

ProSweets confirms urge for flexibility

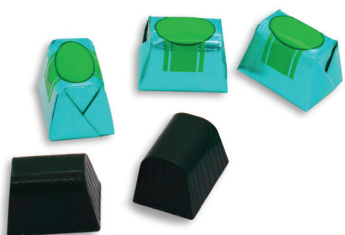


The trade returned to the aisles of Prosweets and ISM



After a two-year break, ProSweets, one of the world's leading trade fairs for sweets and snacks, was back in Cologne, Germany, staged parallel to ISM. Together both trade fairs cover the entire value chain in the production of sweets and snacks, a unique constellation worldwide. More than 1,000 exhibiting companies for ISM and 213 exhibitors for ProSweets. As expected, several important players were missing and the attendance was lower than the previous editions but today more than ever, the world belongs to those who dare and...were on stage. Dominique Huret at Cape Decision, Belgium reports

Chocolate products require technical precision and the ideal packaging material



Hardly any other industry introduces so many innovations onto the market as sweets and snacks. Manufacturers have to arouse buyers' interest with new recipes, flavours, ingredients and packaging. Pandemic has changed some consumers' habits and desires. To name a few: more online purchases meaning less impulse ones, search for snacks allowing sharing, socialising, amplified experiences, wish to consume local power food and a clear request for more sustainable eco-friendly product packaging. Equipment makers have work to do to keep up!

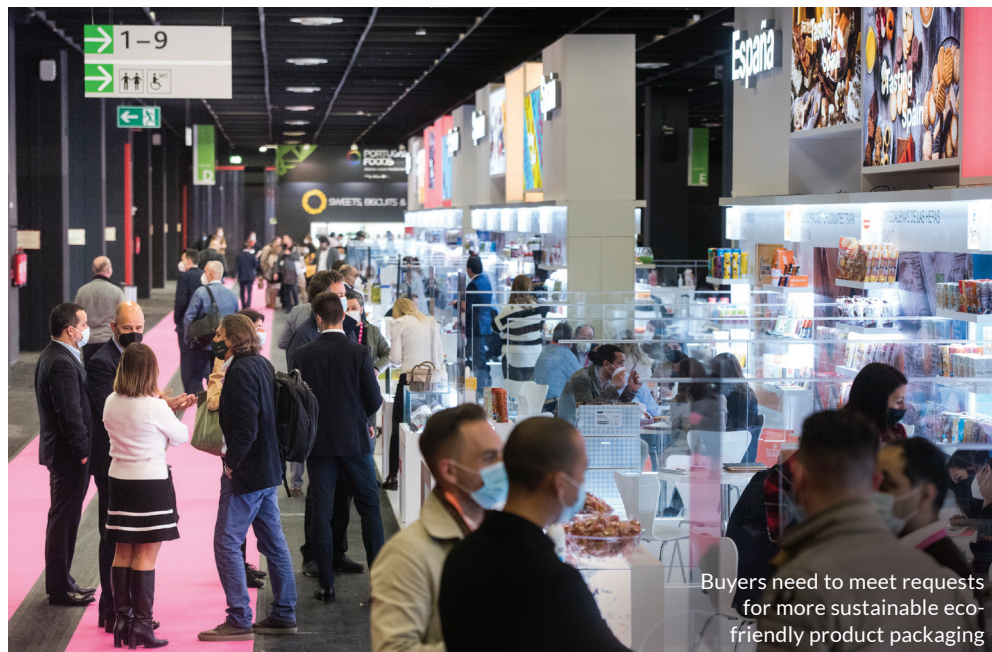
Packaging chocolate in a sustainable way – not a piece of cake

“Coming up with the optimal packaging for sensitive chocolate products requires an effective combination of technical precision and the ideal packaging material. Today most snack bars are packaged using composite materials, eg a base of plastic or paper in combination with an aluminium layer.

