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Plastic recycling

## Starlinger viscotec celebrates 2 Million tons of installed recycling capacity worldwide

In spring 2021 viscotec, a division of the Austrian machinery supplier Starlinger & Co GmbH, reached a milestone: an impressive 2 million tons of capacity are available for the production of PET recyclate on viscotec systems worldwide.

To take a look at the recycling quantities in Europe helps to put this number in relation. An estimated 4.3 million tons of PET packaging waste is generated annually in the European Union and around half is actually sorted for recycling.<sup>1</sup> With the capacity installed by Starlinger viscotec, almost the entire amount of collected and sorted PET packaging waste in the European Union could be processed to produce recycled PET (rPET).

**Commitment to recycling**

Starlinger viscotec is specialised in sheet extrusion lines and plants for recycling and refinement of PET packaging waste into recyclate in food-grade quality for food and beverage packaging applications. "Our solutions make it possible to recycle valuable raw materials. Our partners and customers share our conviction that PET can and must be recycled," says Angelika Huemer, Managing Director of Starlinger GmbH & Co. "To recycle contains the word "CYCLE". Closing the loop is exactly what recyclers and packaging manufacturers do with Starlinger recoSTAR and viscoSTAR systems: they produce recyclate which is safe for food contact. A beverage bottle can be turned into a beverage bottle again after recycling." For food packaging, PET / rPET currently meets the requirement of a closed loop. A beverage bottle, however, which after recycling becomes, for example, a car interior trim, goes into a so-called "end-of-life" application and thus is lost for the food packaging recycling loop.

**Why recycled PET (rPET)?**

PET is of particular importance: it has the highest recycling rate among plastics and is currently the only recycled plastic that is approved for contact with food in the European Union. "We want to raise awareness that PET food packaging is a valuable raw material. By using recycled PET for packaging, a lot of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are avoided. Many people are not aware of the fact that the carbon footprint of beverage bottles made from rPET is significantly smaller than that of reusable glass bottles," points out Julia Peherstorfer, responsible for sustainability and

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<sup>1</sup> Source: eunomia (2020), "PET MARKET IN EUROPE: STATE OF PLAY", retrieved 25.March 2021 from [https://743c8380-22c6-4457-9895-11872f2a708a.filesusr.com/ugd/dda42a\\_e0c40c546a7446daa7ba5e0bedd67cca.pdf](https://743c8380-22c6-4457-9895-11872f2a708a.filesusr.com/ugd/dda42a_e0c40c546a7446daa7ba5e0bedd67cca.pdf), page 12  
*An estimated 4.3 million tons of PET rigid Packaging ended its product life and was therefore available for collection in 2018, of which 45% (1.9MT) was collected and sorted for Recycling across the EU-28 countries.*

marketing at Starlinger viscotec. "Every consumer can contribute by collecting the beverage bottles and packaging via the waste collection system, so they can be recycled. It is the collaboration of consumers that makes it possible for the PET packaging waste to be processed again into new food packaging made from recycled PET (rPET).

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### About Starlinger viscotec

Starlinger viscotec is a division of Starlinger & Co. GmbH, the world market leader in the field of machinery and complete lines for woven plastic packaging production. For 15 years, viscotec has been producing machines and plants for the refinement of recycled PET for food contact and extrusion lines for PET sheet made from up to 100 % rPET in St.Martin im Mühlkreis, Upper Austria, exporting these to customers worldwide. Starlinger PET recycling systems produce food-safe rPET and are approved for use in food applications by many brand owners as well as various national and international authorities. The worldwide sales and service support network and technical consulting service help customers to achieve optimum results in the manufacturing process.

[www.viscotec.at](http://www.viscotec.at)

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