



9 October 2009

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Impressive UK packaging figures**

Despite lots of negative newspaper headlines decrying the 'increasing amounts' of packaging, there has barely been any increase in the amount of packaging per capita in the UK in the last 10 years – from 175 kg per person in 1998 to 176 kg/pp in 2007.

The European Commission has just published the EU's official packaging and recycling statistics for 2007.

These show that the UK's performance over the previous 10 years compares very favourably with that of the EU as a whole (based on the 15 member countries in the EU before enlargement in 2004).

Packaging quantities were stable, recycling rates doubled, landfill greatly reduced. By contrast, Germany's falling recycling rates suggest that setting very high recycling targets is not sustainable.

And over a period when the UK population increased by 3%, and the favourable economic climate meant that consumers bought more goods, the amount of packaging used in the UK increased by just 4%. The amount of packaging used in EU-15 as a whole increased by 17%.

The UK's recycling rate more than doubled from 28% to 62%.

"These figures show clearly that the efforts of manufacturers and retailers to reduce packaging over the last decade have worked", says INCPEN Director, Jane Bickerstaffe.

She adds, "They show that our Packaging Regulations have delivered an impressive recycling rate that is now above the average for the EU-15. It's also thanks to local authorities increasing their collection schemes for all recyclates and to householders for supporting their local schemes."

ends

Notes to editors

1. INCPEN – the Industry Council for Packaging & the Environment is a research organisation set up in 1974 to study the environmental and social impact of packaging. It draws together an influential group of companies that operate throughout the supply chain and share a common interest in packaging, the environment and sustainable development.

Amcor Flexibles, ASDA, Ball Packaging Europe, Boots, Britvic Soft Drinks, Cadbury, Coca-Cola Great Britain, Colgate-Palmolive, Corus, Crown Europe, Diageo, Dow, DS Smith, Duracell, Elizabeth Arden, Findus Group, Gillette, Green and Black's, Imperial Tobacco, J Sainsbury, Kellogg's, LINPAC Group, Marks and Spencer, Molson Coors (UK),

Nestlé UK, Procter & Gamble, Rexam, Tesco, Tetra Pak, Trebor Bassett, Unilever, Warburtons

2. Full EU data is available at

<http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/waste/data/wastestreams/packaging>

### 3. Packaging used

	<b>2007</b>	<b>1998</b>
UK per person	176 kg	175 kg
EU-15 per person	189 kg	169 kg
UK total	10.7 million tonnes	10.2 million tonnes
EU-15 total	74 million tonnes	63 million tonnes

### 4. Recycling

	<b>2007</b>	<b>1998</b>
UK recycling tonnage	6.0 million tonnes	2.9 million tonnes
UK rate	62%	28%
Germany rate	67%	80%
EU-15 rate	60%	47%

For more information, contact: Vicki Procko – +44 (0)1189 255 992, 07788 724817, [vprocko@incpen.org](mailto:vprocko@incpen.org)