



sustainable
packaging alliance

Sustainable Packaging Alliance

SPA Flash

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www.sustainablepack.org

News

Successful SPA Packaging Training in Auckland

SPA's Helen Lewis and Karli James recently conducted a successful Sustainable Packaging training course in Auckland, New Zealand involving 28 participants. The course was organised by the Packaging Council of New Zealand, sponsored by Coca-Cola Amatil and facilitated by the Centre for Design RMIT University and EnviroMark NZ. Organisations represented on the course included *Plastics New Zealand, The Warehouse, PaperlinX, Sealed Air (New Zealand), Lion Breweries, AEP – Filmpac, Cadbury Confectionary, Fonterra Co-Operative Group and Tegel Foods*. The course provided participants with an understanding of the life cycle impacts of packaging materials, marketing and communication and regulations. This knowledge and skills will be essential to aid the implementation of the NZ Packaging Accord that was recently signed by industry and government.



[Picture L-R: Jim Watt \(EnviroMark NZ\), Helen Lewis \(SPA\), Deb Statham \(PAC.NZ\), John Webber \(PAC.NZ\), Karli James \(SPA\) and Naomi Raveora \(PAC.NZ\)](#)

Current activities

Global Packaging Technology Initiative

SPA is developing its *Global Packaging Technology Initiative* to enable businesses to commercialise technologies from around the globe with superior, long-term sustainable performance. As a first step in supporting its development and implementation a business plan was recently submitted to the Victorian Government under the VicStart program. SPA were invited to submit the tender after a successful Expression of Interest submission earlier this year. The GPTI has already received support from a number of peak industry organisations.

For further information contact: Kees Sonneveld, (03) 9216 8043, email: kees@sustainablepack.org

PIQET[®]

The SPA team is developing the first module and concept for the next tool in its sustainable packaging toolbox. The Packaging Impact Quick Evaluation Tool[®] (PIQET) will provide on-line support to enable the integration of robust environmental assessments in packaging design decision-making. The first stage of development will be road-tested in a workshop involving food and beverage packaging technologists and environmental managers in November.

For further information contact: Karli James, (03) 9925 2237, email: karli@sustainablepack.org

Defining sustainable packaging

Since its formation, SPA set out to create a vision for sustainable packaging development. As a first step a research project to assist in establishing a definition of sustainable packaging development was undertaken. Recently SPA, led by Helen Lewis from the Centre for Design at RMIT, developed a draft definition of sustainable packaging as an outcome of this research to date (see page 2). Comments and feedback on the definition are welcome.

For further information contact: Helen Lewis, (03) 9925 3485, email: helen@sustainablepack.org

Sustainable Packaging – A definition

Packaging will support sustainable development if the following principles are met:

1. It adds real value to society by effectively containing and protecting products as they move through the supply chain and by supporting informed and responsible consumption.
2. Packaging systems are designed to use materials and energy as efficiently as possible throughout the packaged product life cycle including its interactions with associated support systems.
3. Packaging materials are cycled continuously through natural or industrial systems.
4. Packaging components do not pose any health or environmental risks to humans or ecosystems. When in doubt the precautionary principle applies.

This definition introduces the goal (**sustainable development**) as well as key ideas such as the need to consider the **product/packaging system** as a whole and to consider the entire **product life cycle**. It considers the three elements of sustainability: the **economic** or commercial functions that packaging fulfils (e.g. transport, shelf life), its **social** functions (e.g. safety, convenience) and **environmental** functions (minimizing impacts). It also differentiates between different levels of concern, i.e. from the macro levels of **society** (prosperity and well-being), the intermediate levels of the **product/packaging system** (efficiency and effectiveness including product waste prevention) to the micro levels of **packaging materials** (closed cycles or zero waste) and **packaging components** (safe or non-toxic).



Forthcoming events

Training courses in Sydney

Sydney: December 1 & 2, register on-line at <http://www.sustainablepack.org/training/registerTraining.aspx>

Courses are designed to assist organisations minimise the environmental impacts of packaging, meet regulatory requirements in Australia and internationally and, to add value to their business through environmental innovation.

For further information contact: Helen Lewis, (03) 9925 3485, email: helen@sustainablepack.org

PIQET Development Workshop (23rd November)

Melbourne: November 23rd. This workshop will provide input to the development of PIQET[®] from food and beverage packaging technologists and environmental managers. Participation is by invitation only and numbers will be limited.

Interested participants contact: Karli James, (03) 9925 2237, email: karli@sustainablepack.org

NPC Forum in Melbourne (2nd February 2005)

The Centre for Design RMIT University in conjunction with the Australian Institute of Packaging (AIP) will be running an afternoon forum on the National Packaging Covenant – *Walking the Talk and Delivering Results*. To be held at the Box Hill Golf Club on Wednesday 2nd February 2005, 1 pm till 5.30pm, the forum will include a panel of speakers comprising Ed Cordner from the NPC Council, Gavin Williams (PCA), Scott Maloney (Vic EPA), John Lyon (Dulux), Bob Beyon (MAV), Graham Clarke (Coles Myer) and Jenny Henty (EV), followed by roundtable discussions among participants.

For further information contact: Karli James, (03) 9925 2237, email: karli@sustainablepack.org

Future Round Table Dates

The date for the next SPA Roundtable is Friday 18th February 2005 and the topic will be “**Environmental Indicators for packaging systems**”.

SPA is Supported by EcoRecycle Victoria