food & beverage REPORTER

July 2026

NEW WASTE PARTNERSHIP MODEL LAUNCHED

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THE MRO SUPPLY CHAIN

RELIABLE FOOD TESTING OPENS MARKETS

Synercore celebrates a decade of growth & innovation in Africa's food industry

From the editor

The South African food and beverage industry continues to adapt to a rapidly changing landscape. From evolving consumer expectations and stricter regulations to ambitious sustainability targets, manufacturers are investing in new technologies, stronger partnerships and smarter ways of working to build resilience and unlock long-term growth.

In this edition of Food & Beverage Reporter, we spotlight five stories that showcase how innovation, collaboration and technical expertise are helping shape the future of food and beverage manufacturing.

Celebrating its tenth anniversary, specialist ingredient supplier **Synercore** reflects on a decade of steady growth across Africa's food ingredient sector. Since launching in 2016, the company has expanded from a specialist supplier into a diversified food technology group serving the bakery, dairy, beverage, confectionery and agri-processing industries.

Its success has been built on consistency and strong global partnerships. As Synercore puts it: "Sustainable growth is built through consistency and its long-term exclusive global strategic partnerships." It's a reminder of the vital role ingredient specialists play in driving innovation, technical support and supply chain collaboration throughout the food manufacturing value chain.

Food safety remains firmly in the spotlight. South Africa's agro-processing sector is a major contributor to employment, economic growth and exports, with agricultural exports reaching R268.7 billion in 2025. Protecting that success depends on robust food safety systems backed by accurate measurement and internationally recognised standards.

Our feature explores the important work of the **National Metrology Institute of South Africa (NMISA)** in maintaining national measurement standards and ensuring traceability in food safety testing. Precision, laboratory confidence and regulatory compliance are essential for protecting consumers, supporting exporters and maintaining trust across the industry.

Efficiency doesn't stop at the production line. Interroll celebrates 28 years of supporting South African industry while continuing to invest in modular conveyor systems, automation, digital technologies and energy-efficient logistics solutions.

As warehouses and distribution centres become increasingly automated, smart materials-handling technologies are helping manufacturers increase throughput, minimise downtime and build more resilient supply chains. Interroll's long-standing commitment highlights the growing importance of modern logistics infrastructure in food and beverage manufacturing.

The circular economy is also gaining momentum. We report on the opening of the new Tonkmeter material recovery facility in Springs, made possible through PETCO's infrastructure investment, with support from **MetPac-SA**. Once fully operational, the facility will process up to 600 tonnes of recyclable material every month, helping divert waste from landfill while strengthening recycling infrastructure, supporting producer responsibility and creating jobs in the Ekurhuleni region.

In packaging, we explore how engineering innovation is helping manufacturers produce more sustainable PET bottles. A Mount Everest-inspired study by **Blow Moulding Technologies (BMT)** shows how advanced stretch blow moulding simulation and physical testing can accurately predict how PET bottles respond to altitude changes. The approach allows beverage producers to optimise lightweight bottle designs before production, reducing development costs while supporting sustainability goals without compromising performance throughout the supply chain.

Together, these stories reflect an industry that continues to move forward through science, engineering, collaboration and strategic investment. Whether advancing ingredient innovation, strengthening food safety, modernising logistics, expanding recycling infrastructure or improving sustainable packaging, South Africa's food and beverage sector is building a stronger, more competitive future!

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Food Indaba 2026 puts water security at the heart of Africa's food future

As climate volatility intensifies across Southern Africa, one of the country's leading food dialogue platforms is shifting attention to the resource that underpins every stage of the food value chain—water.

The 2026 Food Indaba will run from 20 July to 2 August under the theme Water Systems and Food Systems – Rivers, Oceans, Aquifers and Rainfall (ROAR), bringing together policymakers, researchers, producers, chefs, environmental organisations and community leaders to examine the growing relationship between water security and food resilience.

Organisers say the conversation extends well beyond agriculture.

Growing pressure from drought, flooding, pollution, ageing infrastructure and rapid urbanisation means water availability increasingly influences food production, processing, distribution, nutrition and public health.

SA Urban Food & Farming Trust CEO Kurt Ackermann says Cape Town's Day Zero crisis demonstrated how vulnerable food systems become when water systems fail, exposing risks that extend from farming to food affordability and household nutrition.

With another significant El Niño event forecast, the programme aims to move discussion beyond emergency response towards long-term resilience planning.

The flagship conference will feature experts examining urban food systems, fisheries, climate adaptation, marine conservation and food justice, supported by walking tours, urban farm visits, youth workshops and community events across Cape Town.

Building on the success of last year's programme—which hosted 26 events over 14 days and reached more than 120 million people through media coverage—the 2026 edition seeks to deepen collaboration around one of the food industry's defining sustainability challenges.

For South Africa's food and beverage sector, the event reflects a growing reality: future food security cannot be separated from future water security.

Protein boom drives record whey prices as manufacturers rethink formulation strategies

The global race for protein is reshaping ingredient markets—and South African food manufacturers may need to rethink long-held formulation strategies.

According to ingredient specialist ACI Group, soaring global demand for protein is driving unprecedented increases in whey prices while placing sustained pressure on supply chains.

European food-grade whey powder prices have climbed by more than 50% since January, with whey protein concentrate reaching record levels exceeding €26,000 per tonne in some markets.

Demand is being fuelled by multiple long-term trends, including GLP-1 weight-loss medications, healthy ageing, sports nutrition and growing consumer interest in protein-enriched foods and beverages.

Jack Helm, Account Manager for Beverage, Bakery and Functional Foods at ACI Group, says the market is experiencing a structural shift rather than a temporary supply imbalance.

Instead of viewing the issue purely through a pricing lens, manufacturers should focus on supply resilience by diversifying protein sources and building greater formulation flexibility.

Soy protein is emerging as one option capable of reducing dependence on whey, although successful

reformulation depends on functionality—including texture, processing performance and sensory quality—rather than protein content alone.

ACI Group believes manufacturers that begin evaluating alternative protein systems today will be better positioned to manage future volatility while maintaining product quality and commercial competitiveness.

Barentz strengthens African footprint with full acquisition of SK Chemtrade and launch of Barentz South Africa

Global specialty ingredients solutions provider Barentz has strengthened its long-term commitment to Africa with the full acquisition of SK Chemtrade Services (Pty) Ltd, marking the official launch of Barentz South Africa from 1 June.

The move represents the next stage in a successful partnership that began in 2019, when Barentz and SK Chemtrade formed a joint venture to expand their capabilities across South Africa and the broader African market. Over the past six years, the collaboration has combined SK Chemtrade's strong local market knowledge and customer relationships with Barentz's global sourcing network, technical expertise and innovation capabilities.

The acquisition gives Barentz full ownership of the South African operation, creating a stronger platform to support manufacturers across the food and beverage, pharmaceutical, personal care, animal nutrition and industrial sectors with an expanded portfolio of specialty ingredients and value-added technical solutions.

Despite the rebrand, customers can expect complete continuity of service. The existing management team, led by Managing Director Mark Ferrao, will remain in place, ensuring uninterrupted operations and the same customer-focused approach that has underpinned the company's success.

"This transition represents an exciting new chapter for our business," says Ferrao. "While our name is changing, our commitment to our customers, partners and service excellence remains exactly the same. Becoming Barentz South Africa strengthens our ability to deliver world-class ingredient solutions while maintaining the agility and local expertise our customers value."

The transition provides South African customers with direct access to Barentz's extensive global network of suppliers, broader specialty ingredients portfolio, international innovation capabilities and enhanced technical and formulation support, while retaining the trusted local team and relationships built over many years.

Sertaç Sürür, President EMEA at Barentz, says the acquisition reflects the company's long-term confidence in the region.

"Integrating the South African business fully into Barentz immediately connects customers to our global network while local operations remain unchanged. Customers will benefit from expanded access to international suppliers, a wider range of specialty ingredients, and enhanced technical and formulation support delivered by the same experienced local team."

The rebranding also strengthens Barentz's position as a strategic partner for manufacturers seeking innovative ingredient solutions, formulation expertise and supply chain reliability in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

As Barentz South Africa, the company will continue building on the strong foundation established by SK Chemtrade, investing in long-term partnerships and supporting customers with technical expertise, innovation and high-quality specialty ingredient solutions across Southern Africa.

Scaling heritage without losing flavour

Authenticity may be one of hospitality's biggest selling points, but reproducing heritage recipes consistently across high-volume kitchens has become one of its toughest operational challenges.

According to Unilever Food Solutions' Future Menus 2026 report, Culinary Roots is emerging as one of the defining trends shaping professional kitchens, as consumers increasingly seek dishes connected to regional traditions, local ingredients and cultural storytelling.

For chefs, however, scaling these recipes demands far more than multiplying ingredient quantities. Chef Latoya Marivate of Unilever Food Solutions says operators must first identify the defining characteristics that give a dish its identity before adapting it for commercial production.

Using dishes such as Umleqwa Broth with Stuffed Dumplings and Crackling as an example, Marivate explains that protecting signature flavours, textures and cooking techniques is essential if authenticity is to survive the pressures of large-scale service.

The report recommends building flavour through staged cooking techniques—including browning, roasting and marinating—rather than relying on shortcuts that compromise depth. Ingredient selection is equally important, with hardy vegetables such as taro maintaining quality more effectively than delicate greens during extended holding periods.

Texture remains another differentiator, with fresh herbs, toasted seeds, crisp garnishes and finishing sauces introduced at service to recreate the freshness associated with handcrafted cooking.

Beyond preparation, storytelling has become part of the dining experience itself. Provenance, cultural heritage and the history behind recipes increasingly influence purchasing decisions, creating opportunities for restaurants, hotels and caterers to differentiate themselves.

For South Africa's foodservice industry, the Culinary Roots trend highlights a growing commercial opportunity: combining operational efficiency with the authenticity today's consumers increasingly expect.

Consumers crown Rhodes Quality's limited-edition juice range Product of the Year

Innovation has earned Rhodes Quality more than shelf appeal—it has earned consumer approval.
The company's Limited Edition 100% Fruit Juice Blend range has been named Product of the Year 2026 in the fruit juice category following an independent Kantar survey of 2,000 South African consumers.

The award recognises products that stand out for innovation, relevance and overall consumer satisfaction, making the accolade particularly significant in an increasingly competitive beverage market.

Premier Foods Marketing Executive Maria Soares says the limited-edition range was developed to bring excitement to a mature category through distinctive flavour combinations while maintaining the quality consumers associate with Rhodes Quality.

Seasonal blends including Apple, Lemon & Ginger, Pineapple, Carrot & Turmeric and Strawberry & Hibiscus have helped position the range as an example of flavour-led innovation within the ambient juice market.

For beverage manufacturers, the award highlights how limited-edition launches continue to drive consumer engagement while creating opportunities for brands to test new flavour combinations and respond to changing

PURA marks Youth Day by backing Soweto Freedom Ride

Nearly 100 cyclists took to the streets of Soweto on Youth Day as PURA Beverage Co partnered with the Soweto Freedom Ride to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the 1976 Soweto Uprising.

The 10 km community ride travelled through Soweto, including Vilakazi Street, bringing together experienced cyclists, families and young riders in a celebration of participation, resilience and community spirit.

PURA says its involvement reflects the company's commitment to supporting initiatives that unite communities while recognising the contribution young South Africans continue to make in shaping the country's future.

Field Marketing Specialist Jerry Matlejoane described the event as a meaningful opportunity to honour the legacy of 1976 while celebrating today's youth through positive community engagement.

Although the route could not reach the Hector Pieterson Memorial because of activities taking place in the area, organisers say the significance of Youth Day remained central to the event, with residents lining the streets to support participants throughout the morning.

The partnership demonstrates how beverage brands are increasingly aligning with community-led initiatives that extend beyond traditional sponsorship to create meaningful local engagement.

KWV extends global dominance with another gold-winning performance

For more than a century, craftsmanship has defined KWV's brandy heritage. In 2026, that legacy has once again been recognised on the world stage, with the producer collecting multiple top honours at two of the spirits industry's most prestigious competitions.

KWV secured five Double Gold medals and three Gold medals at the International Spirits Challenge before adding a Gold & Style Winner title at the World Brandy Awards, reinforcing its reputation as the world's most awarded brandy.

While the medals recognise individual expressions, the broader story is one of remarkable consistency. At a time when premium spirits are competing for increasingly discerning global consumers, KWV continues to demonstrate that South African brandy can compete with—and outperform—the world's best.

The results reflect more than expert distillation. They showcase decades of investment in grape selection, maturation, blending and cellar expertise, underpinned by knowledge passed from one generation of master distillers to the next.

For South Africa's broader beverage industry, the awards also strengthen the country's international credentials as a premium spirits producer. Global recognition helps build export confidence, reinforces quality perceptions and showcases local manufacturing excellence in highly competitive markets.

Rather than resting on its heritage, KWV says its focus remains on combining traditional craftsmanship with continual innovation, ensuring every release reflects the same commitment to quality that has defined the brand for more than 100 years.

Sally Williams Fine Foods launches the world's first sour nougat with a playful new "Taste The Tingle" campaign

South African confectionery brand Sally Williams is adding a playful twist to one of its most iconic treats with the launch of what it believes is the world's first sour nougat range.

Available in three zingy flavour variants, the new Sally Williams Sour Nougat range combines the brand's signature soft honey nougat with a subtle sour tingle designed to surprise tastebuds without overpowering them.

"Our new Sour Nougat range was created to bring a sense of fun, surprise and shared enjoyment to everyday moments," says Mark Sack, Managing Director. "It still has the soft, indulgent Sally Williams nougat people know and love, but with an unexpected zingy twist that makes you want to go back for another bite."

