

PRESS RELEASE

Packaging law passed by German government

Extended mandatory deposit approved: KHS provides systems for the closed recycling loop

- KHS endorses changes to the German Packaging Law
- Systems supplier supports circular economy with its technologies
- FreshSafe PET prevents contamination of the recycling loop

Dortmund, May 25, 2021 – It comes as no surprise to learn that the majority of parliamentarians in Germany’s Bundestag have now finally approved the changes to the German Packaging Law. This means that the extension of the mandatory deposit to include PET juice bottles will ultimately come into force as of January 2022. Stricter regulations on recyclability and the amount of recycle in PET bottles will also apply in the future. This is where technology from the KHS Group comes into play. The company provides tried-and-tested, future-proof systems and solutions to strengthen the closed recycling loop as now specified by law, among them its FreshSafe PET glass coating technology. This sustainable packaging alternative with a high level of product protection enables pure-grade bottle-to-bottle recycling without contaminating the recycling loop.

“Producing designs suitable for recycling, especially as regards single-use PET bottles, is now even more important following the decision made by the German government,” says Philipp Langhammer, product manager for barrier technology at KHS. Implementing the new legal requirements is a huge challenge for all those involved, however – from retailer to recycler. For instance, juice and nectar bottles made of PET that may contain additives

with oxygen absorbers can no longer be collected through the yellow recycling sack system but are to be returned to the recycling loop. However, these additives make them more difficult to recycle than a normal PET bottle, in turn complicating joint further processing of both bottle types. “With our FreshSafe PET barrier technology, an interior SiOx coating of chemically pure glass, we provide an established system for this relevant problem. It makes bottle recycling much easier as the coating can be simply washed off during the recycling process,” Langhammer explains.

Of great significance

By including PET bottles previously not subject to a deposit in the system, it is extremely likely that more rPET will be available to the bottle-to-bottle loop – at least this is what many stakeholders expect. According to a study by packaging market research institute GVM from 2018¹, to date about 10% of all PET bottles each year are still lost to the closed recycling loop due to the limitations of the mandatory deposit system. This amounts to approximately 40,000 metric tons of plastic per annum that cannot be reused to make food packaging. In Langhammer’s view, extending the mandatory deposit system is thus a leverage factor that can be used to further increase the average amount of recyclate in PET bottles. This not only promotes sustainable processes but also increases consumer acceptance of this material. Furthermore, bottle-to-bottle recycling provides a number of benefits regarding the carbon footprint, says Langhammer. “rPET has a balance that

¹ Gesellschaft für Verpackungsmarktforschung (2018): “Aufkommen und Verwertung von PET-Flaschen in Deutschland 2017” (occurrence and recycling of PET bottles in Germany). Study carried out on behalf of Forum PET within the German Association of Plastics Packaging and Films.

is up to 60% better than new material in this respect.” This is why KHS welcomes the changes to the German Packaging Law.

With its environmentally-friendly packaging and resource-saving machine technology, the systems supplier helps its customers to make their production processes ever more sustainable. The packaging experts at KHS believe it is important to effectively close recycling loops. KHS’ InnoPET Blomax Series V PET stretch blow molder therefore processes preforms made of up to 100% recyclate, for instance. If required, it can be supplemented by the digital, automated Unit Mold Control system that can better regulate the variance of the rPET, among other things. Another ecofriendly option from KHS is the Beyond Juice 100%-recyclate bottle concept with a FreshSafe PET interior coating in combination with Nature MultiPack from KHS, a container system that holds bottles together with dots of adhesive which are strong and secure yet easy to remove. This reduces the amount of packaging waste by up to 90%. All KHS shrink packers can also process film made entirely of recyclate. “We’re continuously developing our technologies further with an eye to sustainability and consistently support the idea of the circular economy,” states Langhammer.

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Beyond Juice

With its FreshSafe PET barrier system the Beyond Juice bottle provides a high level of product and freshness protection for sensitive beverages. Thanks to the Nature MultiPack packaging system the bottles are held together by dots of adhesive which are strong and secure yet easy to remove.

Multipack made of recycled film

By processing film made of 100% recyclate on all KHS shrink packers, the KHS Group has created a further sustainable alternative for secondary packaging.

InnoPET Blomax V

Numerous innovations make the fifth generation of the InnoPET Blomax the most sustainable and powerful of its kind.

Philipp Langhammer

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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.

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