

CPI Announces Corrugated CFQ Standard at London Produce Show

The Confederation of Paper Industries (CPI) has announced it is set to launch a Common Footprint Quality (CFQ) standard for the UK's fresh produce industry that will ensure safe and high performance corrugated packaging for fruit and vegetables.

Revealing the initiative at the London Produce Show at the Grosvenor House Hotel, CPI's director of Packaging Affairs, Andy Barnetson, said the move will further improve the efficiency of the fresh produce supply chain by allowing common footprint trays from different suppliers to be stacked safely and quickly, maximising space in both storage and shipping.



CPI, who shared a platform with the European Federation of Corrugated Board Manufacturers (FEFCO) at the prestigious event for the fresh fruit, vegetable and flower industries on 8-10 June, says it is collaborating with its European counterpart during the process for establishing its own CFQ with a view to introducing the standard later this year.

Speaking to an audience of fresh produce suppliers and growers at the show, Andy Barnetson explained: "The CFQ standard is another initiative by the industry aimed at retaining corrugated's position as the packaging material of choice in the 21st Century. The mark will be an assurance that fruit and veg are suitably protected through the supply chain.

"Corrugated packaging's ability to adapt to all shapes and sizes, its greater protective qualities and how it has evolved from a conventional brown box into a marketing tool thanks to the development of attractive shelf ready packaging (SRP), gives growers improved saleability for their products."

Fresh produce needs packaging that provides cushioning, ventilation, strength, moisture resistance and protection. Corrugated packaging combines all of these attributes as well as being sustainable – more than 80% of corrugated is recycled, while new boxes are made from recycled material. Where new fibre is used, it comes from sustainably managed forests.

A workshop organised by the Association of Fruit and Vegetable Producers of Almeria (COEXPHAL) in Spain found that as well as considerable cost benefits, corrugated board has less impact on the environment than reusable crates, minimises contamination risks and prolongs the shelf life of fruit and vegetables.

The material can increase the shelf life of fresh produce by up to three days, while each corrugated box is used only once and then recycled, reducing the risk of cross-contamination of bacteria through product delivery – unlike returnable transit crates which might be used a number of times before washing.

The other advantages of corrugated packaging - flexibility and innovation - have helped many of the UK's leading companies, such as Pauleys, improve delivery times and respond more quickly to customers' needs.

Pauleys, part of the Brakes Group, has enhanced its packaging capabilities by installing box-making machines at its sites to significantly increase the number of boxes produced per hour. In addition, the equipment is able to create different styles and designs, including corners and flanges, to cater for the wide range of fruit and veg.

Supply chains continue to be scrutinised in an effort to drive down costs and meet environmental objectives. Reduced pack weights – average corrugated board weight decreased by 12% between 2005 and 2015 – and

recycled materials are becoming essential in helping producers respond to what retailers want.

Mr Barnettson concluded: "Corrugated is the perfect fit for fresh produce. Nothing beats it for strength, space efficiency and stacking. Rolling out the CFQ standard is further proof that the industry is not resting on its laurels and is determined to ensure the best packaging solutions for all fresh produce companies."

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For additional information, please contact Emma Punchard, Director of Communications, tel: 01793 889609, email epunchard@paper.org.uk.

NOTES TO EDITORS

- The Confederation of Paper Industries (CPI) is the leading trade association representing the UK's Paper-based Industries, comprising recovered paper merchants, paper and board manufacturers and converters, corrugated packaging producers, and makers of soft tissue papers.
- CPI represents an industry with an aggregate annual turnover of £6.5 billion, 25,000 direct and more than 100,000 indirect employees.
- For facts on the UK's Paper-based Industries please visit: www.paper.org.uk.