

## Press Release

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Beverage industry offers gentle alternatives for consumers sensitive to acidity

### **Gentle digestibility is highly valued among juice drinkers**

**April 2010.** Food sensitivities are becoming more common. But being sensitive to acidity, for instance, does not necessarily mean having to miss out on the enjoyment of drinking juice – the juice industry is responding to the growth in numbers of people who suffer from acid sensitivity by producing a wide range of juice variants that are particularly mild and easily digestible.

Norman Gierow, Global Market Segment Manager at SIG Combibloc: “With their buying behaviour, consumers determine the success of a product. Accordingly, our customers in the food industry are geared towards catering to prevailing consumer needs. So the global beverage industry is coming up with a wealth of juice variants that have a balanced proportion of acidity to sweetness, and can therefore also be consumed by people who are sensitive to acidity”. The particularly mild juices are also suitable as easily digestible drinks for children.

The crucial factors that make the acid content of these variants lower than that of traditional juices are the choice of the fruits, which have particularly favourable growing conditions in certain producing regions, and the combination of fruit types. Juice manufacturers also point to the harvest time of the particular fruit, which affects its acid content.

#### **Mandatory ripeness standard**

In terms of the beverage industry, citrus fruits, grown mainly in the ‘citrus belt’ between the 20<sup>th</sup> and 40<sup>th</sup> degrees of latitude north and south of the equator, are the most important of the tree fruits. There are four categories of sweet oranges: blonde oranges

(also known as round oranges), navel oranges, and pigmented oranges (blood oranges and half-blood oranges), as well as special orange varieties that are virtually acid-free, such as the Mosambi from India.

Very sweet fruits have up to 14 per cent carbohydrate content from sucrose, glucose and fructose, and up to 8 grams per litre of organic acids, primarily from citric and malic acids. The ratio of acidity to sweetness can vary significantly depending on fruit type and is additionally influenced by the stage of ripeness of the particular fruit.

Mild, low-acid juices are characterised by a particularly favourable ratio of sweetness to acidity. Well-known manufacturers of mild orange juices usually stipulate an internal standard for their products. In some growing regions, the ratio of sweetness to acidity as a standard of ripeness is fixed and must be adhered to (ripeness index value as export requirement).

### **Packaging protects quality**

The processing methods employed and the packaging used play a key role in protecting juices and retaining their quality. Norman Gierow: “Foods and beverages react to natural light. They alter in appearance and in flavour, thereby losing quality. For instance, the fat content in foods oxidises if exposed to light, and the fats become rancid. Vitamins and amino acids are destroyed by exposure to light. In terms of appearance, too, light affects foods, as pigments such as carotene and chlorophyll are damaged. And as a result of these processes, unpleasant tainted flavours can also develop”. For the experts in non-carbonated soft drinks at SIG Combibloc, protecting the products from light is therefore a vital criterion that must be met by a premium food packaging. Aseptically filling juices in carton packs ensures that the sensory quality, the vitamin content and natural colours of juices, can be preserved for an extended time without refrigeration. “Of course, this also applies to the aseptic filling of gentle juice variants. We believe that the range of these products available in aseptic carton packs is set to mushroom in the next few years. The demand from consumers is there”, says Gierow.

### **Caption – Amecke:**

Amecke Fruchtsaft is at the forefront of the market in mild juices. The company is catering to consumers with acid-sensitive stomachs with its ‘Sanfte Säfte’ (‘gentle juices’) range – the first varieties appeared on the market in 1999 and quickly carved out a niche for themselves. Thanks to the choice of specific fruit types, the selection of certain growing regions and the identification of the optimal time for harvesting the fruit, the juices are perceptibly less acidic and therefore very easily digestible and gentle on the stomach, says the manufacturer.

**Photo: SIG Combibloc**

**Caption – Eckes-Granini:**

Under the 'hohes C' brand name, Eckes-Granini has 'Milde Säfte' ('mild juices') in its product portfolio; the picture shows sample products from Germany and Hungary. The juices contain less acid and are therefore much easier on the stomach. The mildness of the products is due to the selection of fruits that are naturally lower in acid.

**Photo: SIG Combibloc**

*SIG Combibloc is one of the world's leading system suppliers of carton packaging and filling machines for beverages and food. In 2009 the company achieved a turnover of 1,260 million Euro with around 4,250 employees in 40 countries. SIG Combibloc is owned by the New Zealand based Rank Group.*

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