



STAGNITO COMMUNICATIONS

**FOOD&DRUG**  
packaging

Subscribe | Media Kit | Reprints | List Rentals | About Us | Employment

e-library



Advanced Search

HOME | BLOGS | KEY ISSUES/TRENDS | TECHNOLOGY | CLASSIFIEDS | BUYER'S GUIDE | CALENDAR OF EVENTS | CONTACT US

CURRENT ISSUE



**Safeway Builds Consumer Brands**

Before: More than 70 private-label brands with competing visions and minimal shelf impact. After: A successful team of 10 mega-brands.

Select Issue to Browse

2007

[HTML]

June

[Digital]

STAGNITO NETWORK OF TITLES

- PROCESSING BRANDS
- PACKAGING BRANDS
- RETAIL BRANDS
- INTERNATIONAL BRAND
- CONCEPT BRAND

SPECIAL EVENTS



Article Tools: »E-Mail This Article »Print This Article

HOME > June 2007

**BUSINESSNEWS**

**Nanotech Packaging Hailed and Assailed**

Nanotechnology is being touted as a potential vehicle for sustainable packaging and attacked as an enemy of the environment.

Sainsbury's, the British supermarket chain, is participating in a European Union (EU)-funded project to develop biodegradable packaging using nanotechnology. The thinking is that nano-additives can strengthen the barrier properties, grease resistance and other qualities of fiber-based materials, allowing them to be used in applications that now are problematic.

The EU project, called SustainPack, also is looking at using nanoclay particles to strengthen biopolymer films. The four-year research project has a budget of 36 million Euros (\$48.4 million).

Meanwhile, the environmental group Friends of the Earth is denouncing the use of nanosilver additives in food packaging and other applications as potentially harmful. Nanosilver is used to protect products against bacteria due to silver's antimicrobial qualities. But Friends of the Earth Australia, in a report being circulated by the parent organization, claims that discarding nanosilver-laced material into landfills has the potential to contaminate soil and water by interfering with the balance of naturally occurring, benign microorganisms.

"Companies incorporating nanosilver particles into their products are exposing people and the environment to unknown threats," Friends of the Earth spokesperson Ian Illuminato said in a statement.

**Steaming while nuking is hot food trend**

Food processors are coming up with an array of new products, both frozen and fresh, that are intended to be steamed in the microwave.

Products from several major food companies use packaging that allows steam to build up during microwaving. This is usually done through vents or tiny perforations, in either the film or rigid components of the packaging, that allow steam generated by the product's moisture to build up and escape gradually.

New steamed products include:

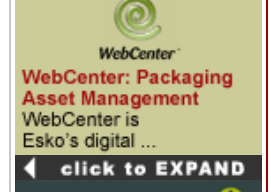
- **Steamfresh from Birds Eye Foods.** This line of 17 frozen vegetables sold \$100 million after its introduction last year—a figure Birds Eye expects to more than double this year. A spokesperson called it "our biggest new product innovation in 25 years."
- **Café Steamers from ConAgra Foods.** Scheduled to be introduced this summer, this line of 12 frozen dinners under ConAgra's Healthy Choice label uses a tray-in-tray format to steam different components of the meal at varying levels. The sauce compartment has tiny holes to let the steam rise through the meal in the perforated top tray.
- **Green Giant Simply Steam vegetables from General Mills.** These boxed frozen vegetables have an interior bag that allows the product to steam in the microwave. General Mills rolled out two varieties of Simply Steam last summer and added eight more this year. In addition, **Green Giant Fresh, a General Mills licensee operated by Scholl Group II, unveiled Freshtables, a line of fresh vegetables in a vented flexible bag designed to steam in the microwave, at this year's Food Marketing Institute (FMI) show.**
- **Steamers from McCormick & Co.** Two extensions of McCormick's spice/steam bag combo, which was brought out last year for vegetables, were unveiled at FMI: Potato Steamers, for cubed or whole new potatoes, and Seafood Steamers, for fish fillets, shrimp and other seafood products.

