EUROPEAN BAKER & BISCUIT

Issue 2 (205) | Vol. 34 | 2026

Supporting the international baking & biscuit industry

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In our daily activities, we tend to look ahead to what's yet to come. Bigger, faster, more efficient, and better – that's the progress we strive for. "And whoever has the youth has the future," right? But where would we be without accumulated knowledge and experience? How would we measure our progress? How could we learn from our mistakes to improve, if there were no history offering us the opportunity to confidently pursue our chosen path?

A quarter of a century ago, our history in the bakery market began. With the arrival of Dick Bassa, Peter Vos, and Frans Temminck, better known as BVT, our Bakery Equipment Family was born, later expanded with the NewCap, Vacuum Cooling & Baking, and Bakepack labels. And recently, our youngest member, Repeatloaf, saw the first light of day. An impressive portfolio of solutions for production in modern bakeries and those of the future. Before we fully embrace the future, we look back with a satisfied smile on 25 years of experience that have provided us with the foundation for that future. Happy Birthday!

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The Shift From Packaging Function To Production Constraint

> This is where interpack 2026 becomes a decision environment rather than a showcase. The dominant themes—Smart Manufacturing, Innovative Materials, and Future Skills—reflect an industry that is being forced to integrate decisions across the production chain.

Interpack has always been a reference point for the processing and packaging industries. In 2026, its relevance is less about scale and more about timing. The baking sector is entering a phase where packaging decisions are no longer downstream considerations—they are production constraints.

The most immediate driver is regulatory. The EU's Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation is moving the industry from broad sustainability targets into enforceable requirements around recyclability, material composition, and traceability. For bakery producers, particularly those supplying retail across multiple markets, compliance directly affects product eligibility, shelf placement, and long-term contracts.

What makes this shift operationally significant is that packaging compliance cannot be solved at the packaging stage alone. Material changes—whether towards mono-material films, fiber-based structures, or reduced plastic formats—introduce new behaviors on the line. Sealing windows narrow, machinability shifts, and barrier performance must be revalidated against real product conditions. In high-speed bakery environments, these changes propagate upstream. Dough variability, moisture migration, and cooling consistency begin to influence packaging performance in ways that were previously absorbed by more forgiving materials.

This is where interpack 2026 becomes a decision environment rather than a showcase. The dominant themes—Smart Manufacturing, Innovative Materials, and Future Skills—reflect an industry that is being forced to integrate decisions across the production chain. Automation is increasingly focused on stabilizing variability before it reaches the packaging stage. Material selection becomes a technical evaluation of product behavior over time. Workforce adaptation is tied to managing more complex, data-driven systems.

Previous editions framed packaging as a high-tech commodity with a role in reducing waste and extending shelf life. That framing still holds, but the context has shifted. Packaging now sits at the intersection of compliance, performance, and cost.

interpack 2026 will bring those pressures into sharper focus—and, in doing so, define the decisions that follow.•

EUROPEAN BAKER & BISCUIT

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CVC Welcomes Apollo as Minority Investor in Syntegon

An investor group led by Apollo-managed funds is acquiring a 37% minority stake in Syntegon from CVC. As a globally leading technology company, Syntegon is a strategic partner for the entire lifecycle of the pharmaceutical, biotechnology and food industries. Record revenue of EUR 1.75 billion in 2025 and a 27% year-on-year increase in EBITDA to EUR 282 million underscore Syntegon's operational strength in highly regulated markets. With fully integrated line solutions along the entire value chain, a portfolio of approximately 2,000 patents and patent applications and groundbreaking innovations, Syntegon has established itself as the technological leader in the industry. One example is SynTiso, the world's first gloveless high-speed filling line for liquid pharmaceuticals.

In the next growth phase, Syntegon aims to gain further share in mission-critical and largely non-cyclical growing end markets. A focus is on the expansion in the USA, where Apollo's strong expertise will provide new momentum.

BRIDOR Buys the Panamar Bakery Group

France-based LE DUFF Group has agreed to acquire Spain's Panamar Bakery Group in a transaction marking the biggest deal in the group's history, as well as for its bakery subsidiary Bridor. Panamar, which is expected to generate around EUR640m in turnover in 2026 and employs approximately 2,600 people, is a leading manufacturer and distributor of frozen bakery products across retail, hospitality and foodservice channels. The company offers more than 1,200 SKUs under brands including Panamar, Cobopa, Pacfren and Panusa, with exports spanning over 20 countries.

The acquisition strengthens Bridor's position in frozen bakery and viennoiserie, while significantly expanding its footprint in the Iberian Peninsula. It also enhances the group's industrial and logistics network across the 100 countries where Bridor operates. The transaction is part of LE DUFF Group's wider strategy to reach EUR3.7bn in turnover across its divisions, which include Bridor, Gourming, and foodservice chains such as Brioche Dorée, Del Arte and La Madeleine.

Lesaffre Appoints Thomas Lesaffre as General Manager of Fermentis

Belgian ingredients supplier Puratos announced it would expand its Buckingham facility in the UK to begin local production of fillings, patisserie glazes, and sourdough, aiming to meet rising demand across the country. The expansion will create 37 new jobs across production, warehousing, R&D, quality, and engineering.

The move will consolidate production from its Simonswood site into Buckingham, where Puratos UK has been manufacturing patisserie and bakery mixes for over 30 years. The expansion will increase filling production capacity and introduce patisserie glaze manufacturing, further establishing Buckingham as a centre of technical excellence. As part of its sustainability strategy, Puratos UK will transition from 'bag-in-bucket' packaging to heat-sealed buckets and pouches for its fillings range, aiming to reduce plastic waste. The new facilities will be BREEAM-certified, supporting Puratos UK's goal to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030.

Grupo Bimbo Opens NOVABES Bakery Hub in El Salvador

Grupo Bimbo has inaugurated NOVABES, a new bakery facility in Apopa, El Salvador, reinforcing its production platform in Central America.

The investment expands supply capacity across bread, pastry and tortilla categories, while positioning El Salvador as a strategic hub within the company's regional network. Grupo Bimbo has operated in the country for more than three decades.

The NOVABES site integrates production areas, raw material storage, logistics operations and a distribution centre spanning more than 4,000 m², alongside administrative facilities. Initial output will focus on pastries, cakes and tortillas, supported by advanced production technologies aimed at meeting growing regional demand. The facility is also the first Grupo Bimbo bakery in El Salvador to operate under the Free Trade Zone regime for food production, improving logistics competitiveness and facilitating access to Central American markets.

German Bakers' Confederation and GHM Gesellschaft für Handwerksmessen Extend Cooperation

GHM Gesellschaft für Handwerksmessen mbH and the German Bakers' Confederation have extended their cooperation on a long-term basis. As the conceptual sponsor of iba, the German Bakers' Confederation has once again commissioned GHM to organise the world's leading trade fair for the baking and confectionery industry until 2039.
GHM will thus organise five more editions of the world's leading trade fair for bakery, confectionery and snacks at three-year intervals. The contract extension builds on a long-standing joint success story: back in 1958, both organisations laid the foundation for their partnership at the "International Bakery Exhibition", now known as iba for short. Since 2006, GHM has been solely responsible for organising iba in cooperation with the German Bakers' Confederation.
Roland Ermer, President of the German Bakers' Confederation, emphasises: "This long-term commitment is an important strategic signal for the German baking industry. The contract extension is a clear commitment to the international importance of the German bakery trade and secures a strong platform for the baking industry worldwide for the coming years."

Puratos to Acquire Dawn Foods

Puratos and Dawn Foods announced that the companies have entered into a definitive agreement under which Puratos intends to acquire Dawn Foods, subject to all customary regulatory approvals.
Founded in 1919 and 1920, respectively, Puratos and Dawn Foods have developed distinct and complementary capabilities, both serving professional bakers, pastry chefs, retailers and food manufacturers by translating consumer trends and insights into ingredient solutions.
This combination would bring together complementary innovation engines – Dawn Foods' application-led creativity and Puratos' R&D-led ingredient technology – alongside complementary production models. Dawn Foods' large-scale, standardized manufacturing and Puratos' more flexible and tailored production. It would also connect Dawn Foods' extensive North American distribution footprint with Puratos' broad international subsidiary network.

IMCD to Acquire Willows Ingredients

IMCD has signed an agreement to acquire 100% of the shares in Willows Ingredients Group Limited, strengthening its food and nutrition activities across Ireland and the UK. The transaction, announced from Rotterdam on 20 February 2026, is subject to customary closing conditions and is expected to complete in the first quarter of 2026.
Headquartered in Ireland, Willows Ingredients employs 26 staff and supplies ingredients to the food and nutrition sector, with particular expertise in health, sports and animal nutrition. The company reported revenues of approximately EUR26m in 2024 and has established supplier partnerships and technical support capabilities across both Ireland and the UK.
IMCD said the acquisition will expand its footprint in high-growth nutrition segments in the region, broadening its portfolio and enhancing market access for customers. The integration of Willows Ingredients' supplier network is also expected to strengthen IMCD's local formulation and technical service offering.

GoodMills Innovation Introduces Lighter Wholemeal Spelt Solution for Artisan Bakers

GoodMills Innovation has launched a new wholemeal spelt ingredient designed to improve the sensory profile of wholegrain baked goods while maintaining their nutritional benefits.
The product, SNOW SPELT wholegrain microgranulate, is positioned as a concentrated wholemeal component that enables bakers to produce lighter-coloured, milder-tasting and finer-textured products compared to traditional wholemeal offerings.
The development responds to ongoing demand for healthier bakery options that do not compromise on taste and appearance. Unlike conventional wholemeal flour, the ingredient is produced through a multi-stage process that concentrates bran and germ fractions while reducing starch content. The result is a finely ground product with improved integration into dough systems and a more balanced flavour profile.

Ulrick + Short Reveals Sugar-reduction System for Sweet Bakery

Ulrick & Short has introduced avanté 25, a new ingredient system designed to support sugar reduction in sweet bakery while maintaining product quality and processing performance.
The solution combines soluble maize fibre, wheat starch and wheat protein to replicate the multiple functional roles of sugar in bakery formulations. In addition to sweetness, sugar contributes to moisture retention, aeration, foam stability and texture—parameters that are critical for volume, crumb structure and overall eating quality.
According to the company, avanté 25 enables manufacturers to reduce sugar levels while increasing fibre content, without compromising structure or machinability. Trials in muffin applications showed comparable aeration, crumb structure and colour to full-sugar controls, supporting direct integration into existing recipes. The ingredient is also suitable for applications such as brownies and madeleines, where it helps maintain height, peaking and a consistent crumb.

New Padovani Equipment Targets Flexibility and Reduced Downtime in Biscuit Production

Padovan has introduced upgraded versions of its moulding machines for baking trays, the R2/R3 PRO, designed to improve operational flexibility, ease of maintenance and line efficiency.
The new models reflect increasing demand from biscuit producers for adaptable equipment capable of responding quickly to changing product requirements and market trends. The supplier said the redesign was driven by direct industry feedback, with a focus on simplifying key operations and reducing downtime.

Among the main improvements is a faster moulding roller change enabled by direct access through the hopper, alongside toolless removal of the feeding roller to facilitate deeper cleaning. Conveyor belt replacement has also been simplified, eliminating the need to remove additional components and reducing the risk of misalignment.

