Circular Economy, Save Food and Food Safety are some of the major issues discussed by WPO in Prague

More than 35 WPO members from all over the world are together in Czech Republic in the week of May 13-17

Prague, May 13, 2019 – WPO (World Packaging Organisation – www.worldpackaging.org) is holding its 1st Board Meeting of 2019 in Prague, Czech Republic, during the week of May 13 to 17. The program is being organized by WPO local member, OBALOVÝ INSTITUT SYBA s.r.o. (www.syba.cz). “We will certainly have an intense week of work for WPO members in Prague which includes Working Groups meetings – Education, Marketing and Sustainability + Food Safety), a Press Conference and the WorldStar Award ceremony. The intention is also to interact, as much as possible, with local industries and members of SYBA, to spread the WPO message and show them all the programs we have been carrying out over the past year, especially on education”, states WPO President, Pierre Pienaar.

Pierre states that besides all the other WPO activities, including the Packaging Training Programs, three issues have been on central discussions among the Board and members: Circular Economy, Save Food and Food Safety. Below the official WPO position on each subject:

Circular Economy
“We are facing enormous challenges, amongst these are climate change, environmental destruction, scarce resources, globalisation, population growth as well as demographic change. One of the commonly recognized ways for human societies to adapt to these challenges is moving from a linear to a circular economy. Today we are consuming raw materials more than the world is able to produce. Renewable raw materials would last for less than six months every year if we would limit consumption to the annual growth. We need to act now.”

Save Food
“As global awareness of the issue of food waste and its detrimental impact on the environment grows, increased attention is turning to the role of packaging in preventing food waste. The WPO has a global Save Food Packaging Awards program that has been developed in conjunction with Messe Düsseldorf and Interpack. This successful awards program recognises companies that are developing innovative and sustainable packaging that minimises food losses and food waste, extends shelf life and improves the supply of food.”

**Food Safety**

“Consumers, media, regulators and industry tend to focus on the product and not on the safety of its packaging, but packaging is a critical component in the overall food safety process. Now, more than ever, as food distribution networks globalise, packaging plays a vital role in ensuring the final product is safe and secure for consumption. There are several factors that all manufacturers should consider in building a defense against packaging failures. First, review the packaging and manufacturing process. Second, address the human error factor. Finally, review the supply chain and ensure that raw materials and value-added products that contribute to your food product are meeting international standards.”

**An intense week of activities in Prague**

As part of the program in Prague, WPO members will also have the chance of visiting the facilities of Thimm Vsetaty, part of Thimm The Highpack Group, one of the leading solution providers for the packaging and distribution of goods. Its portfolio includes corrugated board transportation and sales packaging, high-quality promotional displays, packaging systems combining a range of materials and print products for further industrial processing. The company's product offerings are further enhanced by a wide range of associated packaging services, covering the entire supply chain. Its customers include prestigious branded product groups from across all sectors. Founded in 1949, the family-owned business has more than 3,000 employees at 19 sites located in Germany, Czech Republic, Romania, Poland and Mexico and generates annual revenues of around €601 million.

A local brewery, Pilsner Urquell, will also be visited by WPO members. The brewery is worldwide known for producing the first golden 'pilsner' lager beer, in the world, in 1842. As the company states in its webpage: “This changed beer forever and the invention of the brewer Josef Groll became the most popular style of beer on the planet”.

On the night of May 15, the 190 winners of WorldStar Packaging Award, the most important global packaging recognition, will be announced in a gala ceremony. There were 319 packaging projects judged from 35 countries. The number of winners, by category, was: Beverages 45 (out of 74 entries); Electronics 5 (7 entries); Food 38 (56 entries); Health & Personal Care 11 (32 entries); Household 9 (13 entries); Labelling & Decoration 3 (5 entries); Luxury 5 (out of 10), Medical & Pharmaceutical 11 (out of 13 entries); Other 22 (29 entries), Packaging Materials & Components 14 (31 entries); Point of Sale 9 (out of 14) and Transit 18 (out of 35).

Well done to Japan for taking the highest number of WorldStars – 26; closely followed by Turkey taking 22 and China, 21. The ceremony will also award the winners in the Special Categories – Sustainability, Marketing, Packaging that Saves Food, President’s Award and Lifetime Achievement. To check the full list of WorldStar Award winners visit [http://www.worldstar.org/worldstar-winners-2019](http://www.worldstar.org/worldstar-winners-2019).


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WPO – World Packaging Organisation is a non-profit, non-governmental, international federation of packaging institutes, associations, federations and other interested parties including corporations and trade associations. For more information, contact WPO at [www.worldpackaging.org](http://www.worldpackaging.org).
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