Launching under the campaign theme "Taste The Tingle", the range is built around the idea that the experience is "sweet on the inside, sour on the outside", bringing together playful flavour combinations with the premium nougat quality synonymous with Sally Williams.

The launch also marks a bold new direction for the brand, with a strong focus on family-friendly moments and everyday indulgence. From lunchbox treats and movie nights to kiddies' parties and weekend snacks, the range has been developed to appeal to both children and adults looking for something a little different.

Sally Williams Fine Foods believes the playful flavour profile and colourful packaging will resonate strongly with families, especially children looking for exciting new treats and parents searching for feel-good additions to shared moments at home. Designed around the kind of "pester power" that starts in the sweet aisle and continues all the way to the checkout, the range taps into the excitement children feel when they discover something unexpected, playful, and bold. From lunchboxes and movie nights to birthday parties and weekend treats, Sally Williams Fine Foods expects the new Sour Nougat range to quickly become a family favourite.

Each pack contains an assortment of the three flavour variants including Zingy Apple, Zingy Blueberry and Zingy Lemon, giving consumers a playful mix of flavours in every bag. The treats are also gluten free, offering families and snack lovers a more inclusive indulgence without compromising on flavour or the soft, signature Sally Williams nougat experience.

First Choice leads the way with launch of High Protein Fuel Bars

As a pioneer in the high-protein beverage category, First Choice celebrates another first, the launch of its new High Protein Fuel Bars, expanding its successful range into the snacking segment. Designed to combine great taste with strong nutritional value, the bars cater to health- and fitness-conscious consumers seeking a convenient, on-the-go snack option.

Marisa Maccaferri, Marketing Executive at Woodlands Dairy Group, says the strong performance of the High Protein ready-to-drink range paved the way for this natural extension into bars. "We've experienced consistent year-on-year growth, reflecting sustained market demand. The Fuel Bars are designed to provide a convenient, nutritious snack for fitness enthusiasts and consumers looking to increase or manage their protein intake," she says.

She adds that the snack category continues to lead innovation in high-protein product development, particularly in the bar segment. "Protein has become a key target nutrient for mainstream consumers and is widely recognised for its role in satiety and weight management. While snack bars remain a popular format, competition is intensifying, with even chocolate brands introducing high-protein variants. Strong growth in the performance nutrition sector has spurred innovation aimed at broader consumer audiences."

Thulile Memela, Brand Manager at First Choice, expressed excitement about the launch of the High Protein Fuel Bar, describing it as a powerful new addition to the range. "Each bar delivers 15g of protein contains collagen, and is a source of Vitamin B12, making it an excellent option for sustained energy and muscle support. It's also preservative-free and trans-fat-free, offering clean, reliable nutrition for on-the-go lifestyles. It truly packs a punch," she says.

Available in three delicious flavours – Salted Caramel, Strawberry Vanilla, and Peanut Butter – the Fuel Bars are designed to support muscle growth and repair, help reduce age-related muscle breakdown, and provide sustained energy throughout the day.

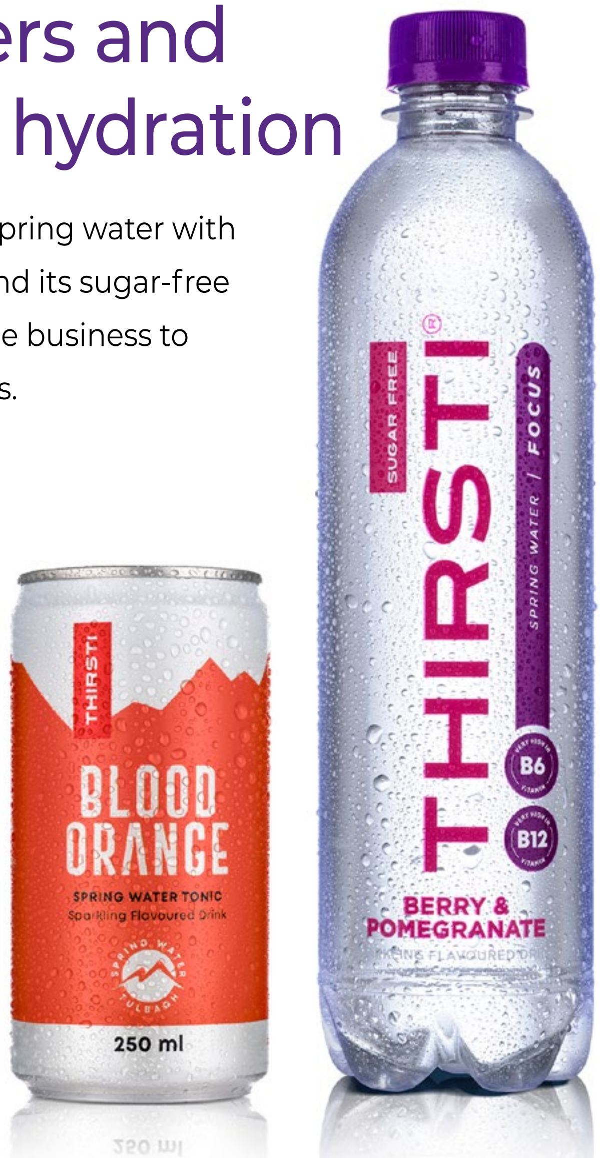
Premium spring mixers and sugar-free functional hydration

THIRSTI is broadening its portfolio beyond natural spring water with the introduction of premium spring water mixers and its sugar-free Flavours Plus functional water range, positioning the business to capture growth across multiple beverage categories.

The expansion reflects broader trends shaping the food and beverage industry, where demand for premium spring water mixers, sugar-free flavoured water, functional hydration drinks, and health-conscious beverage choices in South Africa continues to increase. For manufacturers, distributors and retailers, diversification into adjacent beverage categories presents opportunities to meet changing consumer expectations while strengthening brand value.

Rob Hoatson, CEO of THIRSTI, says the company's strategy has been driven by evolving consumption patterns rather than a departure from its core business: "As a business, we're guided

by evolving consumer needs. Mixers take us into more social occasions, while our flavoured range strengthens our role in everyday hydration. It's about building on what we already do well and staying true to the THIRSTI brand."



Premium mixers respond to changing drinking occasions

The premium spirits market has influenced expectations across the entire drinking experience. Consumers purchasing premium gin, whisky and other spirits are increasingly looking for mixers that complement, rather than overpower, the characteristics of their chosen beverage.

THIRSTI's premium spring water mixer range is developed with its natural spring water, delivering a clean, balanced profile designed to enhance premium spirits. The move enables the company to participate in the growing South African premium mixers market, where product quality and ingredient provenance have become important purchasing considerations for both consumers and hospitality operators.

For the on-trade, including restaurants, bars and hotels, premium mixers also present opportunities to elevate beverage offerings while responding to demand for premium serves.

Functional hydration gains momentum

Alongside social consumption occasions, everyday hydration continues to evolve as consumers seek beverages offering additional nutritional value without added sugar.

THIRSTI's Flavours Plus range combines natural sparkling spring water sourced from the Klein Drakenberg mountains and the Tulbagh basin with functional ingredients and zero sugar.

The range comprises four variants:

- Watermelon & Strawberry and Grapefruit & Guava, both high in Vitamin C and Zinc.
- Berry & Pomegranate, very high in Vitamins B6 and B12.
- Peach & Ginger, very high in Vitamins B3, B5 and B6.

The products address growing demand for sugar-free functional sparkling water, vitamin-enhanced flavoured water, and healthy hydration beverages in South Africa, categories that continue to gain traction among health-conscious consumers seeking alternatives to traditional soft drinks.

www.thirsti.co.za

South African growers supply 100% of Tiger Brands' orange requirements for Oros

Tiger Brands has secured 100% of the oranges required to produce its iconic Oros beverage from South African growers for the second consecutive citrus season.

The development marks a notable turnaround from previous years, when the company was required to supplement local supply with imported oranges due to challenges affecting domestic citrus production. Most notably, global citrus supply shortages, driven by factors such as citrus greening disease in major producing countries like Brazil, increased international demand for South African citrus. This strengthened export parity pricing, reducing local availability and driving up costs. While South Africa is one of the world's leading citrus exporters, local producers often benefit from attractive returns in international markets.

"South African citrus is in high demand in a globally competitive market, making reliable local supply increasingly important. By sourcing 100% of our orange requirements from South African growers, we are reinforcing our commitment to local procurement, providing farmers with stable domestic demand, and strengthening South Africa's agricultural value chain

while reducing reliance on imports," says Shamiel Randeree, MD Snacks, Treats & Beverages, Tiger Brands.

Tiger Brands, the largest user of orange concentrate in South Africa, procures approximately 45,000 metric tonnes – equivalent to approximately 275 million oranges - of oranges annually to produce around 3.5 million litres of orange concentrate used in Oros (1.75ml 2 litre bottles of Oros), the country's leading dilutable beverage brand. During previous seasons, when local citrus supply was constrained, Tiger Brands sourced approximately 65% of its citrus requirements locally, with the remaining 35% procured from international markets.

“By sourcing 100% of our orange requirements from South African growers, we are reinforcing our commitment to local procurement, providing farmers with stable domestic demand, and strengthening South Africa's agricultural value chain”

Oranges, of which Tiger Brands uses Valencia and Navel varieties in the production of Oros, are sourced from leading South African citrus producers across Mpumalanga, Limpopo and the Western Cape. Harvested during the May to July citrus season, the fruit is processed into concentrate and supplied to Tiger Brands' beverage manufacturing facility in Roodekop, Gauteng, where between 75,000 and 100,000 litres are delivered each week to produce Oros (approximately 400 000 litres per month).

The company's ability to secure its full orange requirement locally over the past two seasons has been underpinned by its role as a reliable, long-term buyer, providing producers with a stable domestic market and predictable demand.

According to Tiger Brands, securing 100% local supply reflects the strength of its long-standing partnerships with local producers and its commitment to supporting South African agriculture.
This sustained support has enabled citrus producers to invest in their operations, improve efficiency and create employment opportunities within farming communities.

Among the benefits reported by suppliers are investments in water infrastructure, solar energy projects and initiatives aimed at improving resource efficiency through reduced water and energy consumption.

"Partnerships between food producers and agricultural producers are critical to ensuring the sustainability of South Africa's food system. By providing a dependable local market for citrus growers, we contribute not only to the success of our suppliers but also to the economic wellbeing of the communities in which they operate," says Randeree.

The local sourcing achievement also supports Tiger Brands' broader ambition to increase local procurement and strengthen domestic supply chains while delivering quality products to consumers.
Oros is one of Tiger Brands' ten core brands identified as having compelling growth potential.

“For generations, Oros has remained a trusted household favourite, known for bringing families together around moments of refreshment. The continued local sourcing of its key ingredient reinforces the brand's connection to South African consumers and the communities that help produce it,” says Randeree.

www.tigerbrands.co.za

Advanced metal detection for heavy washdown areas

Metal detection plays a critical role in meat and alternative meat processing — where maintaining food safety often means balancing rigorous sanitation requirements with reliable contaminant detection. Frequent washdown procedures, demanding production conditions, and natural product variation can all impact inspection performance, making equipment design just as important as detection capability.

The CEIA THS/210®-MBH9 addresses these challenges through a combination of cutting-edge detection technology, hygienic construction, and operator-focused design. Engineered specifically for wet processing environments, the system combines exceptional metal detection performance with IP69K construction to support food safety and production efficiency.

Applications range from fresh and processed meat products to poultry, seafood, meat-alternatives, dairy products, and ready meals, where effective contaminant control and hygienic operation are essential.

A key feature of the THS/210®-MBH9 is its hygienic design. Built for intensive washdown environments, the system is built with AISI 316L stainless steel housing and FDA-compliant materials. This sanitary design supports residue-free cleaning and is engineered to withstand the high-pressure, high-temperature washdown procedures common in food processing facilities.

Developed over several years of research and development, the rugged touchscreen interface was specifically engineered to provide long-term reliability in harsh washdown environments while maintaining intuitive operation. The interface allows faster startup, simplified product changeovers, and quick access to inspection settings, helping operators work more efficiently while reducing maintenance concerns often associated with equipment operating in wet environments.

At the core of the THS/210®-MBH9 is CEIA's exclusive multi-spectrum technology. Particularly valuable for meat and meat alternative applications, the technology manages product effect caused by natural variations in moisture, salt content, blood, temperature, density, and viscosity. By automatically compensating for these variables, the system maintains high detection sensitivity while reducing false rejects, unnecessary product waste, and production interruptions.

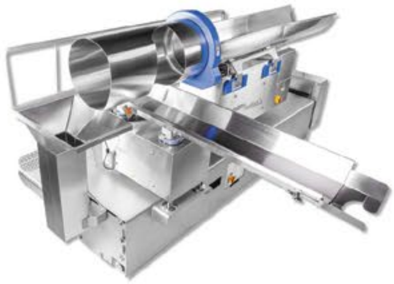
The metal detector also incorporates CEIA's built in Auto-QC function, a factory calibrated verification system that simulates the passage of ferrous, non-ferrous, and stainless-steel test pieces through the detector aperture. This allows processors to verify detector performance automatically without interrupting production or conducting manual test passes, helping simplify quality assurance procedures and minimise downtime.

Additional detection modes enable the THS/210®-MBH9 to be optimised for wet products, dry products, and products packaged in metallised materials, providing flexibility for processors managing multiple production lines or diverse product portfolios. Smart connectivity capabilities further support production monitoring and system management.

By combining hygienic design, advanced inspection technology, intuitive operation, and automated verification capabilities, the THS/210-MBH9 provides food processors with a practical solution for strengthening food safety, reducing waste, protecting brand reputation, and improving production efficiency in demanding washdown environments.