Matthews Cotswold Flour Launches Five New Regenerative Flours to Trade Customers

British artisan flour mill Matthews Cotswold Flour has added five new regenerative flours to its premium quality, award-winning range: Regenerative Plain, Self-Raising, Artisan T65 Bread Flour, Wholemeal and Fine Cake flours. Each of the new flours is milled from grains farmed in a way that improves soil health and will enable trade customers and consumers to create delicious, nutritious, planet-friendly bakes. The new products have been added to the brand's regenerative range which already includes All Purpose, Light and Dark Spelt and Strong Bread Flour. The aim is that all their flours will be made entirely from regeneratively grown grain by 2030. The new flours are milled using 100% regeneratively grown grain and will be available to the trade in 16kg and 1.5kg bags.

Cargill's Baupte Site Cuts CO2 Emissions by 45% with Major Process Modernization

Cargill's Baupte has reduced total site CO2 emissions by 45% following the modernization of one of its most energy-intensive production processes. Supported by an investment of approximately EUR25 million, the project marks a major step in improving the site's energy efficiency and strengthening its industrial performance.

As part of the upgrade, Cargill modernized the site's most energy-intensive process by introducing Mechanical Vapor Recompression (MVR) technology. This replaces natural gas-based steam with an electrically driven system that captures, recompresses and reuses vapors generated during production as the primary heat source, significantly improving energy efficiency while maintaining production performance.

Established in 1941, the site employs around 275 people and exports more than 75% of its production globally, contributing to both the regional economy and Europe's food ingredient supply. Baupte also hosts a dairy-focused Food Innovation Center, supporting product development and application expertise.

interpack 2026, At the Heart of the Baking Industry

Every three years, interpack gathers together the world's processing & packaging sector in Düsseldorf. Its focus: packaging solutions and packaging materials; packaging machines and the related process technology for the food, beverages, confectionery, baked goods, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, non-food and industrial goods sectors. As an internationally leading trade fair, it draws experts from across the world to exchange ideas about the latest technologies and solutions and provides impetuses for the sector's future topics.

By Jo Ilie

interpack is set to open its doors in Düsseldorf from 7 to 13 May 2026. It brings together the global processing and packaging industry to discuss AI, automation, innovative materials and new skills. Around 2,800 exhibitors from around the world are expected.
"interpack 2026 is more important than ever," said interpack Director Thomas Dohse. "Especially in a challenging market environment, the industry needs a place for dialogue and orientation. Our task now is to view and compare concrete solutions and make well-founded investment decisions."
interpack 2026 will focus on specific themes with its Hot Topics Smart Manufacturing, Innovative Materials and Future Skills. Smart Manufacturing is synonymous with data-based, resource-efficient production – from AI to robotics. Innovative Materials focuses on new packaging materials, functionalities and design-for-recycling concepts. Future Skills examines the changing world of work and the skills required for increasingly digitalised and automated production.
Among the approximately 2,800 companies from 67 countries, many market leaders will be showing an impressive presence. Aasted, Sollich, Theegarten-Pactec and SACMI Packaging & Chocolate, for example, will be the representatives of the confectionery and bakery industry at interpack in Halls 1, 3 and 4.
In the extensive exhibition area for food, beverages, consumer and industrial goods in six halls (11 to 14 as well as 5 and 6), companies such as the COESIA Group, Duravant, Gerhard Schubert, Ishida, KHS, Krones, MULTIVAC, Syntegon Technology and ULMA Packaging will be setting standards in automation, efficiency and sustainability.
Halls 7 to 10 will also be playing a key role for the industry. Over 1,000 exhibitors will be presenting materials and end products for packaging: making interpack the world's most important trade fair for packaging materials. Here you will find companies such as BERICAP, Jokey, Metsä, Sappi Europe and SCHÜTZ.
Labelling and marking technology in Halls 8a and 8b will be represented by Bluhm Systeme, Domino Printing Sciences and Totani, for example.

GLOBAL PRESENCE AND COUNTRY PAVILIONS

interpack also underscores its international significance with numerous national pavilions. Many exhibitors make a joint appearance under one national flag, pooling their expertise in clearly demarcated areas. Among others, joint stands from India, USA, China, Taiwan, Korea, Turkey, Malaysia and several European countries will be represented.

CONTENT FOR INSPIRATION

The trade fair will be accompanied by numerous specials. At the interpack Spotlight Forum by the North Entrance, experts will discuss current developments and strategic issues in the industry. The Start-up Zone provides a platform for young companies. One special item on the programme is the presentation of the WorldStar Global Packaging Awards on the exhibition grounds.
With its accompanying trade fair components, interpack also focuses on the expertise of the supplier industry. Here, companies present solutions from the fields of drive technology, control systems, sensor technology, robotics, machine parts and industrial software, thereby visualising the technological basis of modern processing and packaging solutions.

With the SAVE FOOD Expert Talks, the SAVE FOOD Highlight Route, the SAVE FOOD Awards and the SAVE FOOD Project Competition, the focus will also be on preventing food waste and losses. Women in Packaging on 11 May will focus on the role of women in the industry. And interpack TV will report live from the exhibition grounds on innovations, trends and voices from the international community.

HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE BAKING INDUSTRY

interpack 2026 will bring together the industry's technological offerings across three halls covering around 40,000 square metres. The confectionery and bakery zone spans Halls 1, 3 and 4, directly at the South Entrance of the Düsseldorf Exhibition Centre. Manufacturers will find solutions there covering the entire value chain – from raw material processing through shaping and coating to primary and secondary packaging. Exhibitors here include Aasted, Sollich, Theegarten-Pactec, SACMI Packaging & Chocolate, Bühler and Coperion. This means the technological core of the industry is represented on site. This is complemented by the world's largest selection of packaging materials and supplies in Halls 7–10. In total, over 2,800 exhibitors from around the world are expected at interpack from 7 to 13 May.
Stable industry environment with clear growth momentum
The global market for baked goods stood at 177 million tonnes in 2024. Growth of 9.6 per cent is expected by 2029. Markets in the Middle East and Africa are developing particularly dynamically. The global confectionery market is also set to grow by 4.5 per cent by 2029. Latin America, the Middle East and Africa are showing double-digit growth rates, whilst North America is experiencing a slight decline (source: Euromonitor International/VDMA). The market environment is therefore stable. At the same time, sales regions, cost structures and regulatory frameworks are shifting.

EXHIBITORS CLEARLY IDENTIFY THE NEED FOR ACTION

The scale of the challenges is highlighted by companies exhibiting in the confectionery and bakery sector at interpack 2026. One of these is Bühler, which can be found in Hall 3 at interpack. Thomas Isom, Global Head of Business Development Consumer Foods at

Bühler, explains, for example: “The greatest pressure for transformation stems from the combined impact of raw material crises, sustainability requirements, health regulations and rising costs. The key levers for companies therefore lie in three areas: resilient and sustainable raw material and supply chains, recipe and product innovation (particularly sugar reduction and alternative ingredients), and increased efficiency and flexible production.”

These structural requirements are compounded by a tight cost situation. “The confectionery industry, and the chocolate industry in particular, is currently under massive cost pressure, primarily due to sharply rising raw material prices. This is increasing the demand for highly efficient and durable production facilities. At the same time, rising energy costs are forcing investment in modern technologies that significantly reduce energy consumption,” says Klaus-Dietrich Franzmeier, Director of Sales & Marketing at Sollich. The company is exhibiting across more than 1,000 square metres in Hall 3, making it one of the largest exhibitors at interpack.

Against a backdrop of fluctuating raw material costs, staff shortages and growing uncertainties regarding trade and tariffs, Chris Isom, General Manager Food, Coperion Food, Health & Nutrition Division, emphasises the urgency of ensuring throughput and quality with fewer staff: “This requires stricter process control, faster changeovers, and more hygienic and consistent operations. Those companies that modernise intelligently will be successful, by utilising automation and integrated system improvements to increase product consistency, enhance flexibility and reduce total cost of ownership.” Coperion can be found in Hall 4.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION-SETTING IN THE SPOTLIGHT AT INTERPACK

The question is therefore no longer whether modernisation is necessary, but how comprehensive it should be. Klaus-Dietrich Franzmeier of Sollich puts it plainly: “To remain competitive by 2030, companies must consistently rely on modern technologies. The use of artificial intelligence – both in development and in service – will be a decisive factor for success.”

Matt Craig, Coperion Food, Health & Nutrition Division, also sees strategic investment as key: “Make investment decisions in line with the areas in which the industry is actually investing: modernisation and upgrades rather than solely the construction of entirely new production sites. Bakeries are prioritising packaging, software/IT/AI, robotics and automation, as well as key process steps such as mixing and material handling – because these investments deliver measurable improvements in quality, efficiency and plant availability.”

Companies that want to be successful by 2030 must align their strategy along three core axes, says Thomas Bischof (Bühler): “1. Resilient and sustainable raw material and supply chains, 2. Healthier and differentiated product innovations, 3. Digital, efficient and flexible production. “Those who consistently combine these three dimensions can address costs, sustainability and consumer expectations simultaneously.”

INTERPACK 2026: A DECISION-MAKING PLATFORM FOR INVESTMENTS

Bühler will also be showcasing these strategic approaches at interpack 2026. In the “Minimarket” and the “Food Sensation Lab”, producers will find inspiration and ideas for new products. Bühler will also demonstrate how manufacturers can optimize their production processes and prepare for the challenges of a fluctuating market environment. The focus here is on digitalisation and flexibility. In addition, innovations in the areas of chocolate mass and chocolate moulding, biscuit and wafer production, as well as cereals and extrusion technology, will be presented.

Sollich is also showcasing specific developments for confectionery production. The company will present a new generation of enroaching machines at interpack 2026. Furthermore, in collaboration with SweetConnect GmbH, machine learning functionalities are being further developed to provide plant operators with more targeted support for efficient and stable process control.

Coperion is focusing on integration. Equipment, control systems and automation are linked in such a way that modernisation projects deliver tangible results – such as greater product consistency, faster changeovers, improved hygiene and a robust data foundation.

At interpack 2026, the company will showcase solutions for modernising existing production lines. These include hygienic mixing technologies such as the DIOSNA spiral mixer, application technologies such as Bakon Disc Spraying, and flexible depositing solutions featuring the Unifiller MultiStation. The SBX platform will also be presented for extrusion applications. •

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Reading Bakery Systems **Brings Exciting New Technology** to interpack 2026

RBS will be at interpack 2026 at Stand B70 (Hall 1) to present new equipment that can help bakers and manufacturers improve their processes and output. Visitors to the RBS stand can expect a combination of live equipment demonstrations, product samples, and technical expertise. The team will be running the WCX Wirecut Machine, showcasing their continuous mixing technology and have an Emithermic XE Oven section on the show floor. In addition, they'll feature a range of innovative snack products from around the world, giving visitors a tangible look at how RBS systems support product development and market-driven innovation.Most importantly, it's an opportunity to engage directly with the RBS team and explore practical solutions tailored to each customer's production goals.

What are your key objectives for exhibiting at Interpack 2026, and how does the show fit into your broader European growth strategy?

Interpack is a key platform for connecting with both existing customers and new partners across Europe and the rest of the world. Our primary objective is to showcase the latest advances in bakery and snack equipment while promoting our deep process expertise to help manufacturers improve efficiency, consistency, and sustainability.

From a broader strategy standpoint, Europe is an important growth region for us. We've been strengthening our regional Customer Care presence and expanding our ability to support customers locally. Interpack allows us to reinforce that commitment while demonstrating technologies that align with the region's focus on energy efficiency, automation, and product innovation.

