



AA

We couldn't keep it bottled up!

For a third successive time, Extrupet reached a significant milestone by achieving an AA audit grade for BRC Global Standards for Packaging and Packaging Materials. The BRC Global Standard for Food Safety is a framework to manage product safety, integrity, legality and quality, and the operational controls for these criteria, in the food and food ingredient manufacturing, processing and packing industry. The AA rating is the highest grade possible for an announced audit.

This BRC rating, together with the value proposition of PhoenixPET, has again changed the landscape of the local PET industry and has opened up new opportunities to our customers, brand owners, retailers and stake holders.



Product of



Food Grade Plant

Proudly associated with



SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL BOTTLED WATER ASSOCIATION



Contact: 011 865 8360 | Email: info@phoenixpet.co.za | Website: www.phoenixpet.co.za

Pushing world-class quality frontiers

Shaun Bower, Extrupet's national sales & marketing manager, explains how PET recycling has evolved, the organisation's dedication to world-class quality, its expansion plans and why implementing design for recycling principles are key for improved circular economy performance.

When and why did Extrupet start up in South Africa?

The business originally started over 20 years ago to assist the local PET industry with answering government's call to demonstrate extended producer responsibility by developing a strategy for the collection, processing and recycling of post-consumer PET bottles. It soon evolved into a recycled PET (rPET) supplier, servicing both locally-based multinational brands and the largest preform converters on the African continent.

How has Extrupet evolved and Phoenix PET® become a flagship commercial rPET brand used in 100% mineral water applications?

When we reflect on some of our key moments, most of them were created by team members who were never comfortable with the status quo and had the desire to keep pushing boundaries. For instance, our 2011 British Retail Consortium accreditation was at that time, a world-first for any recycling company.

The evolution of Phoenix PET® into a resin that can be used for mineral water has been a steep learning curve over the past two years. The challenges around AA levels and controlling IV in bottles for other beverages are tough but increase exponentially for water applications. The associated costs and quality control measures required incredible application from our technical teams.

What are the driving forces behind a PET recycler implementing four quality certification standards?

All top-performing companies are driven to continually improve and achieve recognition for the quality products they produce within their chosen fields. Growing into the challenge of each accreditation (ISO 9001, BRC and EFSA) has, thankfully, become a habit.

Most recently, our operations in Cape Town were awarded Global Recycle Standard (GRS) certification. This allows our resin to be qualified globally against recycled content, social and environmental practice and chemical restriction requirements. A significant development, as we continue to expand – Phoenix PET® is fast becoming a resin that can be used in markets across the globe.

What can you share about Extrupet's expansion plans?

Vacurema and Starlinger lines currently produce most of our food-grade Phoenix PET®. The expansion

centres on adding further Starlinger capacity and facilitating increased volumes of food-grade rPET as a much-needed addition to global supply. All going well, the project will be completed in Q4 of 2020.

The food-grade recycling side of our business has certainly been more difficult to do consistently well than the PET strapping and fibre production, although each has its own unique challenges.

How has the Covid-19 pandemic impacted your plans?

It has reinforced the positive impact we can make on the environment as a business, which isn't something that everyone gets to be a part of in their working life.

The Extrupet family feels truly blessed in so many ways that we were part of the PET recycling value chain's efforts to collect 95 000 tons of bottles last year, saving 594 448m³ of landfill space and creating a significant number of employment opportunities across South Africa.

Advice for improving PET recyclability?

Education is the starting point to making a difference in terms of better bottle designs, greater awareness of responsible packaging waste disposal, and initiating discussions with brands that don't behave responsibly around how they can contribute to a more circular economy.

From a design perspective, there are key considerations that make a big difference, which if not implemented within the local recycling stream, will likely result in a bottle ending up in a landfill. These include specifying coloured rather than clear bottles; printing on the bottle; shrink sleeves; non-recyclable glues, labels and adhesives; foils and metal closures – all of which negatively impact the recycling process.

Governments worldwide are taking an aggressive stance towards companies (packaging converters, brand owners and retailers) that don't behave appropriately. And we foresee environmental non-compliance in a post-Covid-19 world becoming more relevant and expensive. Companies that have access to quality recycled PET and HDPE locally will have a tremendous advantage as we move into a more regulated world.

For more more information, visit www.phoenixpet.co.za or email info@phoenixpet.co.za

