

Press Release

Excellence in packaging: lightweight returnable glass bottle from Vetropack receives WorldStar Award

Bülach, March 27, 2024 – The World Packaging Organisation has presented Vetropack's lightweight, returnable Echovai bottles with a WorldStar Award in the "Packaging Materials & Components" category. It is, however, not just the jury that is impressed with the robust, yet light bottles: following their debut at the Mohrenbrauerei brewery, they have now become a standard solution for the Austrian brewing industry.

The World Packaging Organisation (WPO) has been honouring the most innovative, creative and sustainable packaging with the prestigious WorldStar Awards every year since 1970. In 2024, 435 packaging solutions from over 40 countries entered the race – among the winners are Vetropack's Echovai bottles, the world's first thermally hardened, lightweight returnable glass bottles, produced with a process specially developed by the company. "We have been researching our Echovai process for almost ten years. I am proud and very grateful to the team at our Innovation Centre for the excellent result," emphasises Johann Reiter, CEO of Vetropack. Last year, the lightweight glass bottles had already won in two categories at the Swiss Packaging Awards and thus qualified for participation in the WorldStar Awards.

In the pilot project with the Austrian Mohrenbrauerei, several million of the bottles were produced and tested. The result: the 0.33-liter returnables cut weight by around 30 per cent compared to standard returnable bottles. "This had a significant impact on logistics. Combined with the use of solar power, we were able to reduce CO₂ emissions per bottle by a full 75 per cent," Andreas Linder, Head of Marketing at Mohrenbrauerei, reports. The lightweight glass bottles are also considerably more resistant to abrasion than their conventional counterparts. This combination convinced the WPO judges due to its economic and ecological advantages.

Echovai bottles as standard solution for Austria

Since first using them in the pilot project, the Mohrenbrauerei has expanded the range of beers available in Echovai returnable bottles. Vetropack has further developed the lightweight bottles and made them accessible to a wider user group: In Austria, Echovai returnable bottles were introduced as an environmentally friendly standard solution for the local brewing industry. Returnable standard bottles, which do not have to be transported back to specific bottlers, reduce CO₂ emissions. The light weight of the Echovai bottles makes the new Austrian system particularly effective. Together with Brau Union Österreich and other stakeholders, Vetropack has also coordinated the bottle, crate, and pallet design, taking into account the associated logistics. This results in a well-running, frictionless overall system. The first user of the system is the Brau Union, which now fills "Gösser Biostoff Lager" in Vetropack's lightweight returnable standard bottles.



Image 1:

The World Packaging Organisation presented Vetropack's Echovai lightweight returnable glass bottles with a WorldStar Award in the "Packaging Materials & Components" category for their ecological benefits and outstanding material properties.



Image 2:

Echovai bottles, the world's first thermally hardened, lightweight returnable glass bottles are not only robust and resistant to abrasion, but also around 30 per cent lighter than conventional returnable bottles.



Image 3:

Andreas Linder, Head of Marketing at Mohrenbrauerei, played a key role in the implementation of the pilot project and the expansion of Echovai to other Mohrenbrauerei beers.



Image 4:

Available since March 2024: “Gösler Biostoff Lager” in the new Austrian standard returnable bottles from Vetropack.

About Vetropack

The Vetropack Group numbers among Europe's leading manufacturers of glass packaging for the food and beverage industry, with around 3,800 employees and net sales of CHF 898.8 million in 2023. Vetropack has state-of-the-art production plants as well as sales and distribution offices in Switzerland, Austria, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Slovakia, Ukraine, Italy, the Republic of Moldova and Romania.

Through our work, we enable people to enjoy food and beverages in the most elegant, safest and most responsible way. This is because glass is a sustainable packaging solution – and the perfect material to ensure that food is packaged safely. With our holistic Service plus+ approach, we help our customers to optimise their value chains and guarantee consumers' safety. To this end, we endeavour to build close and long-lasting relationships. Guided by our understanding of environmental responsibility and cost efficiency, we aim to minimise our carbon footprint throughout the supply chain, and we are committed to recycling as the key to optimising product life-cycles.

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