Heat and Control are experts in inspection solutions for the food industry and the exclusive supplier of CEIA equipment throughout Australia, New Zealand, and Africa.

www.heatandcontrol.com



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New upgraded extrusion plant


Innovation and application

A decade of growth & innovation in Africa's food industry

2026 marks 10 years of measured, strategic growth for locally owned specialist ingredient supplier, Synercore. Founded in 2016, the company is now an integral part of Africa's food ingredient and manufacturing ecosystem, having evolved into a multi-division food technology group that plays an indispensable role in the production process of some of the most trusted food brands.

Over the past decade, Synercore has grown from a focused ingredient business serving a wide range of food categories, including bakery, dairy, beverage, confectionary and agri-processing. This evolution has been shaped by a clear philosophy: Sustainable growth is built through consistency and its long-term exclusive global strategic partnerships.

According to CEO Dr. Tertius Cilliers, the journey has been defined by purpose, perseverance and people. "As Synercore marks its ten-year anniversary, we reflect on a decade shaped by resilience and collaboration," he says. "We didn't set out to be the biggest. We set out to be a trusted and essential partner in the industry. Ten years later, we're proud to be part of the products that millions of people eat every day, without them even knowing we were there."

Did you know?
Synercore proudly serves over 160 customers and manufactures more than 30 000 MT of product per annum across the group, showcasing its evolution into a trusted industry leader.

Who is Synercore today?

Synercore operates across multiple interconnected areas of the ingredient supply chain:

- Product formulation & application
- Supplier of speciality ingredients
- Contract blending
- Milling
- Extrusion
- Research & development

Rather than operating in compartmented silos, Synercore encourages symbiotic integration across the


Contract blending


Customised stabiliser systems

various divisions within the group, creating a stronger whole. This collaborative approach enables customer support throughout the full product lifecycle, from formulation through to full-scale manufacturing, while FSSC 22000 certified manufacturing facilities reflect an unwavering commitment to quality and food safety.

Competitive edge

Synercore's strength lies in a combination of:

- **Commitment to local investment:** Consistently invested in their manufacturing infrastructure, technical capability and specialist skills. These investments support greater regional self-sufficiency, strengthening local supply chains in an increasingly volatile global environment.


Newly upgraded Innovative Research Solutions (IRS) Laboratory

- **Reliability:** Long-term customer relationships, trusted service delivery and deep technical expertise have positioned Synercore as a dependable partner in an industry where consistency and performance are critical.
- **Strategic partnerships:** Through carefully selected global strategic partnerships, Synercore provides customers with access to market-leading ingredients, technologies and insights. These partnerships are underpinned by strong local technical support, enabling global innovation to be effectively adapted for African manufacturing realities and regulatory requirements.


Prof. Pieter Swart (MD of IRS)

- **Innovation and total industry involvement:** Synercore focuses on translating global food trends into solutions that are scalable, affordable and appropriate to South Africa. This allows customers to innovate while managing cost, compliance and production constraints.

A decade of success

Dr. Cilliers defines the last decade by purposeful expansion and sustainable value creation.

In recent years, Synercore converted Norfund's investment into equity, strengthening a partnership aligned to shared development objectives.

The acquisition and integration of Impilo Products and Sizwe Foods further expanded the group's operational depth, while the opening of its head office and warehouse in Klapmuts in January 2025 increased capacity to support growing demand.

The group further continued to invest in research and innovation, with Innovative Research Solutions opening a new purpose-built laboratory at the Woodmill in Stellenbosch in 2025, reinforcing its science-led approach to food solutions.

Synercore has earned recognition from its suppliers as a leading brand in the industry, with South Africa's top food manufacturers acknowledging its excellence through an exclusive invitation to the PepsiCo Supplier Roadshow (2024), the 'Supply Chain Supplier of the Year' award from Famous Brands (2019), and the recent award and recognition at the Fair Cape Supplier Awards (2025).

Beyond business growth, Synercore remains committed to social impact through its Synercore Cares programme, focused on improving nutrition, advancing education, and supporting entrepreneurship to create lasting community impact. Reflecting on this commitment, Synercore was the only external supplier selected to participate in Tiger Brands' Plates4Days CSI initiative and has continued to contribute actively to the programme in the years that followed.

What's next?

Synercore remains focussed to staying at the forefront of food trends, innovation, regulatory developments, and evolving consumer demand. The group aims to continue its growth into various food industries by expanding its infrastructure, capabilities and operations.

Over the past two years, the company has forged new partnerships with customers and collaborators across the continent, resulting in a threefold increase in exports to Africa. With the African Continental Free Trade Agreement expected to further enhance intra-African trade, the group sees significant opportunity to continue to extend its technical expertise and solutions beyond South Africa's borders.

As Dr. Cilliers explains, "Looking ahead, Synercore's Vision 2031 is to strengthen our leadership in the food industry, advancing innovative formulations and sustainable nutrition solutions that shape the future of food. Together with our people and partners, we are committed to building a stronger, more food-secure future for Africa."

www.synercore.co.za

Synercore EXCO team

Opening markets through reliable food testing

Food safety is the foundation on which public health, consumer confidence, and international market access are built, and in South Africa, the economic consequences of getting it wrong are severe. The agro-processing sector is a cornerstone of the national economy: the food, beverages and tobacco subsector accounts for approximately 20 % of manufacturing employment, agriculture's value chain contributes around 14 % of GDP, and agricultural exports reached a record R268,7 billion in 2025.

That record is not a guarantee. Global market access depends on sustained compliance with increasingly stringent food safety standards. A single high-profile failure can trigger import bans, erode hard-won trading relationships, and devastate the livelihoods of workers and producers across an entire value chain.

With food supply chains getting more complex, accurate measurement is vital to make sure products adhere to nutritional, safety and regulatory requirements. Laboratories play a key role in testing for contaminants such as pesticide residues, heavy metal and mycotoxins, as well as checking nutritional content to ensure compliance with national and international standards.

Food safety testing is supported by the National Metrology Institute of South Africa (NMISA), a Type 3A public entity of the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (the dtic). NMISA maintains South Africa's national measurement standards and provides traceability to the international measurement system.

NMISA develops Certified Reference Materials (CRMs) for foods produced in South Africa and the region. These materials are the reference points to which laboratories can relate their measurements, and allow laboratories to verify the accuracy of their analytical method test results.

NMISA further supports laboratory quality management systems through the provision of ISO/IEC 17043 accredited Proficiency Testing (PT) schemes, which enable laboratories to demonstrate their competence, through an independent assessment of the laboratory's test results. The PT results are used to provide accreditation bodies and clients with objective evidence of the laboratory's performance.

In 2025, NMISA coordinated 12 food-related proficiency testing schemes covering:

- Determination of pesticides in oranges
- Determination of pesticides in pear
- Determination of pesticides in blueberries
- Residues in honey
- Mycotoxins in almonds
- Patulin in apple juice
- Ochratoxin and elements in coffee
- Fatty acids, elements and protein in fish
- Pesticides in honey
- Metals in almonds
- Metals in honey
- Metals in tea

The PT schemes allow laboratories to generate measurement results that can be trusted, compared and accepted internationally. This in turn helps to protect consumers and enhances South Africa's reputation as a reliable supplier of agricultural and food products.

"Laboratories play a key role in testing for contaminants such as pesticide residues, heavy metal and mycotoxins, as well as checking nutritional content to ensure compliance with national and international standards"

In a market where a single rejected shipment can unravel years of trade relationships, measurement accuracy is not a technical detail, it is a competitive advantage. NMISA's Certified Reference Materials (CRMs) and Proficiency Testing programmes provides laboratories, industry, regulators and exporters with the measurement confidence that keeps South African products in global markets and AfCFTA's promise of frictionless intra-African trade on track.

Read more about our latest PT schemes at **www.nmisa.org**

Why choose NMISA proficiency testing schemes and reference materials?

NMISA's Proficiency Testing (PT) Schemes and Certified Reference Materials (CRMs) are ISO/IEC 17043 and ISO 17034 accredited through SANAS, designed specifically to meet the needs of laboratories operating in South Africa and across the African continent.

Key benefits include:

- High-quality, internationally recognised materials that helps ensuring that your measurement results are accurate, reliable, and traceable.
- Reduced import or customs delays, ensuring faster access to the materials you need.
- Lower shipping costs and less complexity, which means the risks and challenges associated with transporting specialised testing materials from abroad are substantially reduced
- Locally relevant food commodities and matrices that mirror the products commonly tested by laboratories in the region
- Locally relevant contaminants, including pesticides, heavy metals, mycotoxins, and other substances commonly encountered in South African and African food products.
- Improved ability to comply with local regulations, helping you meet the standards set by the Department of Health, Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (the dtic)
- Seasonally relevant PT schemes that align with local crop cycles, giving you a better reflection of real-world testing conditions.
- Support for regional trade and competitiveness, allowing labs to showcase their competence while reducing dependence on imported materials.
- Customised PT schemes tailored around laboratories analytical challenges are available on request.
- Proudly South African solutions that foster local innovation, skills development, and economic growth

National Metrology Institute of South Africa

NMISA Proficiency Testing Schemes

2026 - 2027

Dispatch date*	PT Scheme No	PT Scheme Description	Approx. Sample Size	Registration Fee		
Mycotoxins				**ZAR**	**USD**	**EUR**
May 2026	NMISA-PT-145	Aflatoxins in Macadamia	2 x 50 g	R 4 850	$ 376	€ 315
		Aflatoxins in Macadamia, with 5 calibration solutions	2 x 50 g 5 x ampoules	R 14 480	$1 114	€ 965
Nov 2026	NMISA-PT-146	Mycotoxins in Maize	100 g	R 8 150	$ 632	€ 530
		Mycotoxins in Maize, with 9 calibration solutions	100 g 9 x ampoules	R 30 227	$2 325	€ 2 015
Pesticides/Contaminants				**ZAR**	**USD**	**EUR**
May 2026	NMISA-PT-144 Round 1	Pesticides in Kiwi	2 x 50 g + 50 g blank	R 4 850	$ 376	€ 315
Sept 2026	NMISA-PT-144 Round 2	Pesticides in Mandarin	2 x 50 g + 50 g blank	R 4 850	$ 376	€ 315
Nov 2026	NMISA-PT-144 Round 3	Pesticides in Avocado	2 x 50 g + 50 g blank	R 4 850	$ 376	€ 315
Elements/Nutritional Content/Other				**ZAR**	**USD**	**EUR**
Sept 2026	NMISA-PT-147	Elements in Fish	20 g	R 8 150	$ 632	€ 530
Nov 2026	NMISA-PT-148	Cannabinoids in Oil (Trial)	3 g	R 16 300	$ 1 263	€ 1 060
Alcohol /Forensic				**ZAR**	**USD**	**EUR**
May 2026	NMISA-PT-141 Round 1	Forensic Blood Alcohol testing: Ethanol	3 levels, 25 mL each	R 8 150	$ 632	€ 530
Sept 2026	NMISA-PT-141 Round 2	Forensic Blood Alcohol testing: Ethanol	3 levels, 25 mL each	R 8 150	$ 632	€ 530
Nov 2026	NMISA-PT-141 Round 3	Forensic Blood Alcohol testing: Ethanol	3 levels, 25 mL each	R 8 150	$ 632	€ 530
Sept 2026	NMISA-PT-142	Blood preservation: Sodium fluoride	2 levels, 100 mL each	R 4 850	$ 376	€ 315
Nov 2026	NMISA-PT-143	Breathalyser calibration: water-bath method	1 level, 4 x 500 mL	R 8 150	$ 632	€ 530

* Registration deadline 2 weeks before dispatch date, registration open to any testing laboratory and participation is confirmed with a purchase order or proof of payment. Any changes to the dispatch date are communicated with registered participants timeously

** The result reporting deadline is typically 4-6 weeks after dispatch. The reporting deadline may be adjusted to accommodate the needs of participating laboratories (the stability of the material is also considered). The draft PTS report is distributed for comment within 2 weeks of receipt the final result set. The final report is issued 2-3 weeks after distribution of the draft report.

For more information or advice on NMISA PTs, customised PT schemes and material spikes contact us on pt@nmisa.org or visit our website at nmisa.org

Proficiency Testing Schemes Provider

PROUDLY SOUTH AFRICAN

Precision for millions of crackers

At Mondelēz International's Capriata d'Orba plant, two Ishida multihead weighers improve weighing accuracy, reduce giveaway and increase efficiency.

At its production site in Capriata d'Orba, in Italy, Mondelēz Italia Biscuits Production S.p.A. operates one of its most important European facilities for snack production. Iconic brands such as Ritz and Cipster are manufactured here for a range of international markets.

The Ritz brand alone accounts for approximately 20% of the plant's total output, making it one of the site's key products. To support these volumes and further improve packing line efficiency, the company decided to invest in the upgrade of its weighing technology which resulted in the installation of two Ishida CCW-RVE 14-head multihead weighers.

Fact and figures

- The standard deviation was reduced from 2g to well under 1g
- The Ishida multihead weighers achieve up to 98% efficiency
- Product breakage during the weighing operation has been reduced by approximately 3%

Challenge

The previous weighers had been in operation for many years and were beginning to show signs of weight inconsistencies and reliability issues.

Before the upgrade, the standard deviation of the weighing process was close to two grams, a value that generated unwanted product giveaway. For high volume productions, such as Ritz, even small weight variations can have a significant impact on raw material costs.

In addition, during the warmer periods of the year, some electronic components of the old equipment proved to be less reliable, causing occasional stoppages or operational anomalies.

Within a multinational company such as Mondelēz, suppliers are being asked to meet very high standards. Every new system must comply with strict guaranteed performance parameters, defined before installation and subsequently verified using real production data.

Solution

To improve line accuracy and reliability, Mondelēz decided to install two Ishida CCW-RVE multihead weighers, each equipped with 14 weighing heads and a hopper volume of 1.5 litres.

