

Packaging trade show boosts business in the Western Cape

Taking place at the CTICC from 24-26 October, Propak Cape attracted thousands of visitors keen to find out about latest technologies and innovations in packaging and related industries.

The Western Cape is home to a large agro-processing industry and is an important export province for agricultural products such as deciduous fruits, wine and the growing citrus industry. Food processing is also a growing sector in the region. These are all consumers of packaging, plastics and printing, which is why Propak Cape is such a significant and well-supported trade event.

Industry players represented at Propak Cape are an important part of SA's working economy, not just in the Western Cape but from a national perspective as well. Propak Cape supports business in the region by providing a platform for manufacturers and suppliers to showcase the latest products, equipment, machinery and services across the packaging, food processing, plastics, printing and labelling industries. It also provides a networking opportunity for all industry stakeholders. People want to know about latest innovations, trends and technologies, what the future holds for packaging and related industries, and about growth potential in the various sectors.

"This year's Propak Cape attracted just under 6,000 visitors, all keen to learn about the latest innovations and technologies. They had the opportunity to talk with technical experts and to engage with 188 local manufacturers and suppliers and 50 international exhibitors," explains Sven Smit, Propak Cape Event Director. "Ten different countries were exhibiting, so we do get quite an international influence at the show which is beneficial to all participants. Products and services related to the newly launched Wine & Olive Production Expo were also an additional attraction to Propak Cape this year."

"This year's theme focussed on sustainability, which is very pertinent given the Western Cape's current drought situation," says Smit. "The sustainability of packaging has never been more important and local packaging companies are investing in research and development to develop new eco-friendly materials that can be recycled, but remain sturdy and temperature resistant. We wanted to highlight the various industry initiatives that have been successfully implemented by the sector's Producer Responsibility Organisations by incorporating a sustainability pavilion at Propak Cape. Using the sustainability pavilion as a platform, an amount of R 45,000 was raised through corporates and individuals pledging funds towards a much-needed seabird hospital at Sancob's Cape Town premises."

South Africa's leading Associations support these sustainability initiatives and the Institute of Packaging South Africa, Plastics SA, Printing SA, Packaging SA and the South African National Bottled Water Association exhibited at Propak Cape.

Douw Steyn, Sustainability Director at Plastics SA, was one of the many speakers at the free-to-attend seminars that took place at Propak Cape. His talk provided an overview of what the South African plastics industry is doing to design better packaging, increase recycling rates, and introduce new models for making better use for a circular plastics economy.

"Plastic is here to stay," says Steyn. "It's all around us in our everyday lives. But a lot of work is being done especially in packaging around what materials we should use, how it's produced, what is its usability and what impact it has on the environment. Recycling and sustainability are key to the industry going forward. I've been involved with Propak for many years and it provides a great industry networking opportunity where we can think creatively with other companies and speak with like-minded individuals. The standard of this year's show can be described as 'Wow' – it's beautiful!"

Other seminar speakers included Charles Muller, Executive Director of Packaging SA; Anton Hanekom, Executive Director at Plastics SA; Steve Thobela, Chief Executive Officer at Printing SA; Shelly Fuller, Sustainable Agriculture Fruit & Wine Programme Manager at WWF South Africa; Bhekithemba Dlamini, Deputy Director Agro Processing at the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI); John Weaver, Chairman of South African National Bottled Water Association; Cheri Scholtz, CEO of PETCO; and Johann Boonzaaier, Manager of the Horticulture Division Bureau for Food and Agriculture Policy (BFAP), amongst many others.

Visitors enjoyed viewing the many interactive displays, live demonstrations and technical presentations that took place at Propak Cape. Not only were visitors looking to learn about latest innovations, a high number were also there to buy and many off-the-floor sales were made at the show. Cabletech Marketing set the sales in motion by selling a R500,000 Haitian flagship 90-tonne injection moulding machine on the first day of the show and Adex Plastics and Machinery were hot on their heels with the sale of one of their machines. The activity continued with more sales reported from exhibitors across the show and hundreds of sales leads generated. Sales are expected to continue in the coming weeks and months as leads are followed up.

"Many of our exhibitors have already signed contracts to be back at Propak Cape in 2020; the year in which we will also celebrate the show's 20th anniversary. The show takes place on a three year cycle as this best supports the changes in technology and machinery in this particular sector. The focus in 2020 will be on innovation, converging technologies, sustainability and diversification which will again highlight the various industry sectors and the crucial role they play in the economy," says Smit.

"Propak Cape has built a reputation as a proven brand that delivers results. We are delighted that our exhibitors have enjoyed such a positive experience at this year's Propak Cape. We look forward to seeing

them back in Cape Town in 2020 and many of them will also be exhibiting at Propak Africa, taking place in Johannesburg in March 2019.”

The Propak Cape exhibition is organised by Specialised Exhibitions Montgomery, a member of the prestigious Montgomery Group, and a member of the Association of African Exhibition Organisers (AAXO).

For further information visit the website at www.propakcape.co.za or contact Keraysha Pillay at email kerayshap@specialised.com

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