Which technologies or systems are you highlighting at Interpack 2026, and what specific production challenges do they address for industrial bakers?

At Interpack, we're highlighting a range of technologies designed to solve key production challenges:

- Emithermic® XE Oven – Addresses energy consumption, inconsistent baking, and complex maintenance associated with traditional DGF ovens;
- WCX Wirecut Machine – Enables flexibility for new products, including cookies and bars with inclusions or challenging doughs;
- Continuous Mixing Technology – Reduces labor dependency while improving consistency and throughput;
- SCORPION® Profiling System – Provides real-time insight into oven performance to support process optimization and troubleshooting.

Together, these systems help manufacturers improve product quality, reduce variability, and operate more efficiently.

Can you share recent innovations in baking or snack production lines that improve throughput, consistency or energy efficiency?

One of the most significant innovations is the Emithermic® XE Oven, which replaces traditional ribbon burner systems with a centralized heat delivery design. This provides more balanced heat across the product band, improving consistency while reducing energy consumption and simplifying maintenance.

We're also seeing major advancements in continuous mixing, where automated control systems deliver highly consistent

dough while reducing labor and operational variability. Additionally, tools like the SCORPION® Profiling System are enabling manufacturers to better understand and optimize their processes, leading to measurable improvements in efficiency and product uniformity.

What product trends are currently shaping equipment demand?

We're seeing strong demand driven by several key trends:

- Better-for-you and functional snacks, including high-protein and clean-label products;
- Product diversification, with manufacturers expanding into new platforms to develop products with new textures and flavors;
- Gluten-free and alternative formulations, which require more precise process control;
- Continued growth in crackers, biscuits, and baked snacks, particularly in premium and differentiated segments.

These trends are pushing manufacturers to invest in more flexible, automated systems that can handle a wider range of products without compromising efficiency.

How are your systems supporting flexibility for manufacturers looking to scale new product development quickly?

Flexibility is a key focus for manufacturers looking to accelerate new product development, and our systems are designed to support that from both a formulation and processing standpoint.

For example, our Low Pressure Extruded (LPE) Snack System allows manufacturers to produce a wide variety of snack shapes and formats with quick die changes, making it easy to adapt to new concepts, regional flavors, or limited-time offerings.

Similarly, our Multi-Crisp System provides the ability to produce a broad range of baked crisps on a single line, giving manufacturers the flexibility to respond to changing consumer preferences without investing in multiple dedicated systems. Equipment like the WCX Wirecut allows for quick changeovers and the ability to run multiple product types on the same line. At the same time, our continuous mixing systems and recipe-driven controls enable manufacturers to adjust formulations quickly while maintaining consistency.

We also support customers through our Science & Innovation Center, where they can test new products, validate processes, and reduce scale-up risk before moving to full production.

Can you share a recent project or installation in Europe that demonstrates measurable improvements?

While many of our projects are confidential, we are seeing strong results from customers upgrading legacy oven systems to newer technologies like the Emithermic platform. These projects typically deliver measurable improvements in energy efficiency, bake consistency, and operational simplicity, while reducing maintenance requirements.

In addition, customers implementing continuous mixing solutions are achieving greater consistency and reduced labor dependency, particularly in high-volume operations.

How do you support customers beyond equipment delivery?

Support is a core part of our offering. We work closely with customers from initial concept through long-term operation. This includes:

- Product and process testing at our Science & Innovation Center (in-person or virtual);
- Training and commissioning support for operators and maintenance teams;
- Ongoing Customer Care services, including inspections, upgrades, and optimization;
- Spare parts and digital support through our eZone platform.

Our goal is to be a long-term partner, helping customers continuously improve their operations over time. •

Discover Innovation at interpack 2026

DRIVING EFFICIENCY AND INNOVATION IN SNACK AND BAKERY PRODUCTION

As snack and bakery manufacturers continue to balance efficiency, product quality, and evolving consumer demands, equipment innovation is playing an increasingly important role across the production line. From next-generation oven technology to flexible forming and automated mixing, new solutions are helping producers improve consistency, reduce operational complexity, and accelerate product development.

At Interpack 2026, Reading Bakery Systems (RBS) will highlight a range of technologies designed to support these goals, with a focus on performance, flexibility, and long-term sustainability. Advancing Oven Technology for Consistency and Efficiency

One of the key innovations on display is the Emithermic XE Oven, developed as an alternative to traditional direct gas-fired (DGF) baking systems. By eliminating ribbon burners, the design simplifies cleaning and maintenance while improving heat balance across the baking chamber. The result is a more consistent bake, reduced energy consumption, and a system that is easier for operators to manage—addressing many of the challenges associated with legacy DGF ovens.

INCREASING FLEXIBILITY IN COOKIE AND BISCUIT FORMING

As product variety continues to expand, flexibility at the forming stage has become essential. RBS will demonstrate its WCX Wirecut Machine, designed to handle a wide range of cookie and bar applications.

Equipped with ultrasonic cutting and crimping technology, the system enables manufacturers to process doughs with large inclusions and produce clean, uniform products. This capability supports faster changeovers and greater responsiveness to new product trends.

IMPROVING CONSISTENCY THROUGH AUTOMATED CONTINUOUS MIXING

Consistency at the front end of the process remains critical to overall line performance. RBS's portfolio of continuous mixing systems is designed to deliver precise ingredient control while reducing labor and energy usage.

With applications ranging from bread and crackers to pet

treats and alternative proteins, these systems provide a scalable approach to mixing that supports both high-volume production and product innovation. The MX Continuous Mixer will be featured on the show floor.

GAINING VISIBILITY INSIDE THE OVEN

Process visibility is another area of focus, particularly as manufacturers look to optimize performance and reduce waste. The SCORPION® Oven Profiling System provides real-time measurement of key baking parameters, including temperature, airflow, heat flux, and humidity. By capturing this data under full production conditions, operators can better understand oven performance and make informed adjustments to improve efficiency and product quality.

SUPPORTING ONGOING PRODUCT INNOVATION

In addition to equipment technologies, RBS will showcase a variety of finished snack products developed to reflect current market trends. These include pretzels, baked crisps, cookies, and crackers, as well as emerging categories such as high-protein and better-for-you snacks. As consumer preferences continue to shift, the ability to quickly develop and scale new products remains a key differentiator for manufacturers.

Reading Bakery Systems' presence at Interpack reflects a broader industry focus on smarter, more adaptable production. By combining automation, process expertise, and data-driven technologies, manufacturers are better positioned to meet today's demands while preparing for future growth. •

Ashworth Belts B.V.

Hall 13 | Boot C27

Ashworth, a global company, is the only conveyor belt company that manufactures and services both metal and plastic belting for straight running, turn-curve, lo-tension, PosiDrive and self-stacking spirals—offering customers the best solution for their specific requirements. Celebrating 80 years, Ashworth continues to lead with patented innovation, trusted products, reliable service, and Factory Service expertise in refurbishment, troubleshooting, installation, and maintenance.

www.ashworth.com

Intralox

Hall 13 | Boot C03

Intralox is the global conveyance solutions leader, offering direct service for a broad range of industries in more than 100 countries. We specialize in innovative technologies, including Modular Plastic Conveyor Belting, ThermoDrive® technology, DirectDrive™ Spiral Systems and Activated Roller Belt™ (ARB™) equipment. Our products, combined with a powerful blend of engineering expertise, services and global support, are backed by the strongest written performance and delivery guarantees. Working with Intralox allows customers to experience our uncompromising commitment to providing sustainable solutions that create lasting value.

Leading snack food producers worldwide trust Intralox to keep their production lines running. Our conveyor belt and equipment solutions for handling chips, salty snacks, nuts, seeds, and more help you eliminate downtime, reduce total cost of ownership, and achieve problem-free conveyance. Our industry experts partner with you to ensure you receive the correct solutions and service, when you need them.

www.www.intralox.com

Handtmann

Hall 5 | Boot B37

Handtmann presents modular production solutions for a wide range of bakery, confectionery, and snack products at interpack At this year's interpack, Handtmann will showcase a broad spectrum of production solutions for bakery, confectionery, and snack applications at booth B37 in hall 5. All systems for portioning, cutting, (dough) dividing, forming, depositing, and co-extruding are flexibly configurable and suitable for a wide variety of applications—from soft consistencies to firm product masses. Examples include rolled fondant, bars and snack bars of all kinds, cookies, muffins, sponge cake bars, fruit paste products, marzipan items, bread chips, vegetable sticks, crackers, gingerbread bites, confectionery, magdalenas, quark balls, nut, chestnut, or date pastes, as well as innovations such as candy in collagen casings or products in alginate casings (e.g., sweet pastes).

In the area of depositing, Handtmann will present several solutions for product masses ranging from very liquid, pasty, inhomogeneous, chunky, fibrous, or containing large inclusions to those with high liquid content—into cups, trays, jars, thermoformed packaging, as toppings, or onto dough sheets. Variety is created through a wide range of outlet options with stamping devices, round and star nozzles, or the ability to deposit at temperatures up to 90 degrees Celsius. One highlight is the fully automated, multi-lane depositing solution featuring the DS 560 P.

A major highlight is a modular system solution for the production of formed products. The single-lane FS 525 all-in-one forming system combines two different forming principles, offering completely new flexibility in the production of shaped items: The hole plate forming technology allows for freely formed 3D products, while the rotary cutting principle enables the production of various cross-sections with clean, smooth cuts.

For trade fair visitors looking for innovative solutions, the ConPro-Sachet system will be on display. It enables the production of a wide variety of product formats in an alginate casing—such as snacks and substitution products in pod form—and their transfer into trays or feeding into flow-packaging machines.

www.handtmann.com

IPCO

Hall 3 | Booth 3D20

IPCO is a major supplier of chocolate forming/moulding equipment, with systems designed for the production of industrial ingredients – chips, chunks, drops and blocks – and decorative products such as shavings, rolls, pencils, blossoms and many more.

The company can tailor systems to suit different needs, with solutions for everything from low cost, rapid deployment start-ups to high-capacity multi-layer systems.

At the heart of all IPCO's high-capacity solutions is the Rotoform rotary drop depositor. The latest model, the Rotoform HP (High Performance), has been specifically designed to deliver new levels of productivity in chocolate chip forming and will be demonstrated at Interpack.

www.ipco.com/chocolate

Padovani s.r.l.