The multiheads were configured in collaboration with Ishida's local distributor Itech to perfectly align with the product characteristics and the requirements of the packaging line.

One of the main interventions was the downsizing of the weigh hopper volume compared with the previous machines. This decision made it possible to enhance the accuracy and consistency of the weighing process.

“The weighers operate in combination with a vertical bagmaker and achieve a standard speed of approximately 65 packs per minute, with the possibility of running at higher speeds depending on pack format and production conditions"

Another significant advantage is the high level of automation: During operation no operator needs to be deployed to look after the weighers. Line personnel supervise the entire process and intervene only for periodic checks, such as metal detector verification or scheduled cleaning.

The added value of ITECH & Ishida

One of the key factors behind the choice of the new Ishida multihead weighers was their outstanding reliability.

“The decision was influenced by the positive experience we have had with other Ishida machines installed in the plant,” explains Samuele Mazzei, maintenance manager for the Ritz and Cipster lines at the Capriata d’Orba site. “Over time, we found that both the new weighers’ designs and their components were much more reliable than our previous weighing solutions.”

The collaboration with ITECH also played an important role in the success of the project: From the technical definition stage through to installation and operator training, the support proved to be consistent and professional.

“The collaboration with ITECH has always been very smooth,” adds Mazzei. “We received support both from a technical and commercial point of view, with a constant presence and great availability whenever needed.”

The introduction of the new Ishida multihead weighers brought concrete benefits to the production lines:

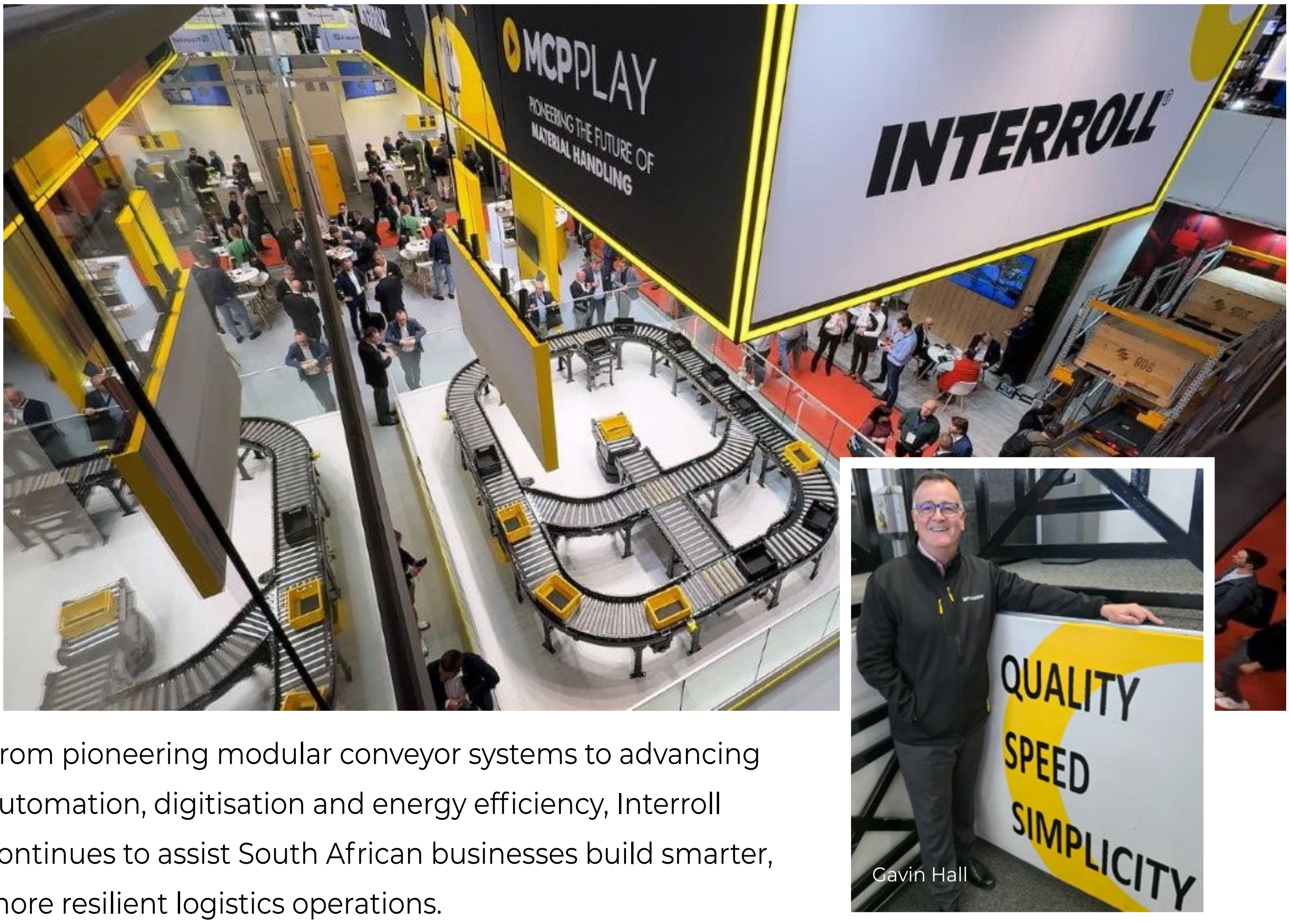
- The standard deviation of weighing operation was reduced from approximately 2g to 0.6-0.8g
- Product giveaway was significantly reduced, resulting in raw material savings
- The Ishida multihead weighers now achieve efficiency levels of up to 98%
- Process stability has improved significantly
- The number of products damaged during the weighing process has reduced by approximately 3%

Thanks to these improvements, the plant can handle very high production volumes while maintaining high quality standards.

“With these new Ishida weighers, we have been able to significantly improve production stability,” concludes Mazzei. “Weighing accuracy is much higher and the machines have proven to be extremely reliable.”

www.ishidaeurope.com

Interroll marks milestone year in South Africa with continued innovation in material handling



Gavin Hall

From pioneering modular conveyor systems to advancing automation, digitisation and energy efficiency, Interroll continues to assist South African businesses build smarter, more resilient logistics operations.

After 28 years in South Africa, Interroll continues to demonstrate why longevity in the materials handling sector depends on more than reliable products. By combining local expertise with continuous innovation in modular conveyor technology, automation, digitisation and energy-efficient logistics solutions, the company remains at the forefront of a rapidly evolving industry.

"Many of our customers have been with us for decades," says Gavin Hall, Managing Director of Interroll South Africa. "That reflects not only the quality and reliability of our products, but our ability to evolve alongside our customers' changing requirements and provide access to the latest technologies shaping the future of material handling."

Part of the global Interroll Group, which was founded in Switzerland in 1959 and today serves industries ranging from e-commerce and retail to manufacturing, food and beverage, airports and courier logistics, Interroll established its South African presence in 1998.

Over nearly three decades, the company has evolved from a sales-focused operation into a local manufacturing and service hub capable of supporting customers throughout the entire lifecycle of their material handling systems.

Hall ascribes the company's longevity in the local market reflects both its commitment to South Africa and its ability to continuously adapt to changing customer requirements. "From day one, Interroll South Africa has been more than a sales and repair centre," he highlights.

"Our local assembly capability has enabled us to supply the full Interroll product range while maintaining the same global quality standards that define the Interroll brand. Today, we operate as a fully-fledged manufacturing facility, combining global engineering excellence with local manufacturing expertise," explains Hall.

As the market evolved and customers demanded faster delivery times and greater support, the company expanded its local capabilities significantly. Today, it manufactures rollers locally and has a dedicated drum motor repair centre. This provides maintenance and lifecycle services, allowing for faster response times while maintaining the quality standards associated with the global Interroll brand.

Building on a foundation of innovation

"We have always believed in modularity. Our original aluminium Modulink conveyor modules proved incredibly durable, with many still operating today," says Hall. The introduction of the Modular Conveyor Platform (MCP) built on that legacy by delivering a plug-and-play system that is flexible, scalable and quick to install.

"The platform strategy has also enabled us to manufacture more efficiently while maintaining the consistently high quality and global standards that customers expect from Interroll, backed by worldwide availability," notes Hall.

Introduced globally in 2014, the MCP enables system integrators to design and deploy highly flexible conveyor systems using standardised modules that can be expanded, reconfigured and maintained with ease. The platform's plug-and-play architecture has become a benchmark within the industry, allowing businesses to scale operations as requirements evolve.

"The MCP was a significant milestone for Interroll," notes Hall. It simplified design, installation, expansion and maintenance, while providing customers with the scalability they need to support future growth. Its success demonstrates the value of standardised, modular solutions in today's fast-moving logistics environment.

The platform continues to evolve through innovations such as MCP PLAY, which incorporates advanced software functionality, intelligent controls and enhanced connectivity to support Industry 4.0 environments. These capabilities enable customers to improve throughput, reduce commissioning times and gain deeper operational insights through real-time data and analytics.

Supporting the next generation of logistics

South Africa's logistics and supply chain sector has undergone significant transformation in recent years, driven largely by the rapid growth of e-commerce and rising customer expectations around fulfilment speed and service quality.

According to Hall, this trend is creating growing demand for automated, data-driven logistics infrastructure capable of delivering higher efficiency and reliability. "E-commerce growth remains one of the most significant drivers of change in the market," he remarks.

Businesses are investing heavily in logistics infrastructure, warehouse automation and last-mile delivery capabilities. At the same time, they are looking for solutions that improve efficiency, provide operational visibility and support long-term growth.

This shift is also accelerating demand for technologies that enable predictive maintenance, real-time performance monitoring and intelligent system optimisation. "Customers increasingly expect data-driven operations, predictive maintenance and real-time visibility into system performance. Our solutions continue to evolve to support these requirements while helping customers maximise uptime and productivity," stresses Hall.

Driving sustainability through efficiency

Alongside automation and digitalisation, energy efficiency has become a major focus area for logistics operators worldwide. Interroll's product portfolio incorporates a range of technologies designed to reduce energy consumption without compromising performance.

These include intelligent conveyor systems with demand-based operation to optimise energy use, combined with zero-pressure accumulation (ZPA), where zone-based control prevents contact and back-pressure between products.

"Energy efficiency is becoming increasingly important for customers, particularly in South Africa where energy security remains a key consideration. Smart systems that optimise energy usage while maintaining throughput can deliver meaningful operational benefits and cost savings," adds Hall.

Local presence, global expertise

While Interroll's solutions are deployed worldwide by leading brands across e-commerce, logistics, manufacturing and retail, the company believes its long-standing local presence remains a key differentiator in the South African market.

Some customer relationships span decades, reflecting the company's reputation for reliability, technical support and long-term partnership. "Our customers value not only the quality and reliability of our products, but also the fact that our local team has direct access to global expertise and decision-makers within the broader Interroll organisation," says Hall.

As South African businesses continue investing in smarter, more agile supply chains, Interroll remains focused on helping customers improve productivity, increase operational resilience and prepare for the future of material handling.

"Material handling is evolving rapidly. Whether it is automation, data analytics, energy efficiency or e-commerce fulfilment, our role is to ensure customers have access to proven technologies and the expertise required to remain competitive. After 28 years in South Africa, that commitment remains as strong as ever," concludes Hall.

www.interroll.co.za

Bizerba and Avocet Scales & Labels drive connected retail in Southern Africa

Bizerba Southern Africa and Avocet Scales & Labels proudly announce their strategic partnership for distribution of Bizerba's retail portfolio in the Sub-Saharan African region.

This is a collaboration which is bound to strengthen both companies' presence in the region, by combining Bizerba's global expertise in connected retail solutions with Avocet's extensive local market knowledge, national footprint, and service capability — delivering scalable, future-ready retail technology to customers across the region.

A partnership designed for a changing retail landscape

Retailers across Southern Africa are increasingly adopting digital and connected solutions to improve efficiency, visibility, and customer experience. The partnership between Bizerba and Avocet was initiated in response to growing demand for advanced PC-based retail scales, AI-driven solutions such as object recognition, fraud prevention, ecommerce or instore ordering, real-time data architectures, and cloud-enabled software platforms — capabilities increasingly requested by leading retail groups, franchise operators and small retail stores alike.

"We started engaging with Bizerba as we were looking for a solution that brings together advanced hardware with cloud-based software and object recognition. Retailers are moving towards PC-based and connected scale solutions, and Bizerba's technology allowed us to address that shift with confidence," noted Vincent Langlois, Avocet Scales & Labels.

Through this collaboration, retailers gain access to modular weighing and labelling solutions, including linerless labelling with automatic cutting, operator authentication, and remote diagnostics just to name a few standard solutions — all backed by reliable local after-salessupport.

Combining global innovation with strong local execution

Avocet's well-established presence, with 11 branches across South Africa and an extended Sub-Saharan distribution network, ensures that Bizerba's technology can be deployed and supported at scale.

"What stood out about Bizerba was the quality of both the equipment and the software platforms. This partnership enables us to offer our customers market-leading technology that is modular, future-proof, and supported locally — something that is critical in today's fast-moving retail environment," said Jim Pinder, Avocet Scales &Labels

By combining Bizerba's global product portfolio with Avocet's market intelligence, serviceinfrastructure, ability to compete in a tough, price-driven market with dedicated customerservice and proximity to customers, the partnership reduces total cost of ownership. It ensures faster response times, local stock availability, and dependable long-term support.

What this means for Bizerba — and for retailers

"When we started engaging with Avocet, it quickly became clear that there was strong alignment in values, market understanding, and long-term ambition. Avocet's national footprint, technical expertise, and deep relationships within the retail sector make them an ideal partner to bring Bizerba's connected retail and weighing solutions to market at scale. Together, we are well positioned to support retailers with technology that is both globally proven and locally supported," says Christian Schiess, Managing Director, Bizerba Southern Africa.

