

PepsiCo sub-Saharan Africa to curb use of virgin plastics

PepsiCo is committed to changing the way packaging is made, used, and disposed across its food system. This pledge sees PepsiCo Sub-Saharan Africa become the first market within PepsiCo's Africa, Middle East, and South Asia (Amesa) sector to reduce its reliance on virgin plastics and incorporate 20% recycled PET (rPET) in its products.



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Increasing the use of materials such as rPET, is part of the 'Positive Value Chain' pillar of PepsiCo's recently announced [PepsiCo Positive agenda](#), which the food and beverage giant says places sustainability at the core of how the company operates.

Driving a circular economy for packaging

PepsiCo has pledged to changing the way packaging is made, used and disposed of across its food system.

"The reduction in the use of virgin plastic packaging, demonstrates the company's commitment to driving towards a circular economy for packaging and reducing plastic waste," says Bronwyn Patten, senior franchise director: WECA, PepsiCo SSA. "This means we must recycle and reuse the packaging material that we put into the world. This not only limits waste, but also reduces the carbon footprint of the packaging that we use."



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Pieter Spies, CEO of The Beverage Company, comments, "We are honoured to be the Pepsi bottler of choice in South Africa and to be a part of their aggressive pursuit of creating sustainable packaging solutions. As The Beverage Company we are committed to delivering premium products that promote sustainability while protecting our natural resources. Our research and development strategies are focused

on leveraging the most innovative technology available and designing packaging that is of the lightest possible weight.”

He adds, “We have been a contributing member of Petco – the PET Recycling Company – for many years and have participated in driving the Reduce, Re-use, Recycle behaviour among customers by implementing measuring and expanding on the management of waste to landfill. We believe that it is important to drive the circular economy and are engaging with industry players to see how we can bring multi-disciplined parties together to collaborate to further increase the collection of post-consumer plastics before going to dump sites.”

Reinventing packaging

While recycling helps to reduce emissions and plastic waste overall, PepsiCo says wants to have a bigger impact on the environment. Therefore, the company’s priority has been to tackle one of the key contributors to greenhouse gases by reducing and reinventing its packaging.

As part of the newly introduced Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) regulations, the requirement for the beverage packaging industry is inclusion of 10% recycled content in the first year (2022) and leading up to 20% inclusion by year five.



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Patten adds, “At PepsiCo, we aspire to a world where packaging never becomes waste. The commitment goes beyond Pepsi brands and the switch to 20% rPET will take place in phases with the 2-litre soft-drinks portfolio already completed. The balance of the product portfolio will be completed during Q1 of 2022.”

The company’s brands, across its food and beverage portfolio, are accelerating their efforts to realise PepsiCo’s sustainable packaging vision and leveraging their influence to educate consumers on recycling and the planetary impacts of their choices. This feeds into the company’s ‘Net Zero Emissions commitment by 2040’ and its sustainable packaging goals, PepsiCo says.

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