

New Mageu packaging upgrade adds safety, shelf life, appeal

RCL Foods, manufacturer of the Number One Mageu brand, has upgraded its product packaging to high-density polyethylene (HDPE) from the carton packaging in use since 1969.



Keeping in mind the hot climate, severe transportation conditions and the short life span of this product, RCL Foods was looking for a packaging solution that would extend the shelf life of the drink, safeguard the product's quality and provide it with a refreshed brand appeal.

Ampack, part of Bosch Packaging Technology since 2012, is a specialist in aseptic machines for liquid food filling, with over 40 years of experience in the market. After careful evaluation of the products' characteristics, Ampack specialists suggested the Mageu drink be filled in HDPE, using aseptic filling, the highest hygiene level, which allows for up to one-year shelf life, outside of the cooling chain.

"It was a perfect combination of the highest quality engineering and cutting-edge technology that we were looking for," explained Johan Niemand, operations executive at beverages unit at RCL Foods.

Throughout the whole filling process, the packaging material is thoroughly decontaminated and the product is kept in sterile conditions to avoid any loss in quality. In terms of speed, the solution is capable of handling three different bottle sizes (250,500 millilitres and 1 litre), with format changes taking below 20 minutes and total speeds of up to 14,000 bottles per hour, depending on the packaging format. The HDPE bottles have a high barrier in order to protect the unique product from deterioration by external factors such as sunlight or oxygen.

The new machine was installed in the current production facility in Pretoria in South Africa with the primary aim to fill Mageu drink, but it can handle various products with different levels of viscosity giving RCL Foods the flexibility of extending its production in the future.

“Since the installation last year, the machine is running flawlessly and is an example of engineering excellence in its purest form,” added Niemand.

Ampack designed and assembled the machine in 10 months. In order to speed up the acceptance phase at the customers' site, Ampack performed an additional aseptic test directly in its facility in Königsbrunn, Germany. In addition, during the installation time, RCL Foods operating staff went through extensive training in all areas of machine operation and maintenance.

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