"From a global Bizerba perspective, the partnership with Avocet strongly aligns with our strategy of deepening our presence in key growth regions such as South Africa and the broader Southern African market. By combining global innovation with stronglocal execution, we are able to serve regional customers with greater responsiveness and relevance," concluded Ante Todoric, Managing Director Business Unit Retail, Bizerba.

For retailers, the collaboration provides confidence to adopt advanced, connected retail technologies at scale — without the risk often associated with complex digital transformation. This partnership ensures access to internationally proven technology alongside reliable local support as retailers adapt to changing consumer expectations and operational demands.

Looking ahead

Both organisations see strong potential in connected, centrally managed retail solutions that enable consistent operations across large and diverse store networks — without the need for regionally fragmented systems. The goal is a fast, reliable, centrally managed retail environment that scales across the region.

www.bizerba.com

Pump spares and parts for Africa

KSB Pumps and Valves employ a customer first approach to the supply of spares and parts for its massive installed base of pumps and valves across the continent.

Johannes Tokwana

Johannes Tokwana, sales manager at KSB SupremeServ responsible for spares and part sales, says the company employs sophisticated logistics techniques based on enterprise and manufacturing resource planning software from SAP which has been specially adapted for the company's needs. It relies on decentralised stockholding backed by a central support base in Johannesburg which ensures all branches in South Africa and companies in Africa are sufficiently stocked.

Apart from its branch network in South Africa the footprint covers KSB operations and partners in Kenya, Nigeria, Zambia, Namibia and Angola, with agency support in Ghana. "For us, the human factor is vitally important with our branches and sales partners still required to regularly visit their customers and identify fast-moving and critical items. This is so we can accurately gauge requirements and hold these items on site to ensure they are not replenished by our staff at SupremeServ before they are depleted. The same principle applies to sister operations throughout the region where fast-moving parts are identified based on installed base data and service history. Critical components are prioritised and where necessary emergency logistics are arranged to protect uptime.

"In areas where, for example, municipalities are battling ageing infrastructure and water shortages or production plants rely on liquid pumping circuits this type of responsiveness is essential. In these instances pump or valve downtime cannot wait for overseas lead times and that is the beauty of having our local manufacturing plant that is able to cater for most of these types of spares. However, our aim always remains to collaborate with our customers to establish preventative maintenance routines that work for them and ensure their pumping infrastructure remains dependable.

"The strategic advantage lies in proximity and that is why we have invested heavily in our African network and having service and support situated in close proximity to our customers. This is particularly important in remote African operations where logistics can be unpredictable," says Johannes.

He adds that service parts usually consist of wear components, seals and hydraulic parts that must be checked and replaced at regular intervals under certain conditions. Keeping these fast-moving items in stock is easy but having them in the right place at the right time is essential and this is the key role of the company's structured supply chain and forecasting discipline.

"That is the critical role that KSB SupremeServ plays to close the loop between manufacture, installation and long-term operation. That means ensuring the right part is available in the right place at the right time whether that is Germiston, Cape Town, Kitwe or Nairobi," Johannes concludes.

www.ksbpumps.com

How solar system integrators and installers grow SA's market

When the going gets tough, the pros find new business. The global solar market has experienced several major growth years, adding 618 Gigawatt peak (GWp) in 2025. However, this is a slower pace than in previous years. Even in South Africa, where the solar market added 1.6 GW in 2025 over 2024's 1.1 GW, that is still a slowdown compared to 2023's 2.4 GW (Global Solar Council) as systems integrators and installers run into various barriers.

Oscar Roberto Harbs Junior

"The demand is still there, but it's not as simple as before," an installer remarked at a recent local solar event, speaking off the record. "Loadshedding is not as big a concern as it was, so there is less urgency to install solar systems. Prices are also higher than before. People want solar systems, but they ask a lot more questions and look for more value."

A maturing market

These comments resonate with Oscar Roberto Harbs Júnior, WEG Africa's Solar Sales Supervisor. South Africa is bountiful in sunshine, and electricity price increases encourage consistent interest in solar and other renewable energies.

According to the Africa Solar Industry Association, solar represents 10.7% of South Africa's energy mix, a testament to the industry's rapid growth in the past decade. There is clearly scope for growth, yet installations have slowed as customers become more discerning, especially in the commercial and industrial sectors. Value is becoming a major part of their decision-making. Companies are taking longer to decide on solar strategies and want to understand their options.

"Buyers want to see value, but not necessarily in the price. They want to know about warranties and service levels. They want to know more about different solar solutions and hybrid designs. They want skilled and trained installation crews. And when they decide to buy, they want the installation process to start quickly," says Harbs.

Reaching SA's 90%

Solar system installers and integrators are at the forefront of these changes, pressuring them to improve their expertise and delivery. Customers are more interested in competence than cheap deals. To show competence and grow their revenues, the solar industry's frontline needs several things:

- Reliable supply: Ready access to solar components or quick order turnaround of stock isn't available, backed by a national supply footprint.
- Vendor guarantees: OEMs offering strong warranties with quick replacement, evaluation, and repair processes.
- Technical training: Accessible and tiered technical training to improve skills and create solutions-based offerings.
- Preferential status with suppliers: Closer partnerships with OEMs to benefit from business referrals and product discounts.

Continued on page 30

New KOB high pressure homogeniser series for small and medium-scale production

The new GEA KOB homogeniser series includes four models reaching up to 400 bar with a capacity starting from 700 up to 18.000 L/h. *Source: GEA*

GEA is presenting the complete range of its KOB series, a new cost-efficient line of homogenisers reaching up to 400 bar. The series is designed to give small and medium production plants access to industrial-grade performance at an attractive investment level.

With KOB models 11, 22, 45 and 90 available, the homogenisers offer a compact, hygienic and flexible solution for a broad range of food, beverage, chemical and personal care applications, including homogenising and feeding spray dryers. Optimised and compact mechanical construction, lower noise levels, simplified maintenance access and efficient power use create a strong value proposition for existing plants and new lines alike.

Built for performance: up to 400 bar and flexible valve options

At the core of the GEA KOB homogenisers is a robust high-pressure design up to 400 bar, ensuring stable and efficient homogenisation for demanding, moderately viscous and abrasive applications. To meet the requirements of diverse applications, higher-efficiency homogenising valve technology and more wear-resistant materials are available as options.

The base configuration uses competitively priced wear-resistant parts, providing an economical choice for standard, non-abrasive products, while optional high-wear-resistant materials extend service life in more demanding, abrasive formulations.

Compact machines engineered for efficiency, low noise and reduced operating costs

The KOB homogeniser series is designed for processors who need adequate and fit-for-purpose homogenisation performance within a limited footprint. Its compact architecture is enabled by an optimised crankcase and gear-reducer design that delivers high mechanical efficiency while generating minimal heat, noise and vibration. As the drive compartment requires neither oil cooling nor forced-air ventilation, the machines rely on fewer auxiliary components and deliver lower installation, maintenance, energy and utility demands.

"Designed to meet demanding sanitary requirements, every KOB model is available with CIP and SIP capabilities"

A newly engineered frame and cladding, developed using advanced structural analysis, further contributes to low vibration levels and long-term durability. The use of poppet-type pumping valves enhances flow characteristics and feeding stability, significantly reducing noise and cavitation while improving volumetric efficiency and extending component life.

Together, these mechanical considerations result in a homogeniser family that reduces energy consumption, simplifies daily operation and maintenance, and minimises downtime.

With their compact footprint and minimal maintenance-space requirements, KOB machines are well suited for both new installations and the replacement of legacy homogenisers without major layout modifications.

Hygienic, CIP/SIP-capable design

Designed to meet demanding sanitary requirements, every KOB model is available with CIP and SIP capabilities and can be configured to meet 3-A sanitary standards. Steamable full-stroke barrier chambers provide aseptic product handling.
The machines can be equipped with a second-stage pressure gauge and pressure transmitters on both homogenisation stages as well as the outlet, for process automation and control. This makes the KOB homogenisers ideal for a broad range of products and processes such as milk, dairy ingredients, beverages, plant-based formulations and selected chemical, personal care and cosmetic products in manual, semi-auto and fully automated production lines.

Modular automation for easy integration

The KOB series supports a wide range of automation levels, from simple motor-starter solutions to full PLC/HMI control. Connectivity options enable seamless integration into SCADA and plant-wide automation systems, allowing processors to choose the right level of digitalisation for their operation. This modularity helps ensure fast installation and smooth retrofitting into existing production lines.

www.gea.com

Continued from page 38

How solar system integrators and installers grow SA's market

These areas distinguish serious installers from "bakkie brigades", and also offer the latter a pathway to growing their installation companies into value-based solar services businesses.

"The early gains are behind us, but the best days are ahead of us, if we prepare," says Harbs.

The vital role of OEMs

OEMs must step up to provide the foundation for a maturing solar industry. Just as customers look to solar integrators and installers for guidance and expertise, the integrators and installers should expect OEMs to improve their delivery and service capabilities.

OEMs can support South Africa's maturing solar market in several areas:

- National distribution and supply points, sufficient warehouse stock, and prioritised delivery.
- Accessible, even free, training for installers.
- Long-term warranties, backed by local replacement and repair facilities.
- Comprehensive partner programs that include preferential treatment and priority tracks.
- Access to new innovations and value-added services, such as design and management software.
- Consistent support for installers to resolve site issues efficiently.

These changes reflect the market's shifting realities. Solar is growing from an energy alternative to a long-term investment in self-sufficiency and potential revenue streams.
Newer market segments (electric vehicles and energy-demanding IT systems) and ageing national infrastructure will drive more demand. But this demand is not the same as before, Harbs advises.

"Fewer buyers are asking if they should get a solar system. More know they want to expand into solar, but they now need to know what their options are. They want installers they can trust to have the knowledge, skills, and channel support to deliver their right solutions. It's up to OEMs like WEG to help enable and grow installers and integrators."

South Africa's solar market is entering a new stage of maturity. With 90% of the energy mix still available, solar system integrators and installers backed by proactive and supportive will lead the way forward, delivering more value, reliability, energy independence, and control over electricity prices.

www.weg.net

Urschel introduces compact 'Little Gem' dicer for fruit & vegetables processers

The new Little Gem Aspire™ from Urschel is a compact dicer designed to deliver versatile slicing, strip cutting, and dicing for processors of fruit and vegetables.

Developed for small to medium-sized processing operations, the Little Gem Aspire combines multiple cutting capabilities within a compact footprint. Designed to support operational flexibility across a wide range of fresh produce applications, the machine delivers precise cuts while supporting efficient operation, ease of use, and a low total cost of ownership.

Suitable for a variety of fruit and vegetable applications, the Little Gem Aspire can process products including onions, potatoes, apples, carrots, tomatoes, beetroot, and mango. The machine is capable of producing slices from 2mm to 20mm, along with a range of strip cuts and dices up to 20mm.

"One of the key advantages of Little Gem Aspire is its versatility across multiple fruit and vegetable applications," says Heat and Control General Manager South Africa, Jeff Rossouw.

"Key features of the Little Gem Aspire include a compact footprint to support efficient line integration, multiple cut styles from a single machine, and a wide cutting range"

"Fresh produce naturally varies in size, density, and moisture content, so processors require equipment capable of delivering consistent, precise cuts across different products and applications.

"The Little Gem Aspire combines multiple cutting capabilities within a single machine, allowing processors to quickly transition between products while achieving uniform cutting results."

As processors continue looking for ways to maximise production flexibility without increasing line footprint, compact equipment capable of handling multiple cutting applications within a single machine is becoming increasingly valuable.

Designed for small to medium sized processors, the new Little Gem Aspire supports flexible fruit and vegetable cutting applications

Engineered for a low total cost of ownership — from initial investment through to ongoing operation — the Little Gem Aspire is designed to support efficient processing while simplifying operation and maintenance requirements.

Key features of the Little Gem Aspire include a compact footprint to support efficient line integration, multiple cut styles from a single machine, and a wide cutting range.

The machine features Urschel's StatiCut™ knife assembly technology, designed to simplify changeovers between cut sizes while reducing the number of parts requiring maintenance and inventory. "These features make the Little Gem Aspire an ideal solution for fruit and vegetable processors seeking efficiency, versatility, and low cost of ownership," says Rossouw.

Heat and Control is the exclusive representative of Urschel equipment in Africa, offering cutting sets, spare parts, and product testing services.

www.heatandcontrol.com

Best practices for managing the MRO supply chain in Africa

Accurate MRO data is becoming essential for operational resilience, cost control and supply chain visibility, especially as industrial operations across Africa modernise and expand. Erick Wessels, Sales Director at RS South Africa, explores how organisations can improve performance through better MRO data management and governance.

Maintenance, repair and operations (MRO) procurement has historically been treated as an indirect function, often receiving less strategic attention than direct materials procurement. Yet inaccurate or fragmented MRO data can have significant operational consequences, leading to unnecessary expenditure, stock duplication, unplanned downtime and procurement inefficiencies.

For many organisations, particularly those operating across multiple facilities or remote sites, poor visibility into spare parts and inventory creates an environment where the same product may be purchased repeatedly from different suppliers at different prices. At the same time, critical items may be unavailable when needed most. In sectors such as food processing, manufacturing, energy and mining, these inefficiencies can quickly translate into production losses and operational risk.

This challenge is increasingly evident in complex and evolving industrial environments, where supply chain volatility, long lead times and infrastructure constraints often place additional pressure on maintenance operations. In many cases, replacement parts are sourced externally, meaning procurement delays can have serious implications for plant reliability and continuity. As a result, clean, centralised and actionable MRO data is no longer simply an administrative requirement; it has become a strategic operational asset.

