

Medium: European Dairy Magazine

Category: Trade Press

Circulation: 6.400 / bi-monthly

Distribution: international/Europe

Date: March 2015



Convenience trend represents a challenge for packaging



9th Round Table of Cofresco Forum focused on effects of ongoing convenience trends on household packaging

What effect is the trend towards convenience having on food safety and household packaging? How can we protect food and guarantee its safety? How are packaging designers reacting to the trend? Are new materials available which meet the needs of these modern lifestyle trends? These were some of the questions discussed at the 9th Cofresco Forum Round Table in Chipping Campden, UK, on 27th November 2014. The Cofresco Forum and its partner Campden BRI had invited guests to the event on "Food Protection and Convenience - Trends and Innovations in Household Packaging".

numerous test facilities of Campden BRI for checking packaging and verifying food preparation instructions, but were also invited to act as candidates for eye-tracking tests. During a hands-on session on "Inclusive Design", the participants experienced how physical impairments, such as colour blindness or arthritis, actually feel and how they impede the handling of packaging. In the following you will find a short summary of the sessions:

Robert Broughton
Product Safety Manager, Amcor Flexibles

"Overview of interactive packaging trends"
David Potter, Interactive Product Solutions, Walton-on-Thames, UK

The age of the smartphone, together with technological innovations such as printable

"Less and less time for planning and cooking meals and ever greater expectations regarding food quality is just one of the issues resulting from the convenience trend which we investigated at the 9th Round Table of the Cofresco Forum," explains Martin Rogall, Head of Research & Development Europe, Cofresco. David Potter, Managing Director of Interactive Product Solutions, provided a fascinating and much discussed overview of the possibilities offered by interactive packaging. Professor Noëlle Billon, MINES ParisTéCh, CEMEF, France, focused on the processing of new polymers which can meet changing requirements. Helen Brown's (Campden BRI) lecture on the growing challenge of allergens centred on protecting food from various contaminants. This topic is becoming increasingly important for industry and households alike, where contamination can easily occur during food preparation and storage. Rob Morland of the Cambridge University Centre for Business Innovation illustrated that people have differing needs when it comes to handling packaging and gave tips on how packaging design should support customers rather than irritate them. The final lecture focused on food safety. Florian Brodtkorb from the University of Münster presented research

results on imminently antimicrobial packaging which aims to provide greater food safety and extend the shelf life of meat and meat products.

The participants of the 9th Cofresco Forum Round Table were given plenty of opportunity to discover new developments at first hand. Not only were they able to inspect the

The speakers and hosts of this year's Cofresco Forum Round Table (back from left: Robert Broughton, Hans Arning, Florian Brodtkorb, David Potter, Martin Rogall, front: Helen Brown, Robert Morland, Prof. Noëlle Billon)





electronics, augmented reality and near field communications (NFC), offer significant potential for food, health and wellbeing brands to develop interactive packaging which establish channels of direct communication with consumers, enhancing both nutrition and brand values.

This session explored the latest consumer trends, technological developments and discussed how brands can realise the potential of experiential packaging.

"Processing new materials for packaging"

Noëlle Billon, Mines-Paristech - PSL Research University - CEMEF [Centre for Materials Forming] - Sophia Antipolis, France

Polymer processing is far from being only the shaping of a part. From the material point of view, it allows texturing and controlling of the microstructure.

This microstructure will hopefully meet complex and demanding requirements for the final packaging. From the description of the different steps of usual polymer processing for packaging, such as thermoforming and ISBM, the lecture will consider the physical aspects that are involved.

After a rapid overview of what we've learnt from past polymers, the focus was on the necessary steps to be taken before new polymers, i.e. bio-based biopolymers, can be used for packaging.

In a hands-on session at Campen BRI's test laboratories, participants were able to check the sealing quality of packaging



During a hands-on session on "Inclusive Design", participants were given special glasses to simulate sight impairments and special gloves to simulate arthritis

"Designing packaging that delights more customers and frustrates fewer"

Rob Morland, Cambridge University, Centre for Business Innovation, UK

There are already 130 million people over 50 years old in the European Union – by 2020 one in two European adults will be over this age. The demographic change of an ageing population brings a major opportunity for companies to develop products and services that better meet the needs of this growing and affluent sector. But designing products, and their packaging, that this population loves to use is not easy.

Most UK organisations are familiar with their obligations under the Equality Act towards people with disabilities. But this applies only to those who have a "physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on the ability to do normal daily activities".

