

Does packaging affect food safety?

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In the previous edition, Mpact Versapak explored packaging additives which assist with beverage preservation. This month we consider the safety of packaging that is in direct contact with the food we consume.

With PVC (Polyvinyl Chloride) and Polystyrene regularly under the spotlight, let's iron out some misperceptions and understand which accreditations and certifications to look out for in order to safely package our food. Items produced from PVC* and Polystyrene materials typically include cling wrap, which is used in retail, bakery, and take-aways. Packaging suppliers can reassure the market of their food safety commitment by displaying their compliance to the BRC or FSSC standards and good manufacturing practices.

BRC and FSSC standards are internationally recognised. These certifications ensure that the packaging meets or exceeds food safety requirements.

Under the BRC certification, an organisation, such as Mpact Versapak, commits themselves to being regulated to only use raw materials that are safe for direct food contact. The raw materials used in the packaging items should be certified for this type of use and should conform to European Food Safety Standards, EU directive 10/2011 and/or FDA standards. Furthermore, a reputable organisation should also conform to Regulation EC No 1935/2004 on good manufacturing practises for material which come into direct contact with food, as well as the FSSC 22000 certification. These standards are encompassing and ensure that requirements for food packaging are met, as recognised by an array of stakeholders in the global food and food packaging.

When purchasing PVC or Polystyrene packaging items, one should enquire with the supplier regarding the compliance of the products. Certificates, based on annual audits, should be readily available and easily supplied. By making responsible purchases and complying to industry standards, various stakeholders along the value chain can make a responsible and legal contribution to consumer safety. Mpact is a leading producer of rigid plastic packaging and cling film, producing a range of packaging and serving a multitude of blue-chip customers within various industries,

What is styrene, actually?



A clear, colourless liquid ... that naturally occurs in these foods.



Versapak



PLANTS & DISTRIBUTION

Mpact Versapak plants are situated in the Western Cape & Gauteng. Distribution is countrywide.



PRODUCTS

Expanded polystyrene packaging and other material grades such as PET and PVC cling film.



MARKETS

FMCG, fast food, retail food, wholesale, beverage and agricultural. Local and international



TECHNOLOGY

Design, extrusion, thermoforming, printing and ongoing focus on developing new products. Visit [ULTRA-ZORB](#) for the most updated info.



SAFETY

Stringent health and safety standards are always maintained. Versapak has an international BRC rating, ensuring compliance.



CONTACT

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Is polystyrene safe?

 Superior hygiene guaranteed
  Maintains food quality
  Protects food from bacteria
  Protects food from moisture
  Food has a longer shelf life
  Polystyrene is not-toxic



South African manufacturers adhere to EU laws, which have approved the use of polystyrene since 1958.



The Polystyrene Association works closely with municipalities and companies to educate and encourage polystyrene recycling.

Can polystyrene be recycled?

Absolutely! Polystyrene can be recycled into a variety of different items.



According to ministries of Health and Environment Canada, styrene is non-toxic.

Polystyrene myths and facts

MYTH	FACT
✗ Polystyrene is not recyclable.	✓ Styrene occurs naturally in strawberries and coffee beans.
✗ Polystyrene is made of ozone-depleting chemicals.	✓ Polystyrene foam products are not manufactured using CFCs or any other ozone-depleting chemicals.
✗ Polystyrene is filling up our landfills.	✓ Polystyrene foodservice products make up less than 1% of our landfill waste.
✗ Paper cups are better than polystyrene cups.	✓ Paper cups are often coated with plastic to hold liquid. This makes them non-biodegradable.
✗ Polystyrene production uses more energy than alternatives.	✓ Polystyrene packaging uses less energy to produce, transport, and recycle than alternatives.
✗ Polystyrene is microwave safe.	✓ As polystyrene melts at high heat, foods should be transferred to suitable containers before microwaving.

including products for the food, beverage, personal care, homecare, pharmaceutical, agricultural, industrial and retail markets.

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Mpact Plastics is a leading producer of rigid plastic packaging and cling film in southern Africa. We operate out of nine production centres across the country, providing packaging from plants with relevant certifications. We service the food, beverage, personal care, home care, pharmaceutical, agricultural and retail markets. In upholding company values, and as a supporter of the circular economy, we positively contribute to industry associations, enabling various communities to participate in recycling solutions.

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- **The relationship between packaging and food waste** 26 Mar 2024
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- **Smart sustainable packaging solutions demonstrated** 24 Nov 2023

Mpact



Mpact is the largest paper and plastics packaging and recycling business in Southern Africa. Our integrated business model is uniquely focused on closing the loop in plastic and paper packaging through recycling and beneficiation of recyclables.

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