

PRESS RELEASE

Circular economy: from targets to reality

Glass packaging industry asks for a legislative framework that looks at market reality and supports authentic circular business models

Brussels, 18 April 2016

The European Container Glass Federation (FEVE), publishes today the industry's position on the European Commission's Circular Economy Package calling for mandatory separate collection schemes, targets focused on recycling, and acknowledgement of the superior value of permanent materials.

The paper signals the industry's strong commitment towards a resource-efficient Europe that ensures the availability of high quality secondary raw material for direct use in industrial production, while guaranteeing the free movement of glass packaging in the EU Internal Market.

The glass packaging industry has long practiced the principles of the circular economy. Because of its inherent properties, glass is endlessly recycled and for over 40 years the industry has built partnerships to collect end-of-life glass containers that replace virgin raw materials in a closed loop. Glass is now amongst the most recycled food and drink packaging materials.

Today, 73% of all post-consumer glass packaging is collected for recycling on average in the EU, and about 90% of it is actually recycled into new bottles and jars. But the challenge is to collect the remaining 27% while ensuring the quality of recycled glass. According to Vitaliano Torno, President of FEVE, *"for the circular economy to function and for all Member States to meet their targets, it is fundamental that separate collection schemes become mandatory across the EU to increase the quantity as well as the quality and safety of recycled materials"*.

The new recycling targets of 75% (by 2025) and 85% (by 2030) provide a good framework to support investments in separate collection schemes and recycling infrastructure. But the targets must unambiguously focus on recycling, without any competing EU-wide targets on preparing packaging for re-use. Reusable packaging is a product that only satisfies demand from very specific markets, typically local or those functioning in closed circuits, and such targets would create barriers to the free movement of goods in the internal market.

The superior value of permanent materials for the circular economy should be better accounted for, both in the waste proposals and the Circular Economy Action Plan. *"Materials that can maintain their properties during their repeated use and that can be recycled over and over again must be put at the heart of the EU circular economy"*, concludes Vitaliano Torno. *"Glass is a permanent material that is 100% and endlessly recyclable without any degradation of its intrinsic properties"*

no matter how many times it is recycled. This allows for important raw material and energy savings with major benefits for the environment and the economy.”

For FEVE, an ambitious circular economy policy means investing in recycling infrastructure throughout the EU, where there are important opportunities for job creation in recycling and further manufacturing of glass. FEVE will be taking this discussion forward with the European Commission, Member States and Members of the European Parliament to ensure a legislative and policy environment that maintains Europe’s leading position for glass production and recycling, in the context of increasingly competitive global markets.

You can find the [Position Paper on the FEVE Website](#)

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About FEVE

FEVE is the Federation of European manufacturers of glass containers and machine-made glass tableware. Its members produce over 20 million tonnes of glass per year. The association has some 60 corporate members belonging to approximately 20 independent corporate groups. Manufacturing plants are located across 23 European States and include global blue chip and major companies working for the world’s biggest consumer brands. See more on www.feve.org

About the Container Glass Industry

The European container glass industry provides a wide range of glass packaging products for food and beverages as well as flacons for perfumery, cosmetics and pharmacy to their European and world customers. With its 160 manufacturing plants distributed all over Europe, it is an important contributor to Europe’s real economy and provides employment to about 50,000 people, while creating a large number of job opportunities along the total supply chain. See more on www.feve.org

About Glass

As packaging, glass containers assure the preservation, safe delivery and attractive presentation of a vast array of consumer products, supplied to European and world markets. Whether used for drinks, food, cosmetics, perfumes or pharmaceuticals, glass plays a vital role in supporting European trade and commerce. Glass is 100 percent recyclable, virtually inert and preserves the original taste of the products it contains. Food and drinks need the protection of its container to preserve purity, because health is not only in the ingredients but also in the packaging that preserves these ingredients. Consumers who believe glass is the best packaging option for their preferred food and drinks support glass by joining the Friends of Glass movement on www.friendsofglass.com

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