

Press Release

Vetropack Group presents innovative 0.33-litre returnable bottle as standard solution for the Austrian brewing industry

Bülach / Pöchlarn, February 02, 2024 – Together with Brau Union Österreich, [Vetropack Group](#), one of Europe's leading manufacturers of glass packaging, is presenting a new 0.33-litre returnable bottle that is being launched on the market in February 2024 as a standard solution for the brewing industry. The bottle is one-third lighter than its conventional reusable counterpart thanks to the innovative Echovai production process developed by Vetropack. As a result, it promises to contribute to fulfilling the new Austrian quota on returnables.

Returnable systems with standardised bottles offer economic and environmental benefits: they reduce logistics costs, shorten transport routes, save valuable resources and thus lower CO₂ emissions. Vetropack has developed a 0.33-litre bottle that is available to the entire brewing industry as a standard solution in order to help meet the quota on returnables that is mandatory in Austria since the start of 2024.

The bottle produced by Vetropack is ideally suited for reuse, as it excels in terms of sustainability, convenience, stability and simplifies logistics. Currently, more than two thirds of the material used in the production of the glass is recycled glass. The bottles are tempered with Vetropack's special Echovai technology, which makes them extremely robust and resistant while simultaneously reducing their weight.

Standardised solution reduces logistics costs and CO₂ emissions

"The bottle is around 30 per cent lighter than a traditional reusable bottle and has at least the same or better pressure and impact resistance," explains Erich Jaquemar, Strategic Account Manager at Vetropack in Austria. The stability of the lightweight glass bottle has been proven in extensive tests. "Due to fewer scuff marks on the contact surfaces, it can achieve around 20 per cent more refill loops compared to conventional containers. At the same time, the bottle's stability offers a plus in food safety," says Jaquemar.

Vetropack developed the shape of the bottle together with relevant stakeholders such as Logistikverbund Mehrweg, the Austrian Brewers Association and its members such as Stiegl, Egger, and Ottakring Brewery under the leadership of Brau Union. The result is a small version of the standard 0.5-litre returnable beer bottle with a height of 212 mm. With this new standard, crates can be stacked in six tiers on each pallet. Additionally, the low bottle weight of 210 grams enables

more rows of crates per pallet, which significantly reduces both transport costs and CO₂ emissions. “Basically, we don't just look at the individual bottle, but at the overall returnable system. In close collaboration with the stakeholders involved and thanks to their expertise, we have coordinated the bottle and crate design, taking into account the associated logistics,” says Jaquemar. Important tests relating to stackability, storability and refilling were carried out at Brau Union's Wieselburg brewery.

“Buying reusable instead of disposable bottles saves valuable resources and up to 75 per cent of CO₂ emissions,” comments Gabriela Maria Straka, Director Corporate Affairs, ESG Sustainability and member of the Management Board at Brau Union Österreich. “With the bottle developed by our partner Vetropack, we are presenting a more ecological and economically attractive alternative to all those for whom shape, size or weight were previously an argument against reusable bottles.”



Image 1:

Gösler is the first Austrian beer to be launched on the market in the new standard bottles. The lightweight Echovai standard bottle produced by Vetropack is one-third lighter than conventional returnable bottles.

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Image 2:

The crate design matches the new standard bottles perfectly.

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Image 3:

Not only lighter, but also robust: thanks to their stability and improved resistance to scuffing, the new standard bottles can be refilled up to 20 per cent more often.

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Image 4:

Erich Jaquemar, Strategic Account Manager at Vetropack Austria

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Image 5:

Gabriela Maria Straka, Director Corporate Affairs, ESG Sustainability and Member of the Management Board at Brau Union Österreich

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About Vetropack

Vetropack Group is one of Europe's leading manufacturers of glass packaging for the food and beverage industry with around 4,000 employees and net revenues of CHF 899.4 million in 2022. Vetropack has state-of-the-art production facilities as well as sales and distribution offices in Switzerland, Austria, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Slovakia, Ukraine, Italy, the Republic of Moldova and Romania.

At Vetropack, we enable people to enjoy food and beverages as safely as possible by providing solutions that combine optimum elegance with maximum responsibility. We view glass as the most sustainable packaging solution – and the perfect material to ensure that food is packaged safely. Our holistic Service plus+ approach helps our customers to optimise their value chains and guarantee consumers' safety. Close, long-lasting relationships are the hallmarks of our collaboration with partners. Guided by our understanding of environmental responsibility and cost efficiency, we aim to minimise our carbon footprint throughout the supply chain, and we are committed to recycling as the key to optimising product life-cycles.

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