Hall 1 | Booth B30

We are leading manufacturers of rotary moulding and cutting machines for the production of biscuits and crackers, co-extruding machines for filled, wire-cut, multi-colour biscuits as well as of rotary cutting and moulding rollers for the production of soft biscuits, hard biscuits, crackers, marzipan and pellets. Working in this field since 1969, we are well-experienced and therefore we can always ensure the supply of top- quality goods along with competitive prices.
Reliability and professional behaviour enable us to be placed among the top-ranking and world-wide known companies in terms of research and realisation of new technological solutions. Our activity ranges from the drawing of new biscuit shapes to the projecting of biscuit machines as well as to the manufacturing of moulds suitable to every device existing on the market.
Each phase of the technical development is carried out by skilled technicians supported by highly advanced equipments, in order of meeting whichever requirement the customer might have. Customer's satisfaction always comes in first place and a proof for that is the fact that we are valuable suppliers of the main multinationals located all over the world (Mondelez, Nestlé, Pepsico) that rely on us thanks to our solid know-how, our prompt assistance and the timely deliveries.

www.padovani.net

Reading Bakery Systems
Successful Snacks Start Here

Hall 1 | Booth B70

The RBS Interpack booth will showcase advanced technologies designed to improve efficiency, consistency, and flexibility in snack and bakery production. Highlights include the Emithermic® XE Oven, a next-generation alternative to traditional DGF systems that simplifies maintenance and delivers a more consistent bake. The WCX Wirecut Machine offers versatile cookie and bar forming with ultrasonic cutting for clean, precise results. RBS will also feature its MX Continuous Mixer for automated, consistent dough production, and the SCORPION® Oven Profiling System for real-time process insights. Together, these solutions help manufacturers optimize performance, reduce costs, and support ongoing product innovation.

www.readingbakery.com

Verhoeven Bakery Equipment Family

Hall 3, Booth C36

No Future Without History
Verhoeven Bakery Equipment Family celebrates a special milestone at Interpack 2026: 25 years of experience in the international bakery industry. With the theme "No Future without History," we connect our rich heritage to a future driven by innovation. Visitors will experience a journey through space, during which the presentation suddenly changes into a classic Dutch historical environment, until the journey through space continues again. Our full portfolio of tailor-made solutions will be presented interactively, including live Vacuum Cooling demonstrations and the Repeatloaf concept. We will also introduce our newly opened T4 Centre in Oss, dedicated to technology, testing, and product development.

www.verhoevenfamily.com

Managing Multi-Phase Dosing In Industrial Bakery Production

Production losses in filled bakery products are rarely caused by inaccurate portioning. They originate earlier—inside the hopper, during transfer, and in the way fillings behave under pressure, residence time, and temperature variation.

By Tudor Vintiloiu

A fruit preparation that separates during a long run, a cream that loses aeration under pumping stress, or a particulate system that settles unevenly will not be corrected by downstream dosing precision. The depositor will replicate that instability across every lane.

This is where dosing becomes a constraint. Not because the system cannot meter accurately, but because the material entering the system no longer behaves in a stable, repeatable way.

MULTI-PHASE FILLINGS INTRODUCE MECHANICAL AND PROCESS CONFLICT

Industrial bakery fillings are increasingly multi-phase systems, combining fat and water components, air incorporation, and solid inclusions. Each responds differently to mechanical stress.

Aerated fillings introduce compressibility. Under pressure, air structures collapse, altering density between deposits. Even with precise volumetric control, weight consistency becomes unstable at higher speeds.

Particulate systems introduce transport limitations. Fruit pieces, nuts, or fibrous inclusions must pass through pumps, valves, and nozzles without degradation or blockage. Smaller outlet geometries improve control but increase clogging risk and shear stress. Larger openings preserve inclusion integrity but reduce deposit definition.

Temperature-sensitive fillings add another layer of variability. Fat-based systems in particular shift viscosity with relatively small temperature changes, especially over extended production runs. A filling that flows predictably at startup may behave differently hours later.

In multi-component products, synchronization becomes critical. The relationship between outer dough and inner filling must remain stable during forming and cutting. Any imbalance leads to leakage, deformation, or structural failure. These constraints are cumulative. Under production conditions, the behavior of the filling—not the nominal performance of the machine—determines dosing stability.

WHERE DOSING SYSTEMS BREAK DOWN IN PRACTICE

Instability becomes visible at predictable points. Start-up and shutdown phases introduce immediate losses. Pressure fluctuations and incomplete priming result in overfilling, underfilling, or dripping. For high-value fillings, these transient losses accumulate quickly.

Multi-lane systems amplify variation. Even small differences in flow or material distribution result in uneven portioning across lanes, particularly with inhomogeneous products.
Material separation within the hopper further disrupts consistency. Over time, heavier inclusions settle while lighter phases rise, leading to variation in composition between early and late deposits.
Air management also becomes critical. Aerated fillings may lose structure during pumping, while unwanted air incorporation in other systems affects both weight and texture.
The operational consequences are direct: higher rejection rates, increased giveaway, more frequent cleaning cycles, and reduced effective throughput.

HANDTMANN: MANAGING VARIABILITY AT THE DOSING INTERFACE

Handtmann's approach focuses on controlling variability at the point where product meets machine.
Its systems combine portioning technology with configurable depositing devices capable of handling a wide range of materials.

"With this flexibility, we are able to provide machines for a large variety of baked goods such as liquids, creams, rye doughs, wheat doughs, short pastry, marzipan, toppings or fillings. Product weights are freely adjustable from 0.5 g upwards… we are able to operate in a continuous dosing, strip dosing or spot dosing," the company told European Baker & Biscuit in a previous interview.
This flexibility is designed to address variability in product behavior rather than simply expand application range.
According to Handtmann, its DS 554 and DS 560 P depositing systems are designed for "fluid, high-viscosity, pasty, inhomogeneous, and chunky filling products," reflecting the diversity of materials encountered in industrial bakery production.
Control is achieved through a combination of servo-driven flow systems and configurable valve technology. Different outlet diameters, ejection pistons, and diaphragm configurations allow the dosing mechanism to be adapted to the physical properties of the filling.
This is especially relevant for particulate systems, where the balance between pressure and product integrity determines whether inclusions pass through intact or are damaged during dosing.
Servo-controlled lifting and flow systems address another persistent failure point: dripping and inconsistent cutoff. By synchronizing movement with product flow, the system maintains clean separation between deposits under high-speed conditions.

Multi-lane capability increases throughput but introduces additional complexity. Maintaining consistent flow across lanes requires precise synchronization, especially when handling variable materials. The control architecture becomes critical in preventing variability in the product from translating into variability in the final output.

UNIFILLER SYSTEMS: MAINTAINING THROUGHPUT UNDER VARIABLE CONDITIONS

Unifiller's systems are designed to maintain consistency across a wide range of product viscosities and production speeds.
Its Pro4000i depositor is positioned to handle materials from liquid to highly viscous, including particulate-containing products.

"The Pro4000i can deposit portions ranging from 445 mL to 4440 mL… Its ability to perform up to 60 cycles per minute drastically reduces production time while maintaining consistent quality," Unifiller points out.
The challenge at higher throughput is maintaining stability rather than achieving speed. As cycle rates increase, pressure fluctuations, material behavior, and system response become more sensitive.
Unifiller addresses this through adjustable dosing parameters that allow operators to respond to changes in product behavior during production. This is particularly relevant for fillings that exhibit viscosity drift or variable inclusion distribution.
Ease of cleaning and maintenance also contributes to stability. Reduced downtime between runs helps limit the impact of material degradation over time, while hygienic design supports consistent performance across multiple product types.

AXIS AUTOMATION: INJECTION PRECISION AND LEAKAGE CONTROL

Injection systems introduce additional constraints, particularly when filling finished or semi-finished products such as donuts, cakes, or pastries.
Axis Automation highlights the importance of maintaining precision under varying conditions. "Replicable results with a consistency of ±1% by volume at up to 30 cycles per minute," according to the company.
The system also addresses a common failure point in injection processes: residual flow after dosing. "A unique 'suck-back' vacuum feature prevents leakage during retraction, ensuring that every injection is clean and precise," Axis Automation states.

This is particularly relevant for high-value fillings where even small amounts of leakage translate into waste and inconsistency.

Injection systems must also accommodate variations in product geometry and filling characteristics. The ability to perform both top and side injection, and to handle fillings at different temperatures and viscosities, supports dosing control across a wide range of applications.

DOSING PERFORMANCE DEPENDS ON LINE INTEGRATION

Dosing systems operate within a broader process structure. Their performance is directly influenced by upstream and downstream conditions.
Upstream variability—whether in mixing, aeration, or ingredient distribution—defines the baseline for dosing stability. A depositor cannot compensate for inconsistent input material.
Downstream, packaging systems impose strict requirements on portion weight and consistency. According to Handtmann, coordinated interfaces with packaging machines are essential to ensure stable and compliant output.

Line synchronization introduces further constraints. Depositors must match the speed and rhythm of forming, baking, and packaging operations. Any mismatch results in buffering, stoppages, or reduced throughput.

In this context, dosing is not an isolated function. It is a system-level variable whose performance depends on integration across the production line.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

The primary limitation in modern bakery dosing is not accuracy under controlled conditions. It is stability under variable product behavior.
Multi-phase fillings expose the limits of systems designed for homogeneous materials. Variability in aeration, inclusion distribution, and temperature response creates conditions where traditional dosing approaches become unstable.
Equipment solutions are evolving toward managing this variability through flow control, valve configuration, and system integration. The objective is not to improve nominal performance, but to maintain consistent output under real production conditions.
For industrial bakeries, the implication is operational. Equipment selection must be based on how effectively a system manages product behavior across the full production cycle. The constraint is no longer the dosing mechanism itself, but the interaction between product, process, and machine. •

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Product Diversification Without Breaking The Line Economics

FRITSCH impressa bread baguettewickler

Product diversification in an industrial bakery should be treated as a line-design question before it becomes a commercial one. A plant that wants to add ciabatta, seeded rolls, laminated formats, filled sweet goods, donuts, gluten-free items, or ready-to-eat bakery does not begin with the sales brief.

By Tudor Vintiloiu

It begins by identifying which parts of the existing operation are genuinely flexible, which are already at their process limit, and which new products will force compromises in throughput, sanitation, or product quality.

That is the point at which diversification becomes useful rather than expensive. The objective is not to make everything on one line. It is to widen the portfolio without damaging the economics of the base business.

START WITH THE INSTALLED BASE, NOT THE NEW SKU

The first serious step is an installed-base audit built around process family. Bread and bun lines can usually stretch into adjacent breads, rolls, split rolls, cut products, rustic shapes, seeded formats, or higher-hydration variants more easily than they can absorb full laminated pastry production. A pastry line can usually broaden within croissants, Danish, and related formats more easily than it can move into pan bread or heavily fermented artisan dough systems.
That distinction matters because most diversification failures are not commercial failures first. They are process mismatch failures. Dough stress, proofing regime, handling sensitivity, topping application, cooling profile, and packaging compatibility all begin to work against the plant once the new category sits too far outside the original line architecture.

A useful principle is this: stay inside the same dough-handling logic for the first diversification step. That usually means extracting more variety from forming, stamping, cutting, decorating, filling, proofing, or post-bake handling before moving into a completely different process platform.

MODULARITY IS VALUABLE, BUT ONLY IN THE RIGHT ZONE

The equipment market has responded to this need with modular systems that allow bakers to widen product range without committing immediately to a full new line. Rademaker's Radini platform is one of the clearest examples. On its official product pages, the company positions Radini as a modular system for pastries,

croissants, donuts, breads and buns, with indicative capacities ranging from 250 to 1,200 kg of dough per hour depending on application and configuration. The same platform is also presented as suitable for full or partial automation, which is commercially important for bakeries that want to stage investment rather than automate everything in a single capex cycle.

That staged-investment argument is reinforced by Onno Kuiper, Sales Director at Rademaker, who said in a previous interview with European Baker & Biscuit that customers are demanding "multi-functional, versatile production lines" with "significantly reduced changeover times," and that Rademaker's Installed Base Team supports customers by "upgrading individual components or sections where needed" so they can modernize "at minimal cost."

