



Joint news release

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BASF and StePac partner to develop sustainable packaging for shelf-life extension of fresh produce

- **Advancing circularity in food packaging with BASF's Ultramid® Cycled™**
- **Circular packaging featuring overall environmental benefits with StePac's Xtend® and Xgo™**

BASF SE (Ludwigshafen, Germany) and StePac Ltd. (Tefen, Israel) have joined forces to create the next generation of sustainable packaging specifically for the fresh produce sector. Supplying StePac with its Ultramid® Cycled™, a chemically recycled polyamide 6, BASF will provide its partner greater flexibility to advance contact-sensitive packaging formats to a higher sustainable standard within the circular economy.

StePac, specialized in developing advanced functional packaging solutions, is pioneering the use of chemically recycled plastics for the packaging of fresh perishables. The company was recently REDcert² certified to incorporate chemically recycled polyamide 6 into its flexible, modified atmosphere packaging (MAP) products. Their two brands Xgo™ and Xtend® are based on MAP technology with built-in humidity control which effectively slows respiration inside the packaging, delays the ageing processes, inhibits microbial decay, and preserves the quality and nutritional value of the produce during prolonged storage and long-haul shipments.

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Ultramid Cycled will make up 30% of the packaging material, with options for integration at a higher percentage.

“This alliance will help strike a balance between creating plastic packaging that is as eco-friendly as possible to keep fresh produce longer through more prudent use of lean plastic films,” said Gary Ward, Business Development Manager of StePac. “These upgraded packaging formats will continue to maintain their role of significantly reducing food waste, a most important task considering that global food waste is responsible for about 8% of anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions.”

With ChemCycling™, BASF has been breaking new ground in the recycling of plastic waste. Chemical recycling primarily involves plastic waste that would have been used for energy recovery or landfilled. It complements mechanical recycling, accelerating a circular economy by yielding food-grade recycled plastic. “In a thermochemical process, our partners obtain recycled feedstock from these end-of-life plastics, which is then fed into the BASF Verbund. Using a mass balance approach, the raw material can be attributed to specific products, such as Ultramid Cycled”, explained Dr. Dominik Winter, Vice President of BASF’s European polyamides business. “This helps to replace fossil raw materials and is an important step towards circularity. As chemically recycled plastics have the same quality and safety as virgin material, the scope of plastics that can be recycled for fresh produce packaging is widened.”

Colombian passion fruit exporters Jardin Exotics, S.A.S. will be the first to use the new packaging brand Xgo™ Circular™. Supplied as film for horizontal form fill-and-seal, the packaging’s MAP properties will slow the ripening process and preserve the quality of the fruit during the long sea voyage from Colombia to Europe. Packing at-source in the final retail packaging format also eliminates the need for repacking after arrival. For passion fruit, the combination of the produce specific modified atmosphere properties of the film together with its high-water vapor transmission rate are what makes this film unique in its performance.

About BASF

At BASF, we create chemistry for a sustainable future. We combine economic success with environmental protection and social responsibility. Around 111,000 employees in the BASF Group contribute to the success of our customers in nearly all sectors and almost every country in the world. Our portfolio comprises six segments: Chemicals, Materials, Industrial Solutions, Surface Technologies, Nutrition & Care and Agricultural Solutions. BASF generated sales of €78.6 billion in 2021. BASF shares are traded on the stock exchange in Frankfurt (BAS) and as American Depositary Receipts (BASFY) in the U.S. Further information at www.basf.com.

About StePac

StePac specializes in functional packaging for fresh produce. Its globally recognized brands include Xtend®, Xgo™, Xflow™ and Xbloom™ modified atmosphere / modified-humidity packaging solutions. These solutions reduce weight loss, slow respiration and aging, and inhibit microbial decay, while prolonging storability and shelf life. They are supported by a wealth of post-harvest expertise for enhanced performance and sustainability. Further information at www.stepac.com.