

## 2-3 RECYCLABLE POUCHES RAPIDLY REPLACING TRADITIONAL PACKS

Recyclable mono-material pouches are rapidly replacing traditional polyester-blend pouches for a wide range of packaging applications, from food to industrial parts.



## 4 CONVEX HELPS NZQA MAKE SITTING EXAMS MORE SUSTAINABLE

A recycling solution organised by Convex has allowed NZQA to make their exams more sustainable by diverting approximately two tonnes of plastic waste from landfill each year.



# PLANT UPGRADES STILL FORGING AHEAD

*A vigorous programme of plant and equipment upgrades is helping to improve turnaround times and quality at Convex.*

In 2021 Convex invested \$1.6M in new machinery and equipment enhancements, including what is believed to be a world-first air-slitting process for packaged frozen food. New stock procurement and forecasting processes were also implemented to help mitigate the predicted ongoing shipping delays caused by Covid-19, and further plant upgrades are planned over the next two years.

Convex Operations Manager, Aaron Collett says, "It's really important for us to make sure we can continue to meet our customers' requirements as best as we possibly can. The past two years have been tough for everyone. We are working more closely than ever with our customers to ensure we can continue their supply and give them the results that they want."

In some instances, meeting customers' needs has involved engineering new machine attachments and processes to provide bespoke workable solutions. This includes making two separate machine adaptations to enable the installation of consistently-placed venting valves for both heavy duty sacks and compostable coffee bags.

New machines have also been purchased, including a fully automated core cutter that provides cleaner and faster cuts and an opti-fresh laser machine that will allow Convex to ramp up their development of shelf-life extension packaging for high respiring fresh produce. Convex has also ordered



Convex Operations Manager Aaron Collett (left) and Extrusion Manager Shaun Trueman with the recently upgraded extrusion machine.

a new 27-metre-long heavy-duty sack machine to make bags capable of packing up to 40kg. This machine was purchased to meet the packaging needs of a specific customer and will be available for a range of industrial applications after it is commissioned in late 2022.

***"We are working more closely than ever with our customers to ensure we can continue their supply."***

In addition to the machinery investments, Convex has also replaced multiple lamination rollers to improve temperature consistency, upgraded extruder air rings to ensure the ongoing consistent quality of the compostable film being made, and installed a new machine attachment to put labels on stand-up compostable pouches.

Aaron says, "It's been very encouraging to see so many good things happening from an operations point of view over the past 12 months. It's been a massive team effort from everyone, including our customers and suppliers. With ongoing skill shortages and overseas supply issues causing us to have to order raw materials up to eight months in advance, we are very appreciative of our customers' efforts to help us forecast their future packaging needs. We are also holding more stock than ever before to help manage the shipping delays."

Construction of a new warehouse and administration office at the Convex Hamilton plant site is also set to begin around March 2022. This will create a more streamlined working environment and provide more on-site warehousing for the higher levels of stock being held.

# RECYCLABLE POUCHES RAPIDLY REPLACING TRADITIONAL PACKS

*Recyclable mono-material pouches are rapidly replacing traditional polyester-blend pouches for a wide range of packaging applications, from food to industrial parts.*

Made from low-density polyethylene (LDPE) materials, Convex recyclable pouches are suitable for soft plastic #4 recycling and repurposing into other products like fence posts. They offer high quality print presentation and can be customised to suit the functionality required for specific products, production lines and packing processes.

Convex Managing Director, Owen Embling says, "These pouches combined with our home compostable and recycled films allow us to offer a workable New Zealand-made sustainable solution for almost every packaging requirement and budget. They are particularly ideal for food-grade applications where using recycled materials is not currently a viable option."

A large percentage of Convex customers have opted to switch to more planet-friendly recyclable pouches, including AS Wilcox & Sons and Comvita.



## ENHANCING SUSTAINABILITY FOR BETA BITES SNACKING CARROTS

*Moving their Beta Bites Snacking Carrots into a recyclable pouch is allowing AS Wilcox & Sons to build on the many sustainable practices they have already adopted in their farming operations and ensure ongoing access to their key markets.*



Beta Bites carrots were successfully trialled in recyclable pouches in 2021 and will be fully transitioning to the new packs in early 2022.

Established in 1954, the fourth generation, family-owned and operated produce company is committed to sustainability. Along with a strong environmental focus on soil health, crops and water management, Wilcox has been sending their soft plastic waste to Future Post for several years to be repurposed into fence posts.

Wilcox Marketing Manager, Dean Langrell-Read says Convex's recyclable pouches provide Wilcox with a more sustainable packaging option that makes economic sense and suits the functionality and shelf life required for their premium fresh snacking carrots.

Dean says, "The recyclable pouches keep the carrots fresh and support our premium messaging of 'Snacking and Fresh' by providing consumers with the convenient re-closeable zipper they want. There is no point putting carrots in paper bags as they would just dehydrate and create massive food waste. So, there is a role for plastic pouches, particularly for carrots and this type of product."