Building a foundation through data governance

The starting point for effective MRO management is robust data governance. Organisations need systems and processes that ensure information is accurate, standardised and consistently maintained across the business.

This begins with something as fundamental as correct manufacturer names and part numbers. Without standardisation, duplicate records and inconsistent descriptions quickly emerge. A single supplier name entered in multiple ways can distort procurement reporting, complicate sourcing decisions and obscure inventory visibility.

Strong governance policies ensure that data follows a common structure across all facilities and departments. Standardised naming conventions, controlled fields and part classification protocols create consistency throughout the organisation and establish a trusted single source of truth.

For African businesses operating across geographically dispersed operations, standardisation becomes even more important. Mining houses, manufacturing groups and utilities often manage inventory across multiple provinces or countries. Without aligned systems and governance structures, data siloes emerge, preventing organisations from leveraging enterprise-wide visibility and economies of scale.

The hidden cost of poor data quality

Poor data governance frequently results in duplication, uncontrolled spending and operational inefficiencies. In many industrial environments, maintenance teams unknowingly purchase items already sitting elsewhere within the organisation simply because inventory data is incomplete or inaccessible.

Free-text fields and manual data entry further compound the problem. When systems are not purpose-built for MRO management, employees often improvise by storing critical information in inconsistent formats or locations. Over time, this creates fragmented datasets that undermine reporting accuracy and decision-making capability.

The financial impact can be substantial. Overstocking ties up working capital in slow-moving inventory, while understocking increases the risk of production interruptions and emergency procurement costs. In an African context, where import lead times may extend for weeks or months, poor inventory visibility can become particularly costly.

There is also a broader operational implication. Inaccurate MRO data limits the ability of procurement, maintenance and finance teams to collaborate effectively. Without reliable information, forecasting becomes reactive rather than strategic.

Digital procurement and inventory management are key enablers

Modern MRO environments require digital tools that enable more effective management of procurement and inventory. While strong governance provides the foundation, technology ensures these principles are applied consistently across operations.

RS South Africa's procurement and inventory solutions demonstrate how digital platforms can bring greater structure and control to indirect spend. By integrating supplier catalogues into ERP and business spend management systems, organisations can improve visibility, reduce manual effort and make more informed purchasing decisions.

For organisations seeking a simpler approach, web-based tools can streamline sourcing and approval workflows without the need for complex systems integration, enabling faster adoption and improved efficiency.

Inventory management is equally critical. Solutions such as vendor-managed inventory (VMI) help improve visibility into stock levels and usage, reducing waste while ensuring critical components are available when needed.

Together, these capabilities enable a more controlled, resilient and data-driven approach to MRO supply chain management.

"The starting point for effective MRO management is robust data governance. Organisations need systems and processes that ensure information is accurate, standardised and consistently maintained across the business"

Real-time visibility creates operational agility

One of the greatest advantages of centralised MRO data management is the ability to achieve real-time visibility across operations. When organisations can see exactly what inventory exists, where it is located and how it is being used, they are able to make faster and more informed decisions.

Procurement teams can identify opportunities for supplier consolidation and spend optimisation, while inventory management systems provide insight into stock usage, replenishment requirements and demand trends. Maintenance teams, meanwhile, gain better visibility into critical spares availability, helping to reduce the risk of downtime.

Analytics dashboards also enable organisations to monitor inventory trends, maintenance frequency and spending patterns in real time. This visibility allows businesses to identify inefficiencies, reduce duplication and improve forecasting accuracy.

In complex operating environments, where disruptions can emerge unexpectedly due to logistics challenges, currency volatility or geopolitical developments, real-time visibility enhances resilience. Organisations with accurate, centralised data are better positioned to anticipate shortages, optimise stock levels and respond proactively to operational risks.

Unlocking long-term strategic value

The benefits of clean MRO data extend far beyond inventory management alone. Accurate and structured data creates a ripple effect of operational and financial improvements throughout the organisation.

With reliable information, businesses can improve budgeting accuracy, reduce emergency procurement, strengthen supplier negotiations and optimise inventory investment. Better forecasting reduces waste while ensuring critical components remain available when required.

Centralised data also enables more effective standardisation across facilities, helping organisations align around preferred suppliers, approved components and best practices. Over time, this drives stronger operational consistency and improved plant reliability.

Perhaps most importantly, clean data lays the groundwork for predictive maintenance and data-driven decision-making. As African industries continue investing in automation, digitalisation and smart manufacturing, organisations with mature MRO data practices will be significantly better positioned to compete.

Data quality as a competitive advantage

As industrial organisations navigate increasingly complex operating environments, MRO data management is evolving from a back-office administrative function into a strategic business capability.

In Africa, where operational resilience is often tested by supply chain uncertainty and infrastructure challenges, accurate and accessible data can provide a meaningful competitive advantage. Businesses that invest in strong governance, purpose-built systems and real-time visibility will be better equipped to control costs, minimise downtime and improve long-term operational performance.

Ultimately, effective MRO data management is about more than inventory accuracy. It is about enabling smarter decisions, stronger reliability and greater business agility across the entire supply chain.

www.za.rs-online.com/web/

Africa's industrial future is still being written – and the biggest opportunities still lie ahead

Local expertise shaping Africa's industrial future

According to the African Development Bank, Africa's manufacturing sector generated approximately R6.7 trillion in economic value in 2025, up from around R5.4 trillion in 2020. Yet despite this progress, the continent still accounts for less than 2% of global manufacturing output – highlighting both how far Africa has come and the scale of the opportunity that remains.

For companies operating across the continent, that opportunity comes with a unique challenge: no two African markets are exactly alike.

Africa is not one market

For years, many African markets were served remotely from Europe, the Middle East or other regional hubs. Increasingly, however, businesses are recognising the value of local decision-making, closer customer support and a stronger presence in the markets they serve.

It's an approach Bosch Rexroth Africa has been investing in for the last 6 decades. Today, the company supports customers across more than 20 African countries through 17 legal entities, 45 locations and a workforce approaching 1 000 people.

Recent milestones include the establishment of a dedicated entity in Côte d'Ivoire and the expansion of operations into North Africa, with Tunisia, Egypt and Morocco now supported through established Bosch Rexroth operations.

Continued on page 37

Collaboration and partnerships driving Africa's growth

Ecovado announced Seeds of Change 2026 winner

Hulisani Mabugana and Hulisani Mudau

Food Lover's Market has announced Ecovado, a proudly rural avocado oil business from Dovheni village in Limpopo, as the winner of its Seeds of Change 2026 enterprise development programme on 12 June 2026. This was after the top 10 social entrepreneurs attended a bootcamp week in Cape Town, and an intensive day of pitching to a panel of Food Lover's Market executives and specialists. Gontse Selaocoe from All Day Jam, and Minnie Brink from Miracle Meel were also announced in the top 3 at the end of the Fertile Ground Pitch Day.

Co-Founded by husband-and-wife team, Hulisani Mabugana and Hulisani Mudau, Ecovado was created to solve a very real challenge facing many avocado-growing communities. In parts of rural Limpopo, avocado trees are found in almost every household, making it difficult for small-scale farmers to sell fruit locally. Lower-grade avocados, which may not meet fresh market standards, are often left without a sustainable route to market.

Ecovado saw the opportunity to create value at source by transforming South African avocados into high-quality avocado oil and other innovative products. By processing avocados close to where they are grown, the business is helping to reduce waste, support local farmers and create employment opportunities for men and women in the village.

"Ecovado is more than a food business. It is a vehicle for rural economic development and empowerment," says Hulisani Mabugana, co-founder of Ecovado. "Every bottle represents the hard work of local farmers, workers and communities who believe in creating value from South African agriculture. Our vision is to transform avocados into opportunity, prosperity and lasting positive change."

The Seeds of Change programme was created by Food Lover's Market to support emerging South African food entrepreneurs with the potential to become more sustainable, scalable and retail-ready. The 2026 cohort took part in an intensive bootcamp in Cape Town, where the entrepreneurs received guidance on business development, product refinement, retail readiness, pitching and growth.

"By processing avocados close to where they are grown, the business is helping to reduce waste, support local farmers and create employment opportunities for men and women in the village"

For Hulisani, being selected as the 2026 winner is both a personal milestone and a signal of what is possible for rural entrepreneurs.

"As an entrepreneur from a rural community, there are many obstacles to building a manufacturing business. This recognition confirms that our vision has value and potential. It brings hope to our village community that their jobs are safe and that more employment can be created through this opportunity," says Mabugana.

Through Seeds of Change, Ecovado will receive further support to help strengthen its business for the next stage of growth. This includes mentorship, retail insight and guidance to help improve packaging, branding, quality systems and customer offering. It also means that Evocado will soon be available in Food Lover's Market stores.

Andrew Millson, Food Lover's Market's Executive for People and Sustainability, says Ecovado represents exactly the kind of business Seeds of Change was built to support.

"Seeds of Change is about backing entrepreneurs who are building businesses with purpose and practical impact," says Millson. "Ecovado is a powerful example of how local food innovation can reduce waste, create opportunity for farmers, support rural manufacturing and bring proudly South African products closer to consumers. This is the kind of enterprise development that has the potential to change lives beyond the shelf."

Food Lover's Market will continue to support and follow Ecovado's journey as the business works towards becoming a more retail-ready supplier.

"South Africa has incredible food entrepreneurs, many of them working in communities that are too often overlooked," adds Millson. "Our role is to help open access, share retail knowledge and give promising businesses a stronger foundation to grow. Ecovado's story is one of resilience, innovation and possibility, and we are proud to be part of its next chapter."

Continued from page 35

Africa's industrial future is still being written – and the biggest, opportunities still lie ahead

"A one-size-fits-all approach doesn't work in Africa," says Chris Riley, Regional President Bosch Rexroth Africa and Chief Executive Officer of Bosch Rexroth South Africa. "Customers need partners who understand their operating environments, their industries and their challenges. That's why we've invested so heavily in local capability, local leadership and strong relationships across the continent."

Local capability is becoming a competitive advantage

As industrialisation accelerates, access to local expertise is becoming an increasingly important differentiator.

The majority of Bosch Rexroth Africa's operations are led by country managers who call those markets home. Their understanding of local industries, regulations and customer requirements helps bridge the gap between global technology and local application.

The need for local capability extends beyond leadership and customer support.

The Group's training footprint extends across the continent through classroom, on-site and e-learning programmes designed to strengthen technical capability across the continent.

The reputation of that training has grown well beyond Africa. Learners now travel to South Africa from countries including Australia, the United States, Saudi Arabia and China to access specialised hydraulic, pneumatic, automation and mechatronic programmes not readily available in their home markets.

Building the next chapter together

Industrial growth is rarely driven by a single company, technology or project. It is built over time through collaboration, investment and the transfer of knowledge across industries, countries and generations.

"Building industrial capability takes time," says Riley. "You build it one relationship, one customer, one project and one market at a time. That's what we've been doing for the past 60 years, and that's what we'll continue doing as we help support Africa's next phase of growth."

Africa's industrial future is still being written, but the foundations are already taking shape. The question is no longer whether opportunity exists, but how quickly it can be realised.

www.bosch-rexroth.co.za

How experience-led retail drives grocery shopping in South Africa

South Africa's grocery sector is undergoing a significant transformation. While affordability remains a key consideration for consumers, retailers are increasingly recognising that price alone is no longer enough to secure customer loyalty. Today's shoppers are looking for experiences.

According to NielsenIQ's Consumer Outlook: Guide to 2026, consumers are becoming increasingly intentional in their spending, prioritising products, brands and retail experiences that offer genuine value, quality and relevance. The research highlights that convenience is also being redefined, with shoppers expecting seamless, personalised and low-friction experiences across every touchpoint.

At the same time, Deloitte's 2026 Retail Industry Global Outlook notes that retailers are facing a structural shift in consumer behaviour, with shoppers increasingly assessing value through a broader lens that includes experience, trust, quality and service, rather than price alone.

Against this backdrop, retailers globally are rethinking the role of the physical store. Increasingly, supermarkets are borrowing from hospitality, food service and lifestyle sectors to encourage longer visits and deeper customer engagement. Cafés, chef-led food counters, curated speciality ranges and experiential store design are becoming important differentiators as retailers seek to create compelling reasons for consumers to visit physical stores.

It is within this context that The SPAR Group opened South Africa's first SPAR Gourmet store at Zimbali Oasis on KwaZulu-Natal's North Coast. The premium retail concept forms part of SPAR's broader strategy to better serve distinct consumer segments through differentiated retail formats. SPAR sees significant potential for the premium format, with plans to establish between 30 and 40 SPAR Gourmet stores nationally over time.

"The design ensures that shoppers view the store as more than just a stop along the way, but a great shopping destination to explore and enjoy," Mpudi Maubane, National PR, Communications and Sponsorship at The SPAR Group South Africa. "The focus is not simply on providing necessities, but on crafting an environment where shopping becomes a pleasurable and immersive experience. Whether it's enjoying a relaxed coffee break at Vida e Caffè or freshly prepared meals by skilled chefs, every visit to SPAR Gourmet is intended to be a journey of discovery and delight."

Built around an intuitive three-loop design, the format combines café-style convenience, freshly prepared meals, premium grocery offerings and everyday essentials within a contemporary, design-led environment.

"The modern consumer expects retail environments that reflect their lifestyles and offer something beyond convenience alone," says Maubane. "Consumers are looking for spaces that inspire, enable discovery and provide meaningful experiences. Retailers that successfully combine convenience, quality and experience will be best positioned to meet these evolving expectations."

www.spar.com

Packaging
REPORTER

46 A powerful driver of South Africa's circular economy

Read the latest packaging news here

Packaging innovation and sustainability take centre stage

Packaging continues to shape the future of South Africa's food and beverage sector as manufacturers respond to changing market demands, sustainability targets and regulatory requirements. These developments will be in focus at Propak Cape 2026, where more than 200 exhibitors will present the latest packaging technologies, processing equipment and production solutions for the regional manufacturing industry.