FRITSCH approaches the same diversification problem from a different angle. Its official IMPRESSA bread line is designed for soft doughs and built around modularity, open access, removable modules, and hygienic design. FRITSCH also places unusual emphasis on gentle handling and avoiding unnecessary tension in the dough sheet. That makes it relevant for operators who want to widen their range within rustic and artisan-style breads without losing control of weight accuracy, structure, or handling quality. Markus Fackelmann, Senior Expert Bakery at FRITSCH, states on the company's official site: "With its gentle dough processing and modular design, the IMPRESSA bread guarantees consistently high product quality when processing very soft doughs."
König's portfolio is relevant for bakeries widening their range in bread rolls and small baked goods rather than crossing immediately into more demanding pastry architecture. Its Combiline EC is officially positioned as a modular bread roll line that can be built around space, market needs, and investment budget, with a maximum hourly performance of 9,000 pieces. The Eco Twin covers the bread-roll spectrum with interchangeable stamping tools and up to 6,120 pieces per hour, while the Artisan SFE EC is positioned as a compact dough sheeting line with up to 9,000 pieces per hour and up to 600 kg per hour throughput.

None of these systems should be framed as universally better than the others. They solve different diversification routes. Radini is useful where a bakery wants a staged, modular route across several product families. FRITSCH is strong where soft-dough handling, hygiene access, and modular product extension are central. König is particularly relevant where a bakery wants to broaden small baked goods and roll formats without overbuilding the plant.

WHAT YOU CAN USUALLY ADAPT

The lowest-risk diversification investments are usually in forming and make-up rather than in upstream mixing or downstream baking. Tooling changes, guillotine options, stamping tools, decorating modules, filling units, sheeting add-ons, cutting sections, or proofing adjustments often generate more sellable range per euro invested than a new line does.

That is why product diversification should first be mapped against five practical questions.
First, can the dough be mixed and fed with the current upstream system without destabilizing batch rhythm or dough quality? Second, can the product be formed on existing make-up equipment with module or tooling changes rather than a new process backbone? Third, can the oven profile handle the new SKU without compromising existing products? Fourth, can proofing, cooling, and packing cope with the new geometry and moisture behavior? Fifth, can sanitation and allergen segregation still be managed without destroying the schedule?

If the answer is yes to most of those questions, the bakery is likely looking at an adaptation project. If the answer is no to several, it is looking at a dedicated line, whether management wants to admit that at the start or not.

WHAT YOU USUALLY HAVE TO SACRIFICE

Diversification always carries a process penalty. The mistake is to pretend otherwise.

The first sacrifice is uninterrupted runtime. Every additional format increases changeovers, adjustments, cleaning exposure, and operator intervention. A line that runs one product exceptionally well almost always outperforms a flexible line on absolute efficiency.
The second sacrifice is process simplicity. More SKUs mean more recipes, more settings, more spare parts, more training, and more opportunity for drift between setup and actual output.
The third sacrifice is scheduling freedom. Once allergens,


Combiline plus EC_Kaiser

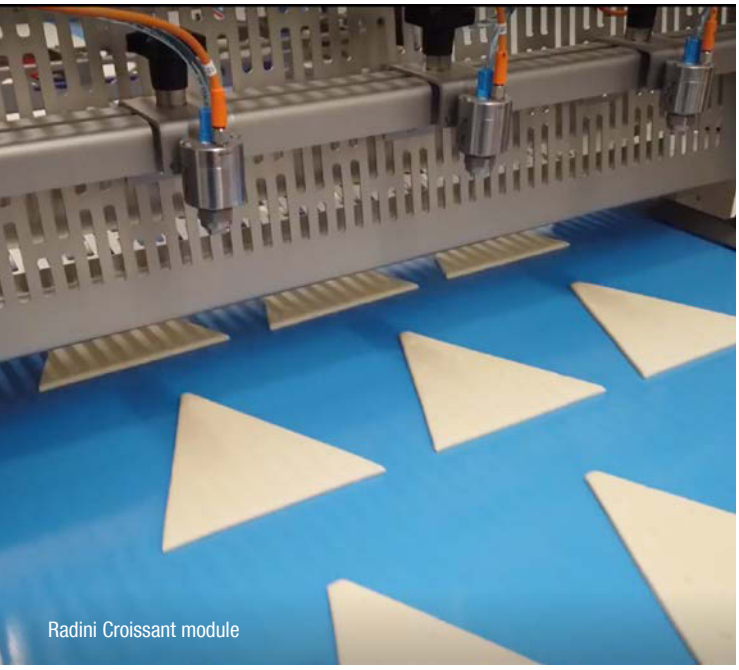
filled products, gluten-free variants, or different moisture regimes enter the portfolio, production order starts to matter more. Diversification can therefore reduce theoretical spare capacity even while creating new sales opportunities.
This is why diversification should be evaluated on contribution margin and asset utilization, not on the number of new launches. A bakery that adds ten SKUs and loses

production discipline has not diversified successfully. It has fragmented its factory.

ROI SHOULD BE BUILT ON WASTE, LABOR, DOWNTIME, AND ASSET REUSE

There is no honest standard payback number for product diversification equipment. The only credible ROI model is one built from plant data.

For most industrial bakeries, the real value drivers are labor reduction in repetitive make-up and transfer steps, reduced changeover time, lower dough waste and rework, higher weight consistency, improved sellable yield, and the ability to reuse existing proofing, baking, cooling, or packaging assets longer before major replacement.



Radini Croissant module

This is why partial modernization can be commercially stronger than a full new line. If a bakery can add flexibility at the make-up stage while preserving the rest of the line economics, the return profile is usually better than that of a broad greenfield investment.
Kuiper's point about upgrading sections rather than replacing full lines is important for exactly that reason: diversification often pays back fastest when investment is concentrated on the actual constraint.
There is also a post-bake ROI angle that is often ignored. König's QualityVac is a useful example. The company states that breads, small baked goods and pastries can be cooled and firmed for subsequent use "in just a few minutes," with benefits including faster processing, shorter baking times and reduced deep-cooling requirements. For bakeries constrained by cooling, stabilization, or downstream handling rather than dough make-up, that kind of investment can unlock diversification more effectively than adding more front-end equipment.

REGULATORY LIMITS MUST BE TREATED SEPARATELY FROM TECHNICAL CAPABILITY

A bakery may be technically able to produce a diversified range and still be commercially blocked by labeling, allergen, or claims rules.

EU food information rules under Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 require clearer allergen presentation for prepacked foods and mandatory allergen information for non-prepacked foods. That matters immediately once a plant widens its matrix to include sesame, milk, egg, nut-containing, or gluten-free products. The regulatory problem is not abstract. It affects sequencing, cleaning validation, pack copy, and commercial risk.
Gluten-free positioning is narrower still. The European Commission states that Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 828/2014 sets the conditions under which foods may be labelled "gluten-free" or "very low gluten." For a diversified bakery, that means the technical ability to run a gluten-free dough is not enough; the plant must also be able to defend segregation, cleaning, and labeling discipline.

The same applies to nutrition and health positioning. The European Commission states that Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 is the framework for nutrition and health claims, and that claims must be clear, accurate, and based on scientific evidence. A bakery moving into higher-protein, high-fibre, reduced-sugar, or functional formats therefore needs regulatory review in parallel with product development, not after commercial launch.

DIVERSIFICATION WORKS BEST AS CONTROLLED COMPLEXITY

The strongest diversification programmes in industrial bakeries do not try to maximize assortment. They try to maximize profitable flexibility.

That means starting with adjacent process families, using modular upgrades where the installed base still has headroom, identifying exactly where changeovers and sanitation will erode capacity, and reserving dedicated line investment for the categories that genuinely require a different production logic.
The market now offers several credible equipment routes for doing that. Rademaker, FRITSCH, and König each present valid but different answers to the same industrial question: how to widen range without dismantling line economics. The right decision is rarely about buying the most versatile machine on paper. It is about buying flexibility only where the bakery can convert it into stable throughput, manageable changeovers, and commercially defensible product range.

That is the operational test. Diversification is not successful when the factory can make more things. It is successful when the factory can make more profitable things without losing control of cost, capacity, and compliance. •

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> RELIABLY INVENTIVE

Modified Atmosphere Packaging In Industrial Baking: **Cost, Waste, And Risk Trade-Offs**

Modified Atmosphere Packaging (MAP) directly extends the commercial window of baked goods by suppressing aerobic microbial growth and slowing oxidative reactions. For industrial bakeries, this translates into fewer returns, longer distribution cycles, and reduced reliance on preservatives.

By Tudor Vintiloiu

The mechanism is straightforward: reducing oxygen levels and increasing carbon dioxide concentrations inhibits mold growth, which is the primary spoilage pathway in most packaged bakery products.

The effectiveness of this intervention depends on initial contamination levels and product characteristics. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization, MAP "can significantly extend the shelf-life of foods by slowing down microbial growth and oxidation processes," but only when combined with appropriate hygiene and temperature control. In practice, this means MAP does not create shelf life; it preserves the margin already secured through process control.

For sliced bread and rolls, where post-bake handling introduces contamination risks, MAP can extend shelf life from a few days to over a week under controlled conditions. The economic implication is not incremental—it alters inventory planning, reduces write-offs, and enables access to more distant retail channels without freezing.

WASTE REDUCTION AND COST IMPLICATIONS

The most immediate operational benefit of MAP is the reduction of product waste across the supply chain. Mold-related spoilage is a leading cause of bakery product rejection at both retail and distribution levels. By slowing spoilage, MAP reduces the volume of unsellable product, directly improving yield on produced volume.

This effect compounds when applied at scale. Lower waste reduces the need for overproduction, which in turn decreases raw material consumption, energy use, and labor costs per unit sold. The cost of gases—primarily CO_2 and N_2—and higher-barrier packaging materials is typically offset by these savings, particularly in high-volume operations.

However, the cost structure is sensitive to scale and product mix. Smaller bakeries or those with short distribution chains may not recover the investment in MAP equipment and materials. Capital expenditure for MAP-capable packaging lines, combined with ongoing gas supply and quality control requirements, creates a threshold below which the technology does not deliver a favorable return.

PRODUCT CATEGORIES WITH THE HIGHEST IMPACT

Not all bakery products benefit equally from MAP. High-moisture, neutral pH products such as sliced bread, burger buns, and flatbreads are the primary candidates, as they are highly susceptible to mold growth. These products also have sufficient volume and distribution complexity to justify the investment.

By contrast, low-moisture products such as crackers and crispbreads derive limited benefit from MAP in terms of microbial control, as their water activity already restricts growth. In these cases, MAP may still be used to prevent oxidation or maintain texture, but the shelf-life gains are less pronounced.

Pastries and cakes present a more complex case. Products with cream or high-fat fillings may benefit from reduced oxidation, but require careful control of gas composition and temperature to avoid quality degradation. In these applications, MAP must be validated against sensory outcomes, not just microbial stability.

REGULATORY AND COMPLIANCE CONSIDERATIONS

MAP introduces specific regulatory obligations, particularly in the European market. Products packaged under modified atmosphere must be labeled accordingly, and shelf-life claims must be supported by validated data. The European Food Safety Authority maintains that MAP does not replace good manufacturing practices and must be integrated into a comprehensive food safety system.

From a compliance perspective, extended shelf life increases

exposure rather than reducing it. Any failure in hygiene, gas composition, or temperature control has a longer window to develop into a non-compliant product. As a result, validation requirements are stricter, with documented evidence needed to demonstrate that microbial limits are maintained throughout the declared shelf life.

Material selection is also constrained by the EU's Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR). High-barrier structures required for MAP performance must now be assessed against recyclability targets, forcing trade-offs between shelf-life extension and packaging compliance.

OPERATIONAL FLEXIBILITY AND DISTRIBUTION STRATEGY

MAP enables greater flexibility in distribution by decoupling production from immediate consumption. Longer shelf life allows for centralized production models, fewer delivery runs, and expanded geographic reach. This is particularly relevant for industrial bakeries supplying national or cross-border retail networks.