"Shifting to a recyclable pouch has allowed us to continue to benefit from the functionality provided by plastic pouches in a way that is kinder to the environment and meets the sustainable packaging requirements of the supermarkets we sell to."

# MANUKA HONEY LOZENGES STRENGTHEN CLEAN AND GREEN EXPORT IMAGE

*A driving goal to make all their packaging recyclable, reusable or compostable by 2025 has prompted Comvita Ltd to pack their Manuka Honey Lozenges in Convex recyclable pouches.*

The new recyclable pouches will be launched in Comvita's largest markets, Malaysia and China, in early 2022.

Based in Paengaroa in the Bay of Plenty, Comvita was established in 1974 as a natural health company with a strong focus on honey. After funding the science that validated the anti-bacterial properties of manuka honey, Comvita pioneered the industry for New Zealand and developed a strong export market for Comvita® UMF® Manuka Honey products.

Comvita Product Development Manager, Elliot Sjardin, says the new pouches have allowed Comvita to source primarily from New Zealand suppliers, which he views as 'fantastic' for investing in local commercial partners and strengthening Comvita's ambition for a clean and green export image.

Elliot says, "We are committed to seeking out long-term sustainability solutions across our entire supply chain. The recyclable pouches were recommended as the best sustainable fit for our product use. China and Malaysia are more developed with soft plastic recycling than New Zealand currently is, so our pouches can potentially be recycled and reused in other packaging there. We are really pleased to have found a local supplier that not only provided us with the packaging we need, but also worked with our Auckland lozenge manufacturers to make sure the pouches run really well on their packing lines."

"After sourcing our previous pouches offshore, it's been a breath of fresh air to work with an account manager who is based just down the road from us."



Learn more about Comvita at:  
[comvita.com](https://comvita.com)

## A MESSAGE FROM THE MANAGING DIRECTOR



### AS OWEN SEES IT –

#### FORECASTING IS THE KEY TO OVERCOMING SUPPLY CHALLENGES

Like many of you, I was very pleased to see the end of 2021. Now that a second year of disruptive Covid-19 restrictions is behind us, I believe we are all better placed to navigate the challenges of 2022.

The Convex philosophy has always been that out of every threat lies an equal or greater opportunity. We have proven this many times since we began operating in 1976. Not having enough finance to buy a new machine or being told that a particular process is impossible has never stopped us – it has simply inspired us to think outside the square to develop a different and often better way of doing things. Covid-19 is no different. We have responded by putting

programmes in place to minimise some of the impacts. That includes holding 40-50% more inventory over a range of primary raw materials and finished products and signing several long-term supply agreements to help provide supply stability. We have also employed more staff and are actively training people to ensure all shifts are well covered.

I am confident that we can prevent supply shocks going forward. The key to achieving this is forecasting. With massive shipping delays forcing us to order raw materials further out than ever before, it's critical we get this right. I encourage you to work closely with your sales consultant so we can factor in your future packaging needs when we place these orders, to help ensure a consistent supply.

We value your continued loyalty and look forward to partnering with you to find workable solutions that will get us all through 2022 and beyond.

Keep strong and take care,



# CONVEX HELPS NZQA MAKE SITTING EXAMS MORE SUSTAINABLE

*Convex has helped the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) move away from using single-use plastic exam paper wrappers, while still retaining the security and visibility required for the packaged exams.*

A recycling solution organised by Convex has allowed NZQA to make their nation-wide exams more sustainable by diverting approximately two tonnes of plastic waste from landfill each year. Since November 2019, discarded exam paper wrappers have been collected from each exam centre, recycled, and then sent to Convex to be reused in other packaging products, including new exam paper wrappers.

***"Finding an eco-friendly packaging solution for our exam paper wrappers was very important to us."***

A key consideration in selecting a more sustainable packaging option was the high level of tamper-proof security required for the packaged exams. This also included the packaging having to be clear enough to enable the Exam Centre Managers to undertake their own required checks on the exam packs and easily identify the correct set of personalised exam papers for each candidate.

Using flow wrap made from a combination of virgin and recycled plastic was deemed the best option, and Convex worked with their recycling partner, Astron Sustainability, to set up a workable process for all parties.

NZQA Deputy Chief Executive Assessment, Andrea Gray, says "Finding an eco-friendly packaging solution for our exam paper wrappers was very important to us. It was clear from student feedback that they wanted us to move away from single-use plastics as well. The challenge was to find a solution that provided the security and visibility we needed. Convex recommended recycling as the best available solution, and they organised the whole process for us."

Convex has been developing sustainable packaging for over 25 years and are one of New Zealand's leading manufacturers of recyclable, recycled and home



compostable packaging. They have been actively investigating sustainable packaging materials and processes since 1996 when they registered their recycling logo and launched their first home compostable bag.

Andrea Gray says "Convex's assistance in getting this initiative underway was really valuable. Their in-depth understanding of sustainable packaging options allowed them to recommend a solution that met our specifications really well. We were not aware that was an option and are really pleased that Convex not only recommended it, but also took the lead in organising all the logistics with the recycling company and our contracted Print and Distribution provider. We are very happy with the result."

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