“These products can be easily packaged by fold wrapping and do not require any additional securing by sealing or glue. However, packaging materials made of composite materials are not recyclable



Manufacturers have to arouse buyers' interests with a variety of ideas



Buyers need to meet requests for more sustainable eco-friendly product packaging

packaging specialists have developed a “suction supported sealing” technology. With a sealing station located directly after the wrapping or packaging station. Negative pressure causes the package to be sucked onto the sealing stamp. In this way, there is no direct contact between the packaging and the product during the sealing process. The sealing seam only comes into contact with the product again after it has sufficiently cooled,” explains Rustler.

The packaging equipment's future will be modular

Theegarden also unveiled the CHS, its modular high-performance packaging machine for chocolate products featuring the complex “envelope fold” packaging type. Small chocolate pralines are packed effectively at a rate of 800 products per minute. But the CHS is particularly flexible when it comes to the nine types of wrapping style it can handle: double twist, protected twist, top twist, side twist, foil wrap, bottom fold, side fold, >>



Modular high-performance packaging machines pack at high rates

and are therefore not sustainable in view of market developments,” explains Markus Rustler CEO of Dresden-based Theegarden-Pactec.

But the switch to recyclable mono-materials for sweets and chocolate individual packaging processes bears many challenges. An important one is that paper and mono-material polymers (eg PP, PET) materials have poor dead-fold properties, ie, the packaging must be closed and fixed after folding by sealing or with the aid of glue so that it cannot open again. Paper wraps, especially the one for chocolate products, face other issues linked amongst others to coating and seal ability. For this reason, for years many well-known brand products use a combination of two packaging materials – aluminium paper laminate and plastic packaging. This is first required as a barrier to protect the sensitive chocolate products during the actual packaging process, while the outer wrap uses contact sealing technology. The chocolate could otherwise be damaged by the heat that is generated or by the sealing tools used. As an alternative to this process, packaging has then to be glued with hot melt.

“But to be in line with the times and the shift to paper-based packaging, Theegarten-Pactec



Sacmi Packaging and Chocolate has recently unveiled a multi-style wrapping machine

Machines can be adapted to wrap irregularly shaped products



Vienna fruit fold and now envelope fold as well. The machine allows the wrapping style and format to be switched in just four hours, by one person, with extended length and width.

Sacmi Packaging and Chocolate unveiled for the first time at a trade fair its HY7, a multi-style wrapping machine.

“The system under the arle & Montanari brands offers an output of 700 pralines per minute and master formats’ change easily. The individual servo-driven parts of the folding unit can be adapted to praline shape and wrap very delicate or irregularly shaped products.



Hibbi The Hippo chocolate bars

Also essential for our customer is their need to wrap with the latest generation of environmentally friendly films,” explains Marco Baldassari, sales manager wrapping from Sacmi.

Ulma, another expert in packaging technologies, is confirming the flexible trends. One of its most advanced developments is dedicated to package nougat. With a variety of flavours and ingredients nougat is nowadays often proposed in a flowpack.

“Ulma packaging process consists of a flow pack machine that prepares the packaging. Unlike traditional flow pack packaging which is completely sealed using a lengthwise seal or two crosswise seals, our equipment leaves the



Flow pack machines are highly versatile offering speed and simplicity

packaging machine with one end open, so that it can subsequently undergo a vacuum packing process, hence prolonging the product’s shelf life. The flow pack vacuum packing solution is highly versatile and suitable for different-sized products. The speed and simplicity of format changes in this type of machine is another benefit. Then a flow pack machine with an upper reel allows the product to be packaged without any need for primary packaging. This results in less film needed,” says Bjorn Willems, sales Ulma. [F2U](#)



Packaging words of wisdom – Markus Rustler CEO, Theegarden-Pactec

Newly appointed president of Interpack comments: “The pandemic has shown that packaging is not only aesthetic and sales booster, it protects the product and guarantees hygienic conditions. However the necessity of packaging is no reason not to work on saving it. Our equipment and our industry as a whole has to work on processing ever thinner materials and progress in mono-materials easier to recycle. My work at Interpack is not limited to a one-week trade fair in Dusseldorf every three years. In between, there are lots of work in forums discussing and building the future of packaging. Being involved in shaping this future in close contact with many packaging companies is a large part of my motivation to take on the role of president.”