The ability to produce in larger batches without increasing waste also improves line efficiency and reduces changeover frequency. However, this flexibility depends on consistent execution. Variability in gas composition, seal integrity, or temperature control can negate the benefits and introduce new risks.

COMMERCIAL SOLUTIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION THRESHOLDS

Industrial deployment of MAP in baking relies on integrated packaging systems capable of maintaining consistent gas composition at high throughput. MULTIVAC provides tray sealing systems with controlled atmosphere capabilities and inline monitoring, supporting applications where product protection and shelf-life extension must be tightly managed. ULMA Packaging offers flow-wrapping solutions with MAP functionality designed for bakery products, enabling continuous packaging with reduced oxygen levels.

On the materials side, companies such as Amcor develop high-barrier films that maintain gas composition over extended periods while addressing recyclability requirements. These materials are critical in ensuring that the benefits achieved at the packaging stage are preserved throughout distribution.

The decision to invest in MAP is therefore tied to volume, distribution complexity, and waste levels. Where spoilage rates are high and distribution chains are long, the technology delivers measurable gains in cost and performance. Where these conditions are absent, MAP introduces cost and complexity without proportional benefit.

SYSTEM-LEVEL TRADE-OFFS

MAP extends shelf life, reduces waste, and enables broader distribution, but it also increases dependence on process control and packaging integrity. The technology is most effective when integrated into a system that already operates with low contamination levels and stable temperature management.

The operational question is not whether MAP works, but whether the production and distribution system can sustain the conditions required for it to deliver consistent results. •

The Future of Cocoa Is **Cocoa-free**

Increasing supply chain problems, brought on by climate change and political instability, have taken a toll on cocoa prices. And that affects all producers of baked goods, from the craft bakers in your neighborhood to the global brands you can find all over the world. Ingredient producers have been exploring cocoa-free possibilities and we already have.

By Jo Ilie

Over the past three years, global cocoa prices have shifted from relative stability to extreme volatility. In 2023, prices began rising steadily due to adverse weather in key producing countries such as Ivory Coast and Ghana. Poor harvests, ageing trees, and the spread of crop diseases reduced output. The situation intensified in 2024, when cocoa prices surged dramatically, more than doubling year-on-year and briefly exceeding EUR10,000 per tonne on international markets. This spike was fueled by consecutive supply deficits, logistical constraints, and low global stock levels.

In early 2025 and into 2026, prices have remained elevated but highly volatile. Some easing has occurred as markets adjust and demand softens slightly in response to higher costs. However, structural supply challenges in West Africa continue to underpin a tight market, suggesting prices will remain above historical averages in the near term.

In this light, it's no wonder the ingredient producers started looking at how they could mitigate this scarcity.

CELL CULTURED TECHNOLOGY FROM CELLESTE BIO

Celleste Bio unveiled its chocolate grade cocoa butter, the first made using plant cell culture technology. Celleste is one of the first to pioneer the use of cell culture technology to produce real cocoa ingredients, with its chocolate grade cocoa butter being a breakthrough for the industry in that it is bio-identical to cocoa butter extracted from the bean, both chemically and functionally. That allows it to yield the same fatty acid profile essential for producing real chocolate and deliver the same sensory qualities such as melting point, smooth texture, and characteristic "snap" of premium chocolate.

This ingredient, says the company, is designed for scalability, enabling stable, sustainable production independent of agricultural limitations. And it generates zero waste, using all inputs efficiently throughout the process.

"Our ability to produce real cocoa butter via cell culture proves that science can be used to grow and produce ingredients that mirror nature with integrity and transparency", said Michal Berresi Golomb, CEO of Celleste Bio. "This is a major R&D achievement for Celleste led by Hanne Volpin, PhD, CTO of Celleste, and her R&D team, and also validation for the entire cocoa industry that there is a solution to supplement supply chain shortages caused by the volatility and unpredictability of traditional farming".

Celleste is in the process of building a pilot facility to accelerate R&D and scale production of its cocoa ingredients. To date, Celleste Bio has raised USD5.6m, including Mondelēz International as a strategic and design partner, along with Supply Change Capital, Trendlines, Barrel Ventures and others.

FOODSOLUTE COCOACUT, A SUSTAINABLE COCOA ALTERNATIVE FROM TH. GEYER INGREDIENTS

Th. Geyer Ingredients launched last year ar iba FOODSOLUTE cocoacut, offering the baking industry a sustainable, functional, and cost-effective 1:1 alternative to traditional cocoa powder.

Made from natural, upcycled ingredients, FOODSOLUTE cocoacut delivers full cocoa flavour and appearance while offering a nutritional boost with 60% fibre content. The innovative ingredient supports healthier product formulations and promotes resource conservation, aligning with the growing demand for sustainable baking solutions.

Designed for easy application, cocoacut can directly replace conventional cocoa powder in baked goods, fillings, batters,

and sponge mixtures without compromising taste, colour or aroma. In addition to its functional benefits, bakeries can achieve noticeable cost savings by using cocoacut.

PROFESSIONAL CHOCOLATE PRODUCT WITH CULTURED COCOA FROM PURATOS

Puratos, one of the largest producers of cocoa-based ingredients for the baking industry, announced that it would soon launch the world's first chocolate product for professionals containing cultured cocoa, becoming the first company to bring this breakthrough innovation to market. The product will be fully commercially available to Puratos customers in the United States toward the end of 2026, marking a significant milestone for innovation in the chocolate industry.

Through its foodtech venture arm, Sparkalis, Puratos is an early investor in cultured cocoa technology. Puratos is developing this first-of-its-kind product in collaboration with California Cultured, a pioneer in cultured cocoa. Together, the two companies aim to commercialize a chocolate product for professionals and food brands that translates cutting-edge cultured cocoa technology into a solution that meets customer expectations for taste, quality, consistency, and performance.

"What matters to chocolate makers is simple," said Alan Perlstein, Chief Executive Officer at California Cultured. "They need an ingredient that behaves like cocoa, tastes like cocoa, and shows up when they need it. This partnership with Puratos moves cultured cocoa from a scientific proof into a dependable commercial ingredient that manufacturers can actually plan around."

Puratos believes that cultured cocoa can act as a climate-independent and sustainable complement to traditional cocoa farming. By helping to ensure more consistent quality and supply in the face of climate change, this approach has the potential to strengthen the long-term resilience of the chocolate industry while continuing to support existing cocoa ecosystems. The company's long-standing Cacao-Trace program demonstrates its commitment to creating measurable, positive impact across the cocoa value chain.

Further details about the new ingredient and its commercial launch will be shared closer to availability.

ALTERNATIVES TO COCOA-BASED PRODUCTS FROM CARGILL AND VOYAGE FOODS

Cargill announced a new commercial partnership with Voyage Foods to scale up and deliver more sustainable alternatives to cocoa-based products along with nut spreads without their traditional ingredients – peanuts & hazelnuts.

Cargill will be the exclusive B2B global distributor for Voyage Foods, expanding its traditional chocolate portfolio to bring even more sustainable alternatives for cocoa-based products to its customers for the very first time. These alternatives to cocoa-based products – or the cocoa-free confectionery range – will be used in the recipe formulation for categories such as bakery, ice cream and confectionery, complementing and diversifying Cargill's traditional chocolate portfolio to provide a broader range of solutions that are vegan, label friendly, and produced with no nut nor dairy allergens used in the recipe formulation.

A WORD FROM EXPERTS: USING NATURAL FLAVOURS REDUCES COCOA PRESSURE

With global cocoa prices hitting an all-time high, Liz Gabriel, bakery specialist at European flavour experts I.T.S., is urging bakery manufacturers to consider using natural flavours as a solution for reducing the amount of cocoa and chocolate in finished sweet bakery.

"One of the most straightforward and stable solutions to reducing the amount of cocoa powder in a recipe is for bakery manufacturers to use a natural flavour", Gabriel explains. "This helps protect against the current cost fluctuations in the cocoa market, helping to give better stability in the supply chain and of course steadying the price of the finished product".

I.T.S claims that natural flavours also offer the baker more options and flexibility around the flavour of the finished product as many different profiles are available. From the classic taste of authentic cocoa to more indulgent milk, dark or ruby chocolate flavour profiles and flavour combinations such as chocolate wafer, chocolate orange or chocolate honeycomb, the addition of a chocolate flavour can completely transform a standard chocolate filling, icing or frosting while helping to manage end product costs.

"Bakeries can also tap into other indulgent and well-loved indulgent flavours to help take the place of chocolate", Gabriel explains. "Caramel is the obvious first choice when it comes to indulgent flavours particularly when creating a filling for a muffin or donut for example. As well as the standard caramel flavour profile, other flavours like salted caramel, caramelised biscuit or even a 'braver' take like miso caramel can help create additional flavour notes to frostings for example and that all important 'mouthfeel.'"

Another option is to use white chocolate, which is seeing a resurgence in both indulgent and standard ranges and does not rely on cocoa powder like its partner flavour. Gabriel says bakers can also try bringing different flavours into chocolate or chocolate-flavoured products because, again, the partner flavour will be doing a lot of the flavour work meaning that the amount of cocoa can be reduced. Chocolate orange, raspberry, mint, hazelnut, and coconut are some popular flavours to try. Or maybe try combining really brave flavours like sesame, pink grapefruit, cinnamon bun or chili with chocolate.

CONCLUSIONS

The urgency of the cocoa supply chain problems - and their immediate impact on price - can be solved with thinking outside the box. And research. May that be innovative new ingredients, like cultured cocoa, or recreating the taste of cocoa from other flavors, the possibilities exist. The world's natural cocoa might be less and less available in time, but the world won't lose its taste too. •

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Where Bakery Capacity Is Lost And **How Packaging Automation Closes The Gap**

Packaging defines whether baked output leaves the plant as finished product at rated capacity or accumulates as delay, rework, and handling loss. In industrial baking, constraints appear at the transition points between product discharge, primary packaging, and end-of-line consolidation, where variability in product flow meets fixed machine logic.

By Tudor Vintiloiu

Interpack press analyses for 2026 frame this directly around cost pressure, flexibility and digital integration, identifying automation, robotics and data-driven control as responses to “rising cost pressure” and “increased flexibility requirements” across food production.

THROUGHPUT LOSSES OCCUR BETWEEN MACHINES

In bakery packaging, nominal machine speed is rarely the limiting factor. Effective output is determined by how consistently product moves between stages.
Cooling, spacing and orientation introduce variability before the first wrapper. If primary packaging cannot absorb that variation, interruptions propagate downstream. According to VDMA, minor stops and short disruptions account for a significant share of efficiency losses in packaging operations, frequently exceeding mechanical failures.

Interpack pre-show briefings reinforce this point by focusing on integrated production rather than individual equipment performance. The emphasis is on coordinated systems where conveyors, robotics and control layers operate as a single structure. The practical implication for bakeries is that throughput gains come from stabilizing transitions, not increasing peak speeds.

PRODUCT CHARACTERISTICS SET AUTOMATION BOUNDARIES

Automation in bakery packaging is constrained by the product itself. Bread compresses, pastry structures deform, and filled or decorated items require controlled handling.