The exhibition will highlight key packaging industry trends in South Africa, including sustainable packaging solutions, recyclable and fibre-based materials, smart packaging, digital printing, automation and product traceability. As food and beverage manufacturers seek greater efficiency, improved product protection, and compliance with food safety standards, investment in packaging technology continues to accelerate.

Visitors will also have the opportunity to experience live equipment demonstrations, providing practical insight into innovations that can improve production efficiency, reduce material usage and strengthen supply chain performance. Solutions covering packaging, plastics, labelling, printing and processing will be showcased, alongside technologies designed to support product integrity and brand differentiation.

"Propak Cape has become an established meeting place for the packaging, plastics, printing and processing sectors," says Mark Anderson, Portfolio Director at Montgomery Group Africa. He notes that the Western Cape, which contributes more than half of South Africa's agricultural exports, continues to drive demand for advanced packaging and processing technologies.

The exhibition will also feature seminars presented by the Institute of Packaging SA (IPSA), a conference hosted by Printing SA, and the Flexographic Technical Association of South Africa's (FTASA) awards evening.
www.propakcape.co.za

Stoney transitions to clear PET packaging

STONEY® ginger beer is transitioning from its traditional brown plastic bottle to clear PET packaging as part of an initiative to improve packaging recyclability in South Africa. The phased rollout begins in June 2026 with the 2.25-litre bottle, with the remainder of the product portfolio set to transition over time.

Consumers will continue to recognise the brand through its established label designs and closure colours, while benefiting from packaging that is easier to identify, collect and recycle within South Africa's waste management system. The new clear 2.25-litre STONEY® bottles are expected to reach retail shelves nationwide from June 2026.

According to Mario I. Garcia, Vice President and Managing Director of Coca-Cola South Africa, the move forms part of the company's ongoing focus on packaging design and improved recyclability.

"By moving STONEY® to clear bottles, we are helping to make them easier to collect and recycle, while supporting economic activity across the waste collection and recycling value chain," he says.

The packaging update does not affect the product itself, with consumers continuing to enjoy the same STONEY® ginger beer flavour.

The transition aligns with broader packaging sustainability initiatives across Coca-Cola South Africa's beverage portfolio. The company offers products in glass, PET plastic, aluminium cans and refillable packaging to provide consumers with packaging options while supporting efforts to reduce packaging waste and associated emissions.

The move follows the successful transition of SPRITE® from green to clear plastic bottles in South Africa, a change introduced to improve PET recycling rates and support a more circular packaging economy.
www.coca-cola.com/za/en

Propak West Africa

West Africa's packaging industry is expected to maintain steady growth, creating new opportunities for manufacturers, processors and packaging technology suppliers serving the African market. Demand is being supported by urbanisation, expanding consumer markets, sustainability requirements and the continued growth of e-commerce, making the region an attractive destination for investment in packaging production and technology.

A growing middle class and increasing demand from the beverage industry are accelerating the need for modern packaging solutions across West Africa. Agriculture and fisheries are also strengthening export activity, increasing the demand for packaging that supports product protection, shelf life, and logistics. These market dynamics are encouraging investment in local manufacturing capacity and advanced production technologies.

Key packaging industry trends in Africa include the adoption of smart packaging technologies, digital printing solutions, recyclable packaging materials, and automated manufacturing systems. These developments are improving production efficiency while supporting sustainability objectives across the regional manufacturing sector.

The industry's momentum will be highlighted at Propak West Africa 2026, taking place from 8–10 September at Landmark Centre in Lagos, Nigeria. The exhibition continues to attract global suppliers of packaging machinery, processing equipment, printing technologies and labelling solutions, with almost 90% of exhibition space already allocated ahead of the event.

According to Mark Anderson, Portfolio Director at Montgomery Group Africa, sustainability remains a key priority. Increased participation from recycling and circular economy organisations reflects growing industry investment in responsible packaging practices, while the involvement of Girls Who Print Africa supports skills development and greater inclusion across the print and packaging sectors.

www.propakwestafrica.com

Amcor supports beverage brands preparing for reuse growth

As beverage producers prepare for changing packaging regulations and evolving circular economy requirements, packaging decisions are becoming a strategic business priority. Amcor, a global developer and manufacturer of responsible packaging solutions, is encouraging beverage brands to review their closure systems in preparation for the expansion of reuse and deposit return schemes.

The European Union's Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) introduces mandatory reuse targets, requiring 10% of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages to be available in reusable packaging systems by 1 January 2030, increasing to 40% by 2040.

Although these requirements apply to the EU, they are expected to influence packaging strategies for South African beverage manufacturers exporting to European markets and businesses aligning with international sustainability standards.

Deposit return schemes (DRS) are also expanding across several markets to improve beverage container collection and recycling. These systems encourage consumers to return empty containers by offering a refundable deposit, thereby increasing collection rates and improving the quality of recovered packaging materials.

According to Uli Kobert, Product Line Director at Amcor, the growth of reuse systems requires packaging that can withstand repeated filling, washing and handling without affecting sealing performance. Reusable PET and glass bottles experience greater operational demands than single-use packaging, making closure selection an important factor in maintaining product integrity throughout multiple use cycles.

Amcor offers closure solutions designed for reusable PET and glass beverage packaging, supported by technical expertise to help beverage producers prepare for reuse systems and deposit return schemes while maintaining packaging performance.

For South African beverage manufacturers, evaluating packaging components today can support export readiness, regulatory compliance and long-term packaging sustainability as reuse becomes an important part of global beverage supply chains.

www.amcor.com

Launching the new MRF are main infrastructure sponsor Petco CEO Telly Chauke, Tonkmeter CEO Leon Grobbelaar, Belinda Booker of co-sponsor MetPac-SA and Gauteng provincial waste management officer Palesa Mathibel

SA's landfill crisis generates new waste partnership model

As Gauteng runs out of municipal landfill space, a new type of partnership between a waste management company and producer responsibility organisations (PROs) is poised to become a model for efficient material recovery, recycling and job creation.

Situated on a private landfill site in Springs, the new Tonkmeter material recovery facility (MRF) serves reclaimers, businesses and industry in the Ekurhuleni region.

Speaking at the launch, provincial waste management officer Palesa Mathibeli said Gauteng was facing a waste management crisis because municipal landfills were reaching the end of their lifespan and a number had been closed down due to non-compliance, leading to an increase in illegal dumping.

"We are quickly running out of landfill airspace because we are not diverting waste away from them," Mathibeli said.

"So, it puts more pressure on facilities like this one. That is why we are very happy to see that our private partners are taking the initiative to support each other in addressing this crisis."

Thanks to a significant infrastructure investment by South Africa's longest-standing PRO, Petco, with a supporting contribution from fellow PRO MetPac-SA, the facility, when fully operational, will be capable of diverting and processing up to 600 tonnes of recyclable materials from the landfill each month.

Tonkmeter CEO Leon Grobbelaar said the landfill received roughly 5,000 tonnes of waste per month and that the aim was to extract at least 50 tonnes of that volume in combined recyclable packaging such as PET plastic, metals, and liquid board cartons.

According to Grobbelaar, this operation sees some waste collection businesses bringing baled materials directly to the MRF, which are further separated and sorted before the residual non-recyclables are taken to the on-site landfill.

Future plans include accepting materials from independent waste pickers working on the nearby Rietfontein municipal landfill site and bringing these collectors into a centralised system.

> **"… the facility, when fully operational, will be capable of diverting and processing up to 600 tonnes of recyclable materials from the landfill each month"**

"It's a very satisfying industry, because of job creation in our KwaThema community and taking waste out of the environment," said Grobbelaar.

Petco's general manager for recycling and collections, Samu Mkhize, said the project was a great example of all players pulling together to keep the circular economy working.

"Tonkmeter is not just another recycling project. It is a practical example of on-the-ground integration. It connects landfill diversion with recovery infrastructure. It integrates industrial, commercial, and informal material streams into a single operating model."

Mkhize said an additional benefit was the cashless payment platform that allowed Petco to pay waste pickers a service fee for the PET and liquid board packaging that they collect, adding that these were the identified products for which Petco was responsible.

She said this was Petco's largest single infrastructure investment to date, demonstrating Petco's commitment to investing in high-value capital infrastructure projects and equipment such as sorting conveyor systems, balers and forklifts.

"Moving forward, these are the kinds of large-scale projects we want to do on behalf of our members. Co-investment with partners like MetPac-SA allows us to unlock shared outcomes, and show measurable progress against legislative expectations."

MetPac-SA CEO Kishan Singh said he was pleased at the opportunity to support a project such as this.

"This now increases the circular economy and waste recovery in South Africa, aligning with EPR regulations. MetPac-SA will continue to support such initiatives in this country in the spirit of saving this planet," Singh commented.

Grobbelaar said the partnership showed what was possible when industry leaders took real responsibility for the lifespan of their products.

"The Tonkmeter site is not a dump. It was designed from day one to be an integrated waste management facility – and this material recovery facility, although small, will be the crown jewel of this project."

Watch the YouTube video here

www.petco.co.za

Driving growth in the returnable bulk water market

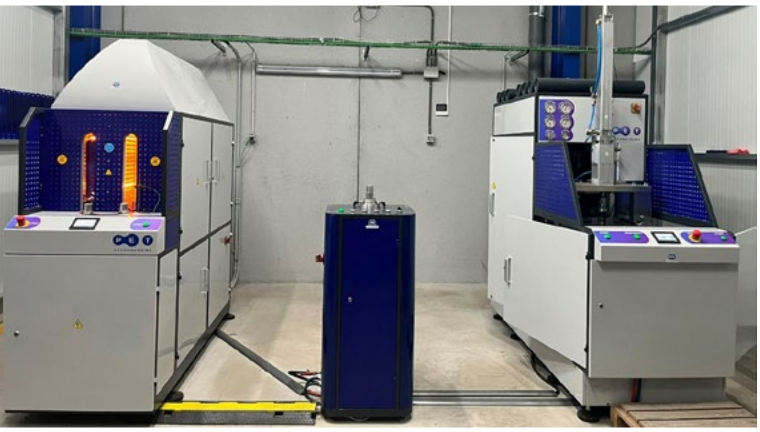
Demand for large-format PET water containers is increasing as water delivery services, hospitality operators and workplaces seek packaging that supports efficiency, product quality and circularity. Growth in the 19-litre and 20-litre water bottle segment is creating opportunities for beverage producers to invest in flexible manufacturing systems that improve production control while supporting sustainability objectives

A recent project between Spanish drinking water supplier Marivending and PET blow moulding equipment manufacturer PET Technologies demonstrates how in-house production can strengthen operational resilience and product quality while responding to growing demand for returnable PET water bottles.

For South African bottled water producers, water delivery companies and beverage manufacturers, the project provides insight into how investment in production technology can support expansion into the growing bulk water market.

Bulk PET water bottle demand continues to grow

The global market for large-capacity PET water containers continues to expand across Europe, Latin America and the United States. Demand is being driven by households, offices, hospitality businesses, educational institutions and commercial water delivery services that require convenient, refillable water packaging.



Both traditional handled bottles and ergonomic handle-free designs are gaining market acceptance, allowing manufacturers to serve different customer requirements from a single production facility.

For South African producers, similar market trends are emerging as businesses and consumers seek cost-effective alternatives to smaller single-use bottled water formats. Returnable PET water bottles also align with industry efforts to reduce packaging waste through reuse and recycling programmes.

Marivending brings bottle production in-house

Marivending, a family-owned company based in Murcia, Spain, supplies drinking water to residential customers and manufactures PET water bottles for its operations. Sustainability forms part of the company's production strategy through the manufacture of recyclable containers and responsible manufacturing practices.

The company produces three primary bottle sizes:
- 13-litre PET water bottles
- 19-litre PET water bottles
- 20-litre PET water bottles

Its flagship product, Sierra Nevada water, is sourced from one of Spain's recognised natural water regions. The water contains naturally occurring minerals including calcium, magnesium and bicarbonates, providing a balanced mineral composition suitable for everyday consumption.

Rather than relying on external bottle suppliers, Marivending invested in its own manufacturing capability to maintain quality control across every stage of production.

According to PET Technologies, "The company decided to manufacture the bottles in-house, as this allows it to control every stage of production, ensuring the consistency, durability and quality of each container."

Rapid project implementation supports production expansion

The project began with direct technical consultations between both companies to define production requirements before equipment installation.

PET Technologies designed a semi-automatic production solution capable of manufacturing both 19-litre and 20-litre PET bottles, including handled bottle configurations. The system was developed with production stability and ergonomic operation as priorities while allowing future manufacturing expansion.

"The project with Marivending got off to a very dynamic start. Right at the beginning of negotiations, a face-to-face meeting was organised with the client, which allowed us to quickly agree on the technical requirements and expectations for the future equipment," PET Technologies said.

Efficient technical coordination enabled the installation to be completed within a relatively short timeframe, allowing Marivending to begin internal production while strengthening its position in the regional bottled water market.

Production environment improves manufacturing consistency

One distinguishing feature of the project is the investment made in the manufacturing environment itself.

Marivending constructed a new production facility that includes a dedicated climate-controlled room for the blow moulding machine. Maintaining a consistent operating temperature improves production stability and supports repeatable bottle quality throughout the manufacturing process.

Environmental control is an important consideration for PET bottle manufacturers seeking to minimise production variation, particularly when manufacturing large-format containers where dimensional consistency is essential for repeated filling and reuse.

UPF-30 delivers production flexibility

Marivending selected PET Technologies' UPF-30 semi-automatic blow moulding system to support its production requirements.