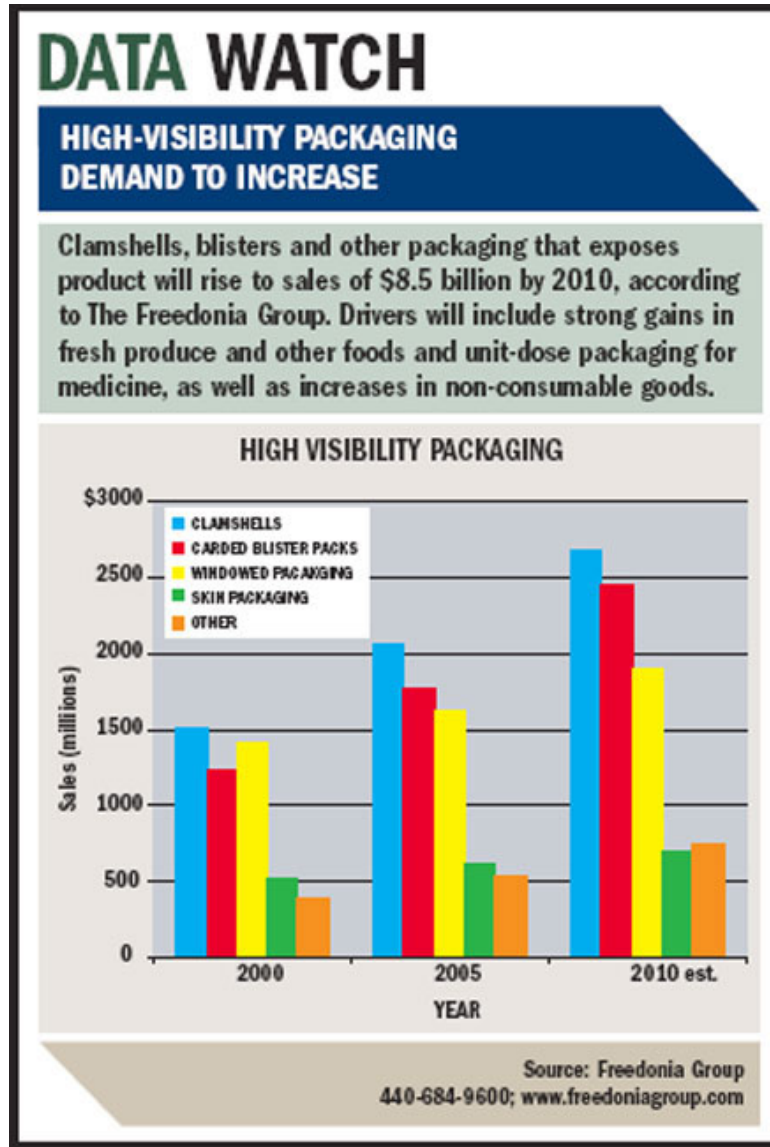
**A-B pulls small shots from shelves**

Responding to complaints about appealing to underage drinkers, Anheuser-Busch has pulled a malt beverage product packaged in 2-ounce bottles.

Spykes, rolled out nationwide in January, contains 12% alcohol by volume and is meant to be consumed either alone or with beer. Critics said its small bottle size and sweet flavors, including mango, peach, banana and hot chocolate, gave the product an inordinate appeal to underage consumers. One critic charged that the federally mandated alcohol warning on the label was too small and hard to read.

In a statement, an Anheuser-Busch spokesperson accused Spykes critics of being "perennial anti-alcohol groups." But he said that "due to its limited volume potential and unfounded criticism, we have ceased production of Spykes."





**The GS100 Series Palletizer**  
[CLICK HERE](#)

FKI Logistex

[National Association of Container Distributors](#)

#### Anti-GMO labeling popular in Moscow

Consumers in Russia are demanding labels that identify food made without genetically modified organisms (GMO).

Foods sold in Russia with GMO must declare this on their labels. But according to Foodnavigator.com, a regional government ruled that foods sold in or near Moscow may claim non-GMO status on their labeling if they pass testing at one of 16 laboratories.

Russian experts predict that food labeled as non-GMO could command a price premium of up to 15%. This worries some Russian food and beverage processors, who complain that a "voluntary" non-GMO label could in fact become compulsory under those conditions.

#### RFID helps spur household recycling

Want to get people to recycle more? Put a bug in their bin.

Communities on both sides of the Atlantic have been experimenting with a way to keep track of recycling by individual households. It involves attaching a radio frequency identification (RFID) chip, otherwise known as a "bin bug," to household recycling bins. When the bin is emptied by an RFID-equipped truck, a data collector on board the truck keeps track of its weight.

Bin bugs first started popping up in the United Kingdom last year, except that they were attached to bins for non-recyclable garbage. The official explanation was that they were to help match up bins with their rightful owners. But some residents were afraid they would eventually be used to keep track of household garbage generation, with fines for excessive weight.

In the U.S., the approach has been more aboveboard, and more carrot than stick. Philadelphia-area neighborhoods, Grand Rapids, Mich., and other communities last year instituted RecycleBank, a program that offers rewards for recycling. Homeowners who use a SmartCart, an RFID-equipped garbage bin from Cascade Engineering, earn points based on how much recyclable material gets put in the bins. They can redeem the points online for coupons honored by participating retailers. RecycleBank claims the program has increased recycling rates, on average, from 5% to 50%.

Wilmington, Del., instituted a citywide RecycleBank program for approximately 24,500 households early this year after a pilot program last year. The program has achieved a diversion rate of 34%, a figure that city officials expect to go up soon, says city communications director John Rago.

HOME | BLOGS | KEY ISSUES/TRENDS | eNEWSLETTER | TECHNOLOGY | CLASSIFIEDS  
BUYER'S GUIDE | CALENDAR OF EVENTS | SUBSCRIBE | MEDIA KIT | REPRINTS  
LIST RENTALS | ABOUT US | EMPLOYMENT

**PROCESSING BRANDS:**  
Beverage Industry | Candy Industry | The National Provisioner | Refrigerated & Frozen Foods | Snack Food & Wholesale Bakery  
**PACKAGING BRANDS:**  
BrandPackaging | Flexible Packaging | Food & Drug Packaging  
**RETAIL BRANDS:**  
Confectioner | Private Label Buyer | Meat & Deli Retailer | Refrigerated & Frozen Foods Retailer  
**INTERNATIONAL BRAND:**  
Industria Alimenticia  
**CONCEPT BRAND:**  
Stagnito's New Products Magazine

An Ascend Media Publication - 7015 College Blvd., Suite 600, Overland Park, KS 66211  
USA Tel 913.469.1185 - Fax 913.469.0806  
Copyright © 2007 Ascend Media. All Rights Reserved.