

Rijswijk, August 2010

Reusable packaging profitable for Eroski

Since 1998, the Spanish supermarket chain Eroski has worked with logistic service provider Euro Pool System. The partnership began with the packaging of meat in reusable crates. Now Eroski also uses the green packaging for bakery products, vegetables, fruit and fish.

The figures illustrate this growth. The number of circulations grew from 250,000 to 55,000,000 per year between 1998 and 2009. All the suppliers of the fresh products mentioned, such as the French company Pom2Sevres (see below), supply their products in the green, reusable packaging. In addition to growth in the number of packaged products, Euro Pool System provides more and more logistic services. Bartolomé Saro, director of the Spanish branch of Euro Pool System, describes the logistics services concerned: "We operate three Return Centres, where we collect all the leftover packaging from the shops. In addition, our washing installations are integrated into Eroski's Return Centres. We have also equipped the packaging storage areas at one of the locations with a cooling system. In an emergency, Eroski's nearby cross-docking centre could use our storage areas."

Lower costs

What does this intensive partnership yield Eroski? Bartolomé Saro answers: "The standardisation of the packaging ensures efficient order picking. We're currently working on the next step: automatic order picking. The fact that we operate the three return centres saves Eroski money, labour, space and CO₂ emissions. Our reusable packaging has also reduced waste in the supply chain, which has reduced the costs for return logistics. In short, it's a partnership that benefits the whole supply chain."

Eroski Facts & Figures

Shops	1,825
DCs for fresh products	14
Return entres	3
Location	Madrid
Area (m ²)	10,000
Location	Bilbao
Area (m ²)	4,100
Location	Barcelona
Area (m ²)	1,600
Turnover 2008 (in millions of €)	9,013
Market position	3

Isabelle Almeida from Pom2Sevres:
“Delivered on time and always clean”

Working with Euro Pool System’s crates saves money and is less polluting than the use of disposable packaging. The latter point continues to weigh heavier for both governments and consumers. The Spanish supermarket chain Eroski wants to receive all its fresh products in the Euro Pool system crates. And this is no problem for apple exporter Pom2Sevres. Commercial manager export Isabelle Almeida comments: “We work with these crates to our complete satisfaction.”

Pom2Sevres from Secondigny – Deux-Sèvres in the Poitou-Charentes region – is a processing centre primarily used for apples. The company was founded by five fruit growers in the area, whose combined properties include about 650 hectares of orchards and yield 40,000 tons of apples. The company sorts the apples and stores them in controlled-atmosphere storage until the moment they go to the customer. Almost half of the apples cross the border, some of these to Spain. The Spanish supermarket chain Eroski is an important customer for the company; as a result, all the apples destined for Eroski go in the green Euro Pool System crates. Isabelle Almeida comments: “We have been working with this packaging for the deliveries to Eroski since 2007. And that’s going great as far as we’re concerned; we’re now using it for a few other customers as well.”

Quality assurance

The deposit system also works well in her opinion. With almost 190,000 circulations per year, that is an important advantage. Although she notes that it is unfortunate that there is always a large sum outstanding for the crates. “That represents a considerable amount of money.”

Apart from this comment, she is positive about the Euro Pool system method. She says that they always receive the crates right on time. Moreover, they’re clean. “That’s important, in connection with maintaining the quality of our products. If we use dirty crates, there’s a good chance the apples won’t arrive at their destination in good condition. And we can’t allow that!”

Euro Pool System International B.V. is Europe’s biggest provider of logistic services in the area of multi-way packaging for fresh products. In cooperation with the European retailer sector, Euro Pool System focuses more and more on providing optimal logistic solutions.

Euro Pool System employs 152 people in seven countries. The pool organisation’s 123 million blue and green returnable crates rotate 600 million times a year. Euro Pool System has 45 service centres throughout Europe.

////////////////////////////////////

Note for the editorial staff

For more information, please contact Dymph Neeteson, PR & Communication.

Euro Pool System International B.V.

P.O. Box 1887

NL-2280 DW Rijswijk (ZH)

T: +31 (0)70 3014 1 30

F: +31 (0)70 3014 1 99

E: dymph.neeteson@europoolsystem.com

I: www.europoolsystem.com