The equipment enables manufacturers to produce multiple container formats on a single platform, including:
- 13-litre PET bottles
- 19-litre PET water bottles
- 20-litre PET water bottles
- PET kegs

This flexibility reduces the need for multiple dedicated production lines while allowing manufacturers to respond to changing customer demand.

The system produces between 60 and 70 bottles per hour, depending on mould configuration and operating parameters, making it suitable for medium- and higher-volume production.

According to PET Technologies, "The UPF-30 is in particularly high demand in the European market thanks to its versatility and the optimal balance between productivity, investment cost and ease of use."

Lessons for South African beverage manufacturers

South Africa's bottled water sector continues to evolve as businesses seek packaging formats that support commercial water delivery, workplace hydration and hospitality applications.

Investment in flexible PET bottle production equipment offers several operational advantages:
- Greater control over product quality
- Reduced dependence on third-party packaging suppliers
- Capacity to manufacture multiple bottle sizes
- Improved responsiveness to market demand
- Support for reusable and recyclable packaging strategies

As sustainability expectations increase across the food and beverage industry, manufacturers are placing greater emphasis on production systems that improve operational efficiency while reducing waste throughout the packaging lifecycle.

The Marivending project illustrates how combining in-house bottle manufacturing with adaptable production technology can strengthen competitiveness in the expanding bulk bottled water market. For South African beverage producers evaluating future investment, flexible PET blow moulding solutions may become an important part of meeting growing

demand for returnable water packaging while maintaining quality, production consistency and operational control.

www.pet-eu.com

A powerful driver of South Africa's circular economy

As South Africa works towards a more sustainable future, the conversation around packaging is rapidly evolving. Businesses are under increasing pressure to reduce waste, improve recyclability, and demonstrate measurable environmental action. At the centre of this shift is the circular economy, a system designed to keep materials in use for as long as possible through collection and recycling.

Shabeer Jhetam

Within this ecosystem, glass packaging continues to stand out as one of the country's strongest circular economy success stories. Glass is 100% recyclable and can be recycled endlessly without any loss in quality or purity. A glass bottle recycled today will become another bottle tomorrow, reducing the need for virgin raw materials and helping divert waste away from already overburdened landfill sites.

However, the impact of glass recycling extends far beyond environmental benefits alone. It is also an important economic enabler. South Africa's recycling value chain supports thousands of livelihoods, from collectors and transporters to entrepreneurs, buy-back centres, and manufacturing operations.

According to TGRC's latest research South Africa's glass recycling sector provides approximately 50 000 people with income-generating opportunities, many within vulnerable communities where access to formal employment remains limited.

For this reason, glass recycling should not only be viewed as a sustainability initiative, but as part of a broader economic opportunity for South Africa.

The Glass Recycling Company (TGRC), together with its members and partners, continues to play a key role in strengthening the country's glass collection ecosystem. Through continued investment in glass recycling initiatives, infrastructure support, and industry collaboration, TGRC ensures that more glass is recovered and returned to the manufacturing process.

Industry support remains critical to maintaining and growing South Africa's circular economy. Glass manufacturers, Ardagh Glass Packaging and Isanti Glass who are members of TGRC play a vital role by purchasing used glass, creating the demand that keeps the recycling system functioning and enabling collected glass to be transformed into new bottles and jars. In addition, TGRC's members which include leading players across the beverage and food sector, contribute through the payment of EPR fees towards building the systems that enable glass to be collected and recycled. Their ongoing commitment helps create a more sustainable packaging landscape while supporting income generation opportunities and economic activity across the recycling value chain.

Beyond infrastructure investment, TGRC's members also play an important role in strengthening South Africa's broader recycling ecosystem through initiatives such as the payment of transport subsidies, waste picker service fees, support for buy-back centres, and improving access to recycling opportunities within communities.

Collectively, these interventions help empower collectors and buy-back centres, strengthen glass collection rates, and ensure that the economic value of recyclable glass continues circulating within local economies rather than being lost to landfill. The ongoing support and investment from TGRC's member network remain a key driver in helping build a more inclusive, sustainable and economically impactful glass recycling system in South Africa.

This level of industry commitment is becoming increasingly important as businesses face growing pressure to demonstrate measurable sustainable behaviour. Consumers are paying closer attention to the environmental impact of products they buy, while regulatory frameworks such as Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) are driving greater accountability across industries. Businesses that actively invest in circular systems today are likely to be better positioned for the future.

For producers, retailers, hospitality businesses, and brand owners, packaging choices are therefore becoming increasingly strategic. Glass packaging offers businesses an opportunity to align product quality with sustainability commitments in a visible and credible way.

The hospitality sector in particular, have a significant opportunity to influence recycling behaviour at scale. Restaurants, bars, hotels, and eventing venues generate large volumes of glass packaging waste daily. With the right recycling support and collection systems in place through TGRC, these businesses can play a meaningful role in improving collection rates while strengthening their own sustainability commitments.

South Africa cannot build a successful circular economy through isolated efforts. It requires industry collaboration, public participation and long-term investment in systems that work. The good news is that the foundation already exists. Glass packaging offers a proven, scalable solution that supports both environmental sustainability and economic inclusion.

The opportunity now is to accelerate momentum. For businesses, this means embedding circularity into packaging and operational decisions. For consumers, it means making recycling part of everyday behaviour and for industry stakeholders, it means continuing to support and invest in recovery systems that create value beyond the bin.

A circular economy is not only about reducing waste, but also about unlocking opportunity. Through continued collaboration between industry, consumers, government, and TGRC and its members, glass packaging is already helping South Africa move closer to that future

www.theglassrecyclingcompany.co.za

Mount Everest-inspired PET bottle study

As food and beverage manufacturers across South Africa continue to balance sustainability targets with operational efficiency, lightweight PET packaging remains a priority. Reducing plastic use lowers material costs and supports environmental commitments, but lighter bottles must also withstand the realities of modern distribution networks.

A new engineering study from BMT (Blow Moulding Technologies) demonstrates how combining advanced stretch blow moulding simulation with physical testing can help manufacturers predict and prevent PET bottle deformation caused by altitude changes. The research provides packaging engineers and beverage producers with a methodology for optimising bottle designs before products enter the supply chain, reducing the need for costly physical prototyping and helping manufacturers make informed decisions about lightweighting.

For South African producers distributing products across regions with varying elevations, understanding how altitude affects PET bottle performance has direct implications for product quality, packaging integrity and supply chain efficiency.

Why altitude matters in PET bottle design

Pressure changes experienced during transportation remain a significant consideration for manufacturers filling products in one location and distributing them across different elevations.

When a PET bottle is filled and sealed at a higher altitude before being transported to a lower elevation, the increase in external atmospheric pressure creates an internal vacuum effect. This pressure differential can cause the bottle walls to deform, producing visible panelling or, in severe cases, structural collapse.

These challenges often encourage manufacturers to increase bottle weight to improve performance, creating tension between packaging durability and lightweighting objectives.

Ross Blair, Head of Engineering at BMT, says manufacturers must consider packaging performance beyond the production line: "Packaging performance must be assessed across the distribution chain, not just at the point of manufacture. This work demonstrates how simulation and physical testing can be used together to predict altitude-induced panelling and support more informed package design decisions."

Mount Everest provides an engineering benchmark

To investigate the impact of extreme pressure variation, BMT developed a case study based on an unusual but scientifically valuable scenario.

Engineers simulated a PET bottle being filled and sealed at the summit of Mount Everest before being transported to sea level. This created a pressure differential of approximately 680 mbar, allowing researchers to assess how lightweight PET bottles respond to significant vacuum loading.

Rather than relying solely on laboratory testing, BMT combined stretch blow moulding (SBM) simulation with structural analysis and physical pressure chamber testing. The simulation results closely matched the physical test outcomes, validating the company's integrated engineering methodology for predicting bottle deformation under altitude-induced loading.

The approach allows packaging manufacturers to identify potential performance issues during the design phase, reducing development time while supporting more efficient bottle optimisation.

Fill volume plays a critical role

One of the study's key findings was the relationship between fill volume and bottle performance under vacuum conditions.

Researchers tested bottles filled to different levels to determine how headspace, the volume of air above the liquid, influences structural behaviour when pressure changes occur.

The results revealed a non-linear relationship between fill volume and collapse resistance. As fill levels increased, the vacuum pressure required to initiate bottle collapse also increased disproportionately.

A fill volume of 97% delivered the strongest overall performance, minimising maximum sidewall deflection while limiting total bottle volume reduction to approximately 1.2%.

The findings demonstrate that reducing headspace significantly improves resistance to deformation while increasing the pressure required to trigger structural failure.

For food and beverage manufacturers, this provides measurable data for balancing packaging performance with production economics. Increasing fill volume may improve bottle strength, but it also increases product volume and associated production costs. Quantifying this trade-off enables engineering teams to identify the most cost-effective packaging solution.

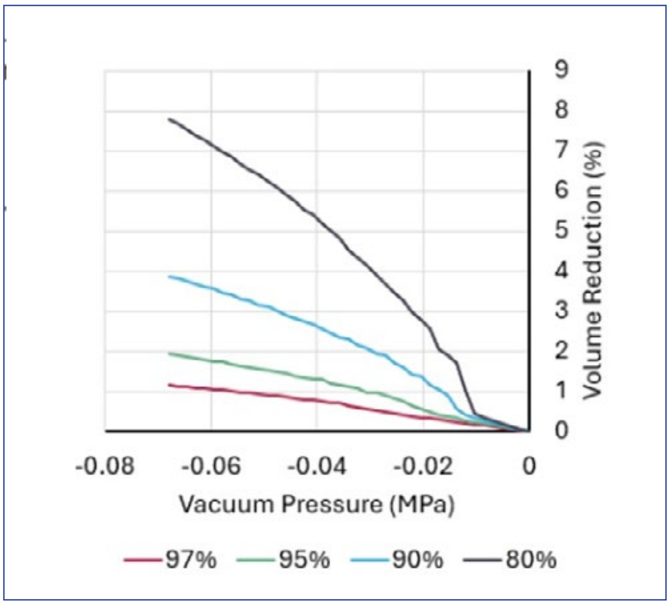
Beyond fill volume: optimising bottle design

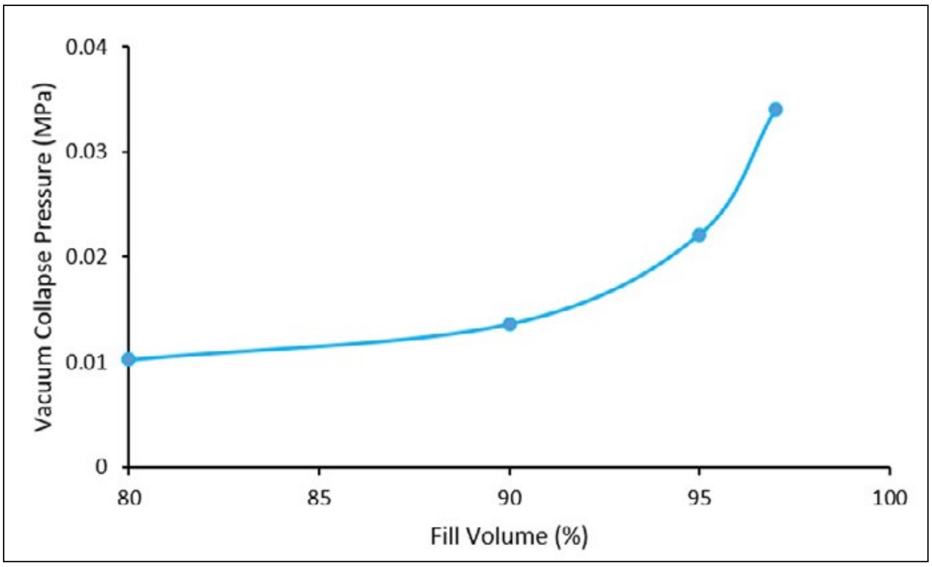
The research also confirms that fill level is only one variable influencing PET bottle performance.

Bottle thickness distribution, stretch blow moulding processing conditions and overall structural design all contribute to resistance against altitude-induced panelling.

By incorporating simulation early in the product development process, manufacturers can evaluate multiple design variables simultaneously before investing in production tooling or physical prototypes.

Effect of Vacuum pressure on volume reduction inside the bottle for varying headspace levels





This enables packaging teams to optimise material distribution throughout the bottle, improve structural performance and reduce resin consumption without compromising package integrity.

For beverage manufacturers introducing new bottle formats or pursuing lightweight packaging initiatives, predictive simulation provides a faster route to design validation while reducing development costs.

Relevance for the South African food and beverage sector

South Africa presents a distinctive packaging environment due to its varied topography. Products manufactured in elevated inland production centres frequently move through distribution networks serving lower coastal regions, exposing packaging to atmospheric pressure changes during transport.

For producers of bottled water, carbonated soft drinks, juices, dairy beverages, edible oils and other liquid food products, accounting for these pressure differentials forms an important part of package engineering.

As sustainability objectives continue driving demand for lightweight PET packaging, engineering tools capable of accurately predicting real-world performance become increasingly valuable.

Rather than compensating for uncertainty by adding material, manufacturers can use validated simulation models to optimise bottle geometry, improve processing conditions and evaluate fill strategies before commercial production begins.

The methodology demonstrated by BMT highlights how digital engineering can reduce development risk while supporting environmental objectives by reducing plastic consumption and improving manufacturing efficiency.

As pressure grows on food and beverage companies to reduce packaging waste, improve recyclability, and optimise production costs, integrated engineering approaches, such as stretch blow moulding simulation combined with physical validation, are expected to play a larger role in package development.

For manufacturers seeking to balance sustainability, product protection and commercial performance, predictive engineering offers a practical pathway towards lighter PET bottles that remain fit for purpose throughout increasingly demanding distribution networks.

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What's happening?