



Extrupet: Changing the Way South Africans Recycle

Polyethylene Terephthalate, more commonly known as PET, is an incredibly diverse and useful plastic, used in clothing, containers, and beverage packaging. It has become a ubiquitous part of the world, which means that the safe disposal and recycling of it is very important in today's needs for an increasingly green society.

Extrupet has been operating in South Africa for over two decades answering the call to recycle PET bottles. The company, based in Wadeville Gauteng, is an advanced producer of rPET resin in South Africa. Originally they introduced Vacurema technology and thereafter, a Starlinger System in 2014, which allowed them to grow into food grade bottle-to-bottle recycling: now a core focus of the business.

The Starlinger System is approved by several multinational corporations and is used for the efficient and easy recycling of PET. With these systems and dedication to the South African environment, Extrupet can recycle over 2.5 million plastic bottles every day.

Trends: The dairy industry, particularly UHT applications, uses various kinds of packaging. Some a combination of aluminium, plastic and paper (multilayer packaging) or opaque plastic.

There are claims that this packaging is recyclable, but Russell Westley, the Key Accounts Manager of Extrupet, states, "The scale required to recycle these cartons successfully does not exist, so if you are a producer of this kind of

packaging in South Africa, it will not be collected and will ultimately end up on landfill." He further states that the mass recycling of these packages is possible, as, "There are some countries that have an opaque recycling stream. However, this is normally closed loop and/or has a certain amount of both volume and end product outlets that make this a viable recycling option." Unfortunately in South Africa this is not the case.

So why are some converters looking at PET instead of other packaging substrates? While glass does seem to be a solution, the carbon footprint of the glass manufacturing process needs to be taken into account.

It takes more carbon dioxide to produce glass than it does to produce plastic. Additionally, the fact that glass weighs more than plastic, which increases the emissions created when transporting the material, and ultimately results in plastic being the more environmentally friendly option.

With the introduction of the bottle-to-bottle recycling, Extrupet is reusing plastic consistently, meaning that there are less carbon emissions in the supply chain, as well as fewer plastic products ending up in landfills. The rPET

produced by Extrupet is used in many packs, mostly for highly specified food applications. In fact, at the time, Extrupet was one of the first recyclers in the world to be certified by the British Retail Consortium (BRC). These product certifications are just incredible with their material also having European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) approvals.

With the uses of PET expanding every day, Extrupet hopes to continue the good work of recycling within the South African plastics space. Each bottle collected adds jobs throughout the supply chain and helps our country deal with the ever-growing problem of climate change. Keep it up Extrupet!

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We are here to take a stand

Today more than ever, with the global waste crisis, we are taking up the challenge to recycle as many PET bottles as possible. In so doing, we are helping the environment, enhancing the packaging industry and creating jobs all at the same time.

Contact us today to find out more information.

Better for the environment and our economy.
Putting the future in your hands.

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Our accreditations



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