

Sonoco Invests in Higher Production Capacity for Advanced Injection-Molded Rigid Plastic Packaging

September 8, 2016 3:00 PM ET

HOCKENHEIM, Germany, Sept. 08, 2016 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Sonoco Europe has expanded its production sites for injection-molded rigid plastic packaging in Zwenkau, Germany. By investing approximately 8 million Euros and adding 25 new employees, the Hockenheim-based company aims to increase production capacity and improve the location's energy efficiency. In Zwenkau, Sonoco produces injection-molded rigid plastic packaging using advanced in-mold labelling (IML) technology. IML technology allows for the creation of highly decorated, visually appealing plastic containers particularly suitable for uniquely showcasing spreads, sausage products, fish and dairy produce. Additionally, Sonoco produces IML lids for rigid paper containers in Zwenkau.

Expanding product lines and staff

By expanding its two production sites in Zwenkau, Sonoco significantly increases its production capacities for injection-molded rigid plastic packaging. Until recently, the site known as Zwenkau II was primarily used to provide additional capacity to assist with peaks in production demand. Since June 2016, the Company has continuously operated on a three-shift basis. The workforce has increased from 75 to 100 staff, and approximately 8 million Euros were invested in the facility expansion. All lines are now supplied with resin directly and fully automatically from on-site granule silos. The company further established additional office space and a [high-bay warehouse](#).

"The sites Zwenkau I and II were already among the most modern and efficient plants in our industry," said Séan Cairns, general manager and division vice president, Sonoco Consumer Products Europe. "With the current investments, we will further extend this lead and react to the rapidly increasing demand for modern plastic packaging in the food market."

Outstanding tactile and visual effects: high-quality decoration with IML technology

An increasing number of food manufacturers use Sonoco's decorated IML injection-molded rigid plastic packaging for moist and sensitive food products. Thanks to the IML technology, production and labelling of containers are combined in one single process step. The label is injected directly into the packaging wall and is preferably made from the same plastic substance as the container. Both components merge during processing – an advantage in terms of recycling as there is no need to separate materials. Most importantly, IML opens up a wide range of design possibilities and outstanding tactile and visual effects. Plastic containers can be designed in various shapes and colors, including transparent windows and photorealistic images.

Thanks to Sonoco's patented PermaSafe[®] technology, these advantages are also available for sterilized and pasteurized food. These types of products were usually packaged in glass or tin cans. As the "reinvention of the can," PermaSafe[®] packaging is practically impermeable to oxygen and water vapor.

"Due to the PermaSafe[®] technology, our plastic containers durability rivals that of tin cans," said Andreas Rothschink, sales director of plastic packaging, Sonoco. "At the same time, they offer more decoration possibilities and higher convenience for consumers."

As opposed to metal cans, the plastic packaging alternative features a snap lid. It makes the container resealable, and consumers can eat the product in portions.

Apart from complete plastic packaging solutions, Sonoco also produces IML lids for rigid paper containers in Zwenkau. The lids can be individually designed with IML technology and significantly expand the packaging's decoration area. The IML lids are available for round and rectangular rigid paper containers.

About Sonoco Europe

Sonoco's more than 70 operations in Europe provide customers with solutions in Global Rigid Paper and Closures; Global Plastics; Packaging Services and Graphics Management. Offering a range of packaging materials, packaging services,

technical disciplines, material science and manufacturing capabilities, Sonoco takes a holistic approach to providing customized solutions that meet our customers' unique needs. To learn more, visit www.sonocoeurope.com.

About Sonoco

Founded in 1899, Sonoco (NYSE:SON) is a global provider of a variety of consumer packaging, industrial products, protective packaging, and displays and packaging supply chain services. With annualized net sales of nearly \$5 billion, the Company has 20,800 employees working in more than 330 operations in 34 countries, serving some of the world's best known brands in some 85 nations. Sonoco is a proud member of the 2015/2016 Dow Jones Sustainability World Index. For more information on the Company, visit our website at www.sonoco.com.

Contact: Brian Risinger
+843-383-7509
brian.risinger@sonoco.com



Sonoco Products Company