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PRESS RELEASE



UK reprocessing plant to boost beverage carton recycling rates

Partnership between ACE UK members, Tetra Pak, SIG Combibloc and Elopak, with Sonoco Alcore

The Alliance for Beverage Cartons & the Environment (ACE) UK has today signed an agreement with paper and packaging producer, Sonoco Alcore, to establish the UK's only beverage carton reprocessing facility at its UK plant near Halifax, West Yorkshire.

The plant will be operational from 2013 and capable of recycling 25,000 tonnes of cartons sorted from household and commercial waste streams by local authorities and their waste management contractors.

Collection coverage for beverage cartons is already high. As a result of close working between ACE UK and local authorities, 89% of households can recycle cartons – either through kerbside collection or through the industry's own bring-bank system – compared to just 20% in 2006. Kerbside coverage in the UK has increased tenfold from 4% of local authorities in 2006 to 43% in 2012.

As the UK mill offers numerous benefits to local authorities, kerbside coverage and carton recycling rates are now expected to increase even more dramatically. These benefits include creating a UK market for the recycling of used beverage cartons and enabling those local authorities with no-export policies on waste to recycle cartons in the UK – diverting material from landfill and avoiding landfill tax¹, gate fees and associated greenhouse gas emissions.

In addition, the mill provides an opportunity for local authorities to reduce the road and rail miles travelled by used beverage cartons for recycling: currently cartons collected by ACE UK are reprocessed in mills in mainland Europe². It will also be of interest to those local authorities that prefer to have a defined route for their recycling streams, rather than having used cartons sold on the open market, usually to mills overseas.

Richard Hands, Chief Executive of ACE UK, comments: *“This decision underlines the firm commitment of our members - Tetra Pak, SIG Combibloc and Elopak - to constantly improve the environmental performance of their beverage cartons. The already low carbon footprint will become even lower, valuable materials will go back into the UK economy and local authorities can meet the expectations of many householders that their waste should be reprocessed in this country. We are confident that by the end of Year 1 (December 2013) a further ten local authorities will have started collecting cartons in their kerbside service, sending them to the new mill for recycling by ACE UK and Sonoco Alcore.”*

The high-quality wood fibres found in beverage cartons are flexible and strong, and can be recycled making them a valuable raw material for new paperboard products. The Sonoco Alcore plant will recycle the reprocessed paperboard layers into consumer and industrial products, such as the tubes for cling film and the cores for rolls of textiles.



Adam Wood, Vice President Industrial Converting, Sonoco Alcore, Europe comments: *“Our company has a long history of recycling and reuse, and this opportunity with ACE UK strengthens our focus on sustainability. This partnership provides us with the fibre we need to produce our engineered tubes and cores, and we are looking forward to receiving a growing stream of cartons.*

“Additionally, as an integrated manufacturer, it is important for us to know our material sources and we know ACE UK members are committed to sourcing from responsibly managed forests. This partnership has brought real business benefits to our UK operations while supporting our sustainable business practices.”

ACE UK’s dedicated recycling team will continue to find other ways of collecting, including on-the-go consumption on transport systems or in the street, as well as through the catering sector.

Linda Crichton, Head of Collections & Quality Programme at WRAP, comments: *“This announcement of a new UK-based reprocessing capacity for beverage cartons is welcomed by WRAP. With the steady increase in collections of cartons for recycling over recent years the ability to now recycle these in the UK is good news for local authorities and their waste management contractors. I’m sure it will also encourage others to add cartons to their kerbside recycling services.”*

To find out more about beverage carton recycling, visit: www.ace-uk.co.uk

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Notes to editors:

¹ Indeed, if the UK plant runs at full capacity of 25,000 tonnes, this will potentially reduce landfill taxes and gate fees (average) by £3,400,000 based on landfill tax for 2012 and £3,600,000 for 2013.

² Taking into account all of the UK collection hubs, and based on sending the cartons to the Italian paper mill, this would be an average annual saving of 41,378 road miles which is an average annual saving of 178 tonnes of CO₂. And with the saving of 110,400 annual rail miles this will save a further 110 tonnes of CO₂. A total saving therefore of about 288 tonnes of CO₂.

About ACE UK

The Alliance for Beverage Cartons and the Environment (ACE UK) represents the beverage carton industry in the UK, which supplies cartons for milk, fruit juice and an increasingly wide range of products including pasta sauces and soup.

Formed in 2007, its mission is to support environmental policies, activities and legislation in the field of packaging, waste, recycling and recovery; contribute to UK environmental policy, activities and legislation related to beverage carton packaging, in particular the promotion of renewable resources; and communicate the beverage carton’s environmental credentials.

Members include beverage carton producers for the UK market, specifically Tetra Pak, SIG Combibloc and Elopak. In addition about 98% of the paperboard used by ACE UK members in beverage cartons in Europe is produced by Stora Enso in Skoghall (Sweden) and Imatra (Finland), and Korsnäs in Gavle (Sweden), who also support ACE UK.

For more information please visit www.ace-uk.co.uk or contact:

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