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StePac standing pouches cut fresh food waste

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Fresh produce packaging innovator StePac Ltd. is gaining growing interest in the retail sector for its functional standing pouches. The attractive, high-performance resealable bags are crafted with the company's proprietary Xgo advanced modified atmosphere/modified humidity (MA/MH) technology. They're designed to significantly lengthen the shelf life of fresh produce and reduce waste in the supply chain as well as in the consumer's homes. The pouch enhances consumer experience and concurrently helps raise the fresh food packaging sector to greater ethical standards by contributing its part to the global waste reduction effort.

Divine Flavor LLC, a San Diego-based grower-owned distributor of fruits and vegetables and part of agro giant Grupo Alta, has already adopted StePac's new standing pouches. The attractively

designed Xgo standing pouch is cleverly engineered to combine shelf-life extension capabilities by actively slowing the aging and ripening process, with convenience in an attractive “grab-n-go” retail packaging format.

Since 2010, Divine Flavor took advantage of StePac’s Xtend line of bulk packaging for transporting its squash, cucumbers and bell peppers from growing regions in Mexico to USA. The company began testing the new Xgo standing pouches just over two years ago in a move to expand their line of high-value products and bring differentiation of their brand by offering supermarkets a means of bringing the purposeful packaging benefits all the way from the farm to the consumer.

Xgo standing pouches allowed the company to shift to packing fresh produce in the final retail format at source. Impressed by the consistent performance, the Divine Flavor technical team fully adopted the protocol in 2020 for direct field-to-home refrigerator packaging of its Persian cucumbers for the US market. It is now arousing the interest of fresh produce distributors around the globe.

“The Xgo standing pouch is a remarkably high performing product, with an unrivalled ability to retain freshness and meaningfully extend product shelf life,” said Michael DuPuis, quality assurance and public relations coordinator for Divine Flavors. “The feedback from our customers has been excellent; they’re really happy with the quality and attractive appearance and the fact that it has that sustainability edge consumers are seeking.”

The Xgo standing pouch life extension capabilities are due to unique properties inbuilt into the packaging matrix that functions to lower oxygen and increase carbon dioxide. This creates optimal conditions for slowing respiration and senescence (aging) in plant tissues, inhibiting the growth of mold and other microorganisms, thereby preserving freshness and valuable nutrients. The StePac technology limits dehydration and product weight loss during storage, shipment, and home use and has inbuilt condensation control, that ensures high visibility of the packed products even under challenging supply chain conditions.

StePac’s breakthrough pouches are resealable and are also available in fully recyclable formats, contributing to a circular economy. They can be decoratively printed for personal brands to evoke instant product recognition while on the shelves and come with a convenient grab handle.

“Our packaging designs have traditionally focused on the wholesale sector, offering a lean functional solution to bulk packaging of high-value fresh produce that can support long haul shipments as well as storage,” said Gary Ward, business development manager for StePac. “It already demonstrated abilities to extend shelf life by 50-100%, bringing promising support to food-waste reduction. In the midst of current COVID-19 climate, concerns for food safety are driving demand for more retail packaging. We have purpose designed our packaging to preserve quality and reduce waste in the most sustainable way possible. We are increasingly venturing into the retail sector to bring this sustainable resource saving solution into consumers’ homes.”

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