What about the millions of other people, especially the elderly, who don't meet this criterion, but still suffer from multiple minor impairments to vision, hearing, dexterity, mobility or cognition? For these people, many products and their packaging are a source of continuing frustration. In too many cases they will avoid buying products whose packages they find difficult or impossible to open without help from tools, or friends.

Most packaging designers are young and suffer from none of these impairments. How can they put themselves in the shoes, or more correctly in the bodies, of people three times their age? This presentation provides an answer that has already worked for the likes of Nestlé and BT. It could work for you too.

The University of Cambridge Engineering Design Centre (EDC) is one of the world's leading design research groups and has worked for more than ten years to achieve a comprehensive understanding of what it takes to design inclusive products.

With sponsorship from BT and others, the EDC has developed a practical Inclusive Design Toolkit which includes all the resources needed for designers to create products that will delight more consumers



Varying hand widths and lengths, combined with the respective strength, make it either impossible - or child's play - to open certain packaging (photographs: Cofresco Forum)

and exclude as few as is reasonably practical for the product concerned. Working together with the EDC, the Centre for Business Innovation has launched and run two consortium programmes for leading companies around Europe that want to learn how to design inclusive products and packaging which will help them capture increased market share by delighting more customers and frustrating fewer.

"Allergens. A growing challenge?"

Dr. Helen Brown, Campden BRI, Biochemistry Section Manager, UK

Food allergy or food intolerance is an issue that affects a large number of people. According to a recent YouGov survey (September 2014), over one in five of the UK population consider themselves to have a food allergy or intolerance. Nearly a third of households in the UK are affected as they contain someone who has a food allergy or food intolerance. The consequences for the individual and the household are the same regardless of whether the condition is medically or self-diagnosed.

Avoidance of food products containing the allergen is the main way to manage food allergy/intolerance. In some households this means that everyone in the household adopts the same behaviour as the sufferer and avoids the food to which the individual in the household is allergic or

intolerant. However it appears that the majority of households, 'fit' around the individual with the allergy or intolerance, eating the foods they want to eat rather than all adopting the behaviour of the allergy sufferer. The household is challenged to 'manage' the food ingredients and products containing the allergens. The challenges include preventing cross contamination during food preparation and serving, thorough cleaning, and avoiding accidental use of ingredients due to poor or incorrect labelling.

Food packaging plays an essential role in the containment and segregation of allergen and non-allergen containing ingredients. Considerations of the requirements of households that contain food allergy or intolerance sufferers present opportunities for food packaging innovations.

Cofresco Forum

Cofresco Frischhalteprodukte GmbH & Co. KG founded the Cofresco Forum in 2001. Originally named "Cofresco Institute", the internationally aligned Forum was founded with the aim of driving research in the field of household packaging for food.

The first few years were dominated by the establishment of a network of researchers and research institutions. These activities were supported by the presentation of the Forum's own research award.

Various research projects have been funded over the years. The spectrum of topics ranged from active packaging and alternative food storage methods, to product applications which are easier to use, and environmentally friendly packaging.

This has resulted in the creation of an international platform for scientists and other interested parties which has presented and discussed a variety of ideas and research approaches in this particular field and led to the further exchange of ideas and concrete projects.

This website serves as a key instrument of the Cofresco Forum and aims to initiate further interesting and individual cooperation projects. However, the Cofresco Forum also attaches great importance to personal meetings between members of the network. A major element of the Forum's work will therefore be the regular hosting of scientific round-table meetings on the subject of household packaging for food.

The Cofresco Forum website is not only a research tool for experts in the field of packaging and food science, but offers them an opportunity to present their work and exchange ideas. The topics are wide-ranging: from nutrition in connection with packaging, to the preparation and storage of food, as well as innovative packaging materials and technologies. Other areas of interest range from sustainability and health, to legal regulations.

Partner of the 9th Cofresco Forum Round Table

Campden BRI

Campden BRI is the UK's largest independent membership-based organisation carrying out research and development for the food and drinks industry worldwide. It is committed to providing industry with the research, technical and advisory services needed to ensure product safety and quality, process efficiency and product and process innovation.

The R&D programme reflects needs identified by industrial members and provides a constantly renewable knowledge base for technology transfer.

A continuous programme of investment ensures leading-edge processing and analytical facilities for research and contract work. Campden BRI maintains close working relationships with industry through frequent meetings with its thirteen member interest groups.