs for the food technology sector:** Koelnmesse is an international leader in organising trade fairs in the field of food and beverage processing. Anuga FoodTec and ProSweets Cologne are established, world-leading trade fairs, hosted in Cologne/Germany. In addition to the events at its Cologne headquarters, Koelnmesse also stages further food technology trade fairs with different sector-specific areas of focus and content in key markets across the world, including India, Italy and Colombia. These global activities enable Koelnmesse to offer its customers bespoke events and leading regional trade fairs in a variety of markets, thus creating the foundation for sustainable international business. Koelnmesse is also ideally positioned in the field of food and beverages with its leading international trade fairs Anuga and ISM and its global network of satellite events.

Further information: <https://www.prosweets.com/fair/industry-sectors>

#### **The next events:**

ProSweets Cologne - The international supplier fair for the sweets and snacks industry, Cologne 28.01. - 31.01.2024

Anuga FoodTec - International supplier fair for the food and beverages industry, Cologne 19.03. - 22.03.2024

Anuga FoodTec India - India's global gateway to cutting-edge technology for the food & beverage industry, Mumbai 28.08. - 30.08.2024

#### **Note for editorial offices:**

ProSweets Cologne photos are available in our image database on the Internet at [www.prosweets.com](http://www.prosweets.com) in the "News" section or [www.prosweets.com/imagedatabase](http://www.prosweets.com/imagedatabase)

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