Robotic pick-and-place systems must operate within defined motion limits to avoid product damage. Increasing speed requires tighter control over acceleration, grip force and placement precision. Vision systems compensate for inconsistent infeed, but introduce processing latency that becomes relevant at higher line speeds.
This creates a trade-off. Automation reduces manual handling and improves repeatability, but increases system sensitivity. Performance gains depend on upstream consistency as much as on downstream equipment capability.

FLEXIBILITY IS A THROUGHPUT REQUIREMENT

SKU variation in bakery production introduces frequent format changes across packaging lines. These changeovers are a primary source of lost production time.
Interpack describes flexibility as a central requirement rather than an optional feature. In practice, this translates into servo-driven adjustments, recipe-based format control and reduced mechanical intervention.

Syntegon addresses this through its integrated packaging architecture. According to its recent announcements, the combination of automation, robotics and digitalization is designed to "enable human operators to focus on the highest value-adding tasks." Within its neXt platform, flow wrapping and cartoning are linked through standardized interfaces intended to reduce changeover time and simplify operation.

According to Packaging Reporter, this architecture is positioned around reducing downtime and supporting more efficient format changes across packaging stages, rather than increasing isolated machine speed. The operational relevance is straightforward: in high-mix bakery environments, flexibility determines how much of installed capacity is actually usable over a production cycle.

INTEGRATION IS REPLACING FRAGMENTED LINE DESIGN

Packaging suppliers are shifting from standalone machines to integrated line solutions. This is reflected in the positioning of MULTIVAC, where its Smart Production and Smart Digitalization themes are presented through complete lines rather than individual units. The company states that its systems are delivered as "fully automated and seamlessly integrated processing and packaging lines" for bakery applications. This integration extends beyond packaging into upstream processing through the FRITSCH portfolio.

FRITSCH's production systems, including modular dough processing lines, are designed to deliver consistent product presentation to downstream packaging. That alignment is critical. Packaging inefficiencies in bakery plants often originate upstream, where inconsistent spacing or orientation forces manual correction before packing. The combination of processing and packaging integration reduces this dependency, allowing automation to operate under stable input conditions.

INSPECTION AND DATA INTEGRATION ARE EMBEDDED FUNCTIONS

Packaging automation is also where compliance and product verification are enforced. Inspection systems are integrated into the line to check seal integrity, label accuracy and product presence. MULTIVAC highlights this integration in its interpack preview, where AI-supported lines identify products from multiple infeed streams and apply correct labelling automatically. The company states that this allows "the traysealer capacity to be utilized perfectly," linking identification accuracy directly to throughput. According to the same materials, vision systems are used to check labels for presence and legibility, with faulty packs rejected automatically. The company also indicates that inspection systems can detect contamination in sealing areas even with printed films, addressing a known limitation in visual inspection accuracy.

MULTIVAC's Cooling@Packing

For bakery operations, this is not a secondary feature. Labelling errors, seal defects or product misidentification directly translate into waste, recall risk or customer rejection.

THERMAL AND PROCESS CONSTRAINTS EXTEND INTO PACKAGING

Packaging automation in bakery environments must also account for product temperature. Traditional processes rely on extended cooling before packing, which increases handling time and space requirements.

MULTIVAC's Cooling@Packing approach, which reduces the cooling phase by integrating stabilization into the packaging stage is one such example. While the exact performance gains depend on product type, the operational implication is clear: reducing cooling time shortens process flow and lowers work-in-progress.

This illustrates a broader shift. Packaging is no longer isolated from processing conditions; it is increasingly designed to operate as part of the overall thermal and material flow of the line.

AUTOMATION DETERMINES WHETHER CAPACITY IS REAL

Industry experts consistently position automation as a response to cost pressure, flexibility demands and operational complexity. In bakery production, these pressures converge at the packaging stage. Automation improves consistency, reduces labor dependency and enables higher sustained output. However, its effectiveness depends on integration with upstream processes, the ability to manage product variability and the stability of end-of-line operations.

Where these conditions are met, packaging supports full utilization of production capacity. Where they are not, it becomes the point where losses accumulate. •

Syntegon Seamless Guide-by-Light

Peak **Snackification**

The endearing popularity of biscuits as a snack food is keeping demand levels high. May they be full sugar, gluten free, double baked or high protein, biscuits are highly adaptable to every food trend out there and that gives them an unparalleled market advantage.

By Jonathan Thomas

Biscuits (both sweet and savoury) continue to occupy a strong position in the global snack foods industry. Snacking remains as popular as ever – according to the sixth edition of Mondelez's State of Snacking report (which surveyed the opinions of 3,785 adults in 12 key markets), 91% of respondents claimed to snack at least once a day. This figure compares with 63% who claim to snack at least twice and 31% who eat snack foods at least three times during the day. For 62% of respondents, the preferred option is to eat many small meals during a typical day, instead of a few large ones. This is especially true for younger consumers such as millennials and those belonging to Generation Z, for whom the percentage figure rises to 71%. Furthermore, 66% of respondents stated that they could not envisage life without snack foods, while over half (53%) claimed to be snacking more compared with 12 months previously.

The research identified a few key motivations for snacking. One was the desire for indulgence, with 77% claiming that snacks were one of their few treats in their daily lives. For 87%, life was more fun with a bit of indulgence from time to time, while 80% claimed that snacking was a way of treating themselves after a productive day – this figure rose to 85% for millennials. Despite this widespread desire for indulgence, however, the research did identify some key health concerns. The percentage of respondents actively seeking portion-controlled snacks amounted to 69% in 2024, up from 65% in 2019 but down from a peak of 71% in 2021.

According to the Mondelez research, two-thirds of consumers worldwide claimed to snack on biscuits and/or cookies in 2024, up from 61% the previous year. At 87%, the percentage of respondents falling into this category was highest in the Philippines, ahead of India (84%), Brazil (72%), the UK (71%) and Indonesia (71%). At the other end of the spectrum, the percentage of people regularly snacking on biscuits and cookies was lowest in countries such as Germany (50%), France (59%) and China (59%).

Although sales of both sweet and savoury biscuits have held up well throughout much of the world, the market does face certain challenges. One of the most pressing is concern over the health profile of many types of biscuits, specifically their sugar, sodium and calorie content. In the UK, for example, restrictions have been in place since 2022 governing the in-store and online placement of foods classed as being high in fat, salt and sugar (HFSS). In October 2025, restrictions on volume price promotions for these foods (e.g. 'buy one, get one free' offers) were introduced, followed by a clampdown on television and online advertising at the start of the following year. This has led many manufacturers to reformulate their biscuits with the reduction or removal of ingredients linked with poor diets.

Another issue facing producers at present is the rising cost of many of the key ingredients used in the manufacture of sweet and savoury biscuits, such as wheat, vegetable oils and cocoa. Although the global wheat harvest reached a record high

of more than 842 million tonnes in 2024, the deteriorating global political situation and disruptions in the supply of fertiliser are driving up prices. Elsewhere, the global price index for vegetable oils reached its highest level for almost four years in February 2022, with prices especially high for varieties such as palm, rapeseed and soyabean oils. This, too, was largely attributed to the tensions in the Middle East and their effect on crude oil prices.

SWEET BISCUITS

Products coated or flavoured with chocolate continue to account for a sizeable percentage of the global market for sweet biscuits and remain popular throughout most of the world. In the UK, for example, sales of chocolate-flavoured biscuits within the anytime treats category were worth GBP509m in 2024. However, escalating cocoa prices have forced some biscuit manufacturers to reformulate their recipes to keep production costs down. In the UK market, leading brands such as Blue Riband (which is owned by Nestlé) and Penguin and Club (which are owned by pladis) are now classed as chocolate-flavoured rather than chocolate products, as they contain less than the required minimum for cocoa solids.

Chocolate-based products remain a staple of the global cookies market, which was valued by Market Research Future at more than USD41bn in 2025. This figure is forecast to grow by an annual average of over 5% in the years leading up to 2035, reaching a value of USD68.8bn. One of the key growth drivers is the emergence of more cookies positioned on a health platform, with manufacturers adding functional ingredients to their products. Examples include protein and fibre, while consumer interest in cookies

marketed as low or non-sugar remains high. There is also a growing demand for gluten-free and vegan cookies.

Indulgence is another growth driver for cookies, especially in the artisanal and in-store bakery (ISB) channels. This has taken the form of thicker and/or filled cookies, as well as products with unusual shapes and sizes. The use of fillings allows considerable scope for innovation while at the same time satisfying the demand for indulgence, some of which have been based on popular confectionery brands (e.g. Mars Bar, Biscoff, Twix and Kinder Bueno). Meanwhile, larger cookies are now making inroads into the desserts market.

According to Nestlé Professional, cookies represent one of the largest sectors within the UK market for out-of-home (OOH) sweet bakery goods, worth GBP328m in 2024. Volume sales are rising by over 9% per annum, driven by increased consumer demand for gooey textures, flavours inspired by nostalgia and products suitable for sharing on social media platforms. During the summer of 2025, UK retailer M & S launched new premium cookies described as the first ISB product both filled and topped. The cookies were launched in three flavours, namely Chocolate & Hazelnut, Pistachio and Raspberry Cheesecake.
In markets such as the UK, non-chocolate sweet biscuits are typically eaten with hot drinks. According to pladis, 65% of UK consumers frequently pair sweet biscuits with a cup of tea, while 87% of all biscuits in its McVitie's range are eaten with a hot drink. These findings led pladis to partner with the PG Tips brand of tea in the first quarter of 2026, aimed at promoting the typical British tea-and-biscuit break. The three most popular brands within this sector are McVitie's Digestives, Rich Tea and Hobnobs, with tea breaks accounting for over 40% of total consumption.
The Hobnob brand was extended in April 2026 with new Oaty Crunch Creams, available in Milk and Chocolate flavours. Earlier in the year, the McVitie's range had been extended with new Golden Cinnamon Digestives, which contain 30% less sugar than the standard variant and have been designed to comply with the new HFSS legislation. Another recent launch was a Grab Pack for McVitie's Digestives, new packaging geared towards on-the-go consumption.

SAVOURY BISCUITS & CRACKERS

The market for savoury biscuits and crackers continues to expand throughout parts of the world such as Europe. One of the reasons for this growth is the changing perception of many types of savoury biscuits from traditional mealtime accompaniments (e.g. with cheeseboards) to snack foods, especially in European countries such as the UK, France and Italy. The market has also benefited from the impression that savoury biscuits often represent a healthier alternative to their sweet counterparts, due to the lack of sugar. That said, manufacturers of savoury biscuits must still contend with concerns that their products may contain excessive levels of sodium or saturated fats.

On a related note, many savoury biscuits and crackers are now being positioned on some kind of health platform. Many products, for example, contain relatively high levels of fibre, which can assist with digestive health, while the number of biscuits made with whole grains continues to increase. Whole grains have been linked with weight management and lower blood pressure and cholesterol levels, while many consumers are increasingly opting for products made with recognisable ingredients and which satisfy clean label requirements.

Another reason for the recent growth of the European market has been the emergence of more savoury biscuits enhanced with exotic flavours and taste profiles. Typically, this has taken the form of regional spices (e.g. chilli) and herbs (e.g. rosemary). The introduction of more flavoured varieties has added a touch of indulgence to the savoury biscuits market, as well as catering towards consumers with more adventurous palates. Cheese-flavoured products are also a mainstay of the market and experiencing strong growth at present – according to data from Persistence Market Research, this sector accounted for 35% of global sales of savoury biscuits and crackers in 2025. Also, savoury biscuits and crackers benefit from their suitability as carriers for various toppings. For younger consumers such as millennials and those belonging to Generation Z, these can be shared with family and friends using social media platforms such as Instagram.

Aside from Ritz, Mondelez competes in the savoury biscuits and crackers market via brands such as TUC, Triscuit and Wheat Thins. The presence of the latter two brands, however, is mostly confined to the North American market. TUC crackers, on the other hand, are available in more than 50 countries worldwide. Health plays a major role in the brand's promotion, emphasising the fact that the biscuits are baked, rather than fried. Elsewhere, the Ritz brand has been one of the best performers within the Mondelez stable in recent years, with annual sales of the brand in the US worth around USD1.5bn.

One of the leading brands in the European market is Wasa, which leads the crispbread category and is owned by Barilla. It is available in a range of varieties, examples of which include Thin Rye, Whole Grain, MultiGrain, Sourdough and Sesame & Sea Salt. Much of the recent promotional activity undertaken for the Wasa brand has focused upon healthy eating, one example of which is the Go Hard campaign launched in the second half of 2025. This stressed the use of simple ingredients based on whole grains, indicating that healthy eating need not be difficult. The campaign was launched throughout Western Europe, in Scandinavia, France, Germany, Austria, Greece and the Netherlands.

The simplicity of ingredients is also used in the marketing of the Jacob's brand, which is owned by pladis and leads the UK crackers category. Only a handful of ingredients are used in the manufacture of the iconic cream crackers brand, namely wheat flour, salt, vegetable oil, yeast and a raising agent (e.g. sodium bicarbonate). Aside from cream crackers, the Jacob's brand also encompasses other types of savoury biscuits, such as crispbreads, Cornish wafers, Mediterranean crackers and cheese-flavoured varieties (e.g. Cheddars). Another brand part of the pladis stable is Carr's, which was extended during the festive season in 2025 with Carr's Rich & Savoury Rosemary Crackers.

Brand owner pladis has been investing in its UK facilities to expand and increase biscuit production within the last year. During the summer of 2025, it announced it was to spend GBP33m into overhauling its Aintree production site at Liverpool where the Jacob's brand is manufactured, including the installation of new ovens. At the same time, pladis announced investment worth GBP2m into its Carlisle biscuit factory (which produces savoury assortments) and, within the sweet biscuits sector, it is to spend GBP21m in its Stockport site to install a chocolate moulding line for the manufacture of Jaffa Cakes.

Another leading brand within the UK market is Ryvita, which is owned by Associated British Foods (ABF). In 2025, the brand was awarded a Royal Warrant by King Charles as part of its centenary celebrations. Recent extensions of the Ryvita brand have included a Prawn Cocktail flavour for its Cocktail Thins range, as well as a Smoky BBQ variant of Ryvita Snack It Thins. The brand leads the UK market for crispbreads and health plays a major role in its marketing and promotional efforts. •

Germany: Discounters Win the Market

Inflation and supply chain woes have affected the German baked goods market, one of the biggest in Europe. Here's what is in store for the coming year, based on the analysis provided by Euromonitor International.

By Jo Ilie

The German baked goods market is estimated at EUR21.425bn in 2025 and is expected to come closer to EUR25bn by the year 2030. Its growth might come more from retail value than from volume, as inflation has made customers more conscious about how much they spend on this daily staple. Discounters seem to win the race, though, because they offer fresh bread and pastry - many times an impulse buy - at lower prices.

Market analysts at Euromonitor International have detailed below how the most important segments of the market are evolving and how.

Value holds up as discounters and bake-off lead

Retail value sales of baked goods are set to rise in current terms in Germany in 2025. During the year, everyday staples (bread and rolls) have maintained high purchase frequency and price levels have stayed elevated versus pre-inflation baselines. Consumers have continued to trade down to private label and discounter bake-off ranges, but overall spend has held up thanks to strong footfall at discounters and ongoing premiumisation pockets in artisanal and special-diet items (for example, sourdough, spelt, seeded loaves). At the same time, sweet bakery has faced margin pressure from persistently high cocoa and sugar costs, prompting selective price rises, recipe tweaks, and tighter promotional intensity.

UNPACKAGED BREAD SALES BOOSTED BY DISCOUNTERS' EXPANSION

Unpackaged and artisanal bread and rolls (including in-store bake-off) is set to see notable value growth in 2025. Growth is being fuelled by discounters scaling their bakery counters and vertically integrated supply, which has lifted perceived freshness and impulse purchases while keeping prices sharp. The format's high trip frequency, aroma-led merchandising, and widening assortment (from everyday Brötchen to premium sourdough) has supported steady gains.

WHAT'S NEXT?

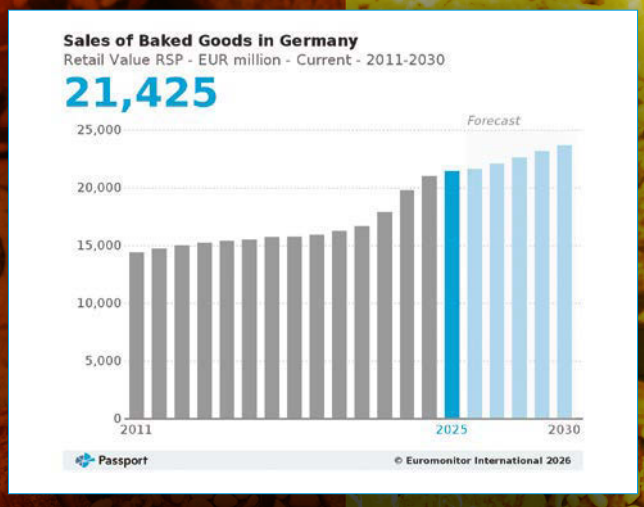
Bread and rolls remain everyday staples

Sales of baked goods are expected to increase in current terms, but to stagnate at constant 2025 prices. Volumes are likely to be flat. Bread and rolls will keep the category stable because people buy them often and can find them everywhere. Private label and in-store bake-off counters will remain popular thanks to sharp prices and a fresh look and smell. Promotions will help to keep traffic high. Sweet bakery will grow more slowly, as cocoa and sugar remain costly and shoppers are careful with non-essentials.

HEALTHIER CHOICES RISE WITH WHOLE GRAIN, FIBRE AND SIMPLER RECIPES

Shoppers are choosing options that feel simple and natural. The future is expected to see more wholegrain and seeded breads, shorter ingredient lists, and steady reformulation to cut sugar, salt, and saturated fat in sweet bakery. Fibre and gut health cues are a plus. Protein-positioned breads and gluten-free remain smaller niches, but they add choice for consumers with specific needs. Smaller pack sizes and portion guidance can help health conscious consumers to manage treats without giving them up. •

Market analysis based on data provided by Euromonitor International.


Sales of Baked Goods in Germany
Retail Value RSP - EUR million - Current - 2011-2030
21,425
Forecast
25,000
20,000
15,000
10,000
5,000
0
2011
2025
2030
Passport
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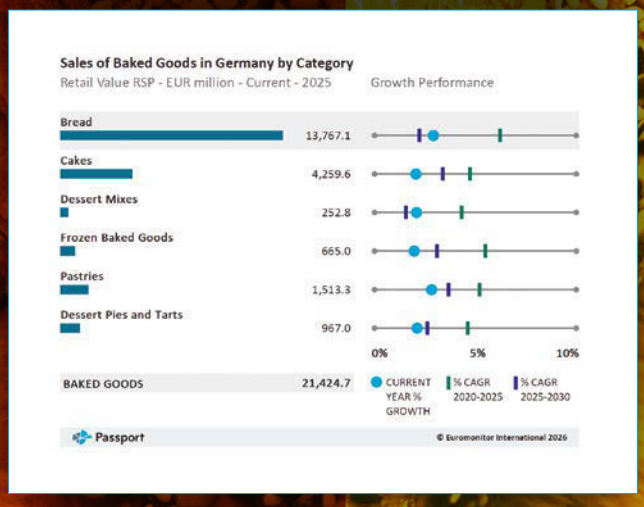
Sales of Baked Goods in Germany by Category
Retail Value RSP - EUR million - Current - 2025
Growth Performance
Bread
13,767.1
Cakes
4,259.6
Dessert Mixes
252.8
Frozen Baked Goods
665.0
Pastries
1,513.3
Dessert Pies and Tarts
967.0
0%
5%
10%
BAKED GOODS
21,424.7
CURRENT YEAR % GROWTH
% CAGR 2020-2025
% CAGR 2025-2030
Passport
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No More **Brown Paper Bags**

Craft bakery packaging is moving well beyond simple paper bags, as artisan producers respond to pressure for sustainability, differentiation and operational efficiency. Several clear developments are shaping the segment.

By Jo Ilie

There was a time when a brown paper bag was a sign that a customer had just bought an artisanal loaf or a butter croissant. But now that's not the expectation anymore. As craft bakery is a premium service, clients expect the packaging to keep up with that.

SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS GO PREMIUM

There is a strong shift toward mono-material paper solutions, compostable films and recyclable barrier coatings that can replace plastic-lined packs. Suppliers are also improving grease and moisture resistance, making fibre-based packaging viable even for butter-rich viennoiserie and filled products. The focus is on maintaining artisan aesthetics while meeting stricter EU packaging and waste regulations.

KM Packaging, for example, launched the K-Nature Paper HBe, a high barrier paper packaging material designed to take confusion out of recycling for end consumers. The product is kerbside recyclable in major markets and can be used for vertical and horizontal flow wrap, form fill and seal, and pre-made pouch packaging products. Paper HBe's material composition of >85% paper, with a strong PE coating and EVOH barrier, makes it an ideal alternative for many products that currently use flexible plastic packaging. "Creating an over 85% paper-based product that performs as well as plastic is a real achievement," said Andrzej Kukula, Technical and New Product Development Manager, KM Packaging. "The end consumer and producers are looking at sustainable alternatives to plastic and our Paper HBe product could well be the answer. The material's high paper quantity means that it has good recyclability, which can only grow the confidence the consumer has in the brands that use it."

Another solution comes from Melodea, Ltd., a leading sustainable barrier coatings producer for packaging: MelOx NGen. MelOx NGen is a high-performance barrier product specifically engineered to allow for the recyclability of plastic food packaging and beyond. In addition to its eco-profile, the new barrier has proven superior in its key role of maintaining food freshness and substantially reducing plastic waste. MelOx NGen is a water-based, plant-sourced coating designed to line the inside surface of numerous forms of plastic food packaging such as films, pouches, bags, lidding, and blister packs used to house CPG products and is currently being rolled out to the global plastic industry. Approved by FDA and BfR as compatible for food

contact, the coating helps protect and extend the shelf-life of foods such as snacks, confectionery, nutrition bars, meats, and dairy products as well as pharmaceuticals.

Melox NGen is a new iteration of Melodea's award-winning bio-based and renewable material MelOx for paper packaging but designed specifically for use on plastic. Used to line packaging as a transparent layer, it offers a sustainable and cost-effective alternative to petroleum-based Ethyl Vinyl Alcohol copolymers. EVOH which are currently widely used in packaging for its food preservation properties as well met-PET plastic materials commonly used to produce lids.

SMART AND TRACEABLE PACKAGING

Digitalisation is entering even small-scale operations. QR codes and batch-linked labels allow consumers to trace ingredients back to origin, aligning with broader transparency trends. This is particularly relevant for bakeries sourcing organic, regenerative or specialty ingredients and wanting to communicate provenance credibly.

FUNCTIONAL CONVENIENCE FORMATS

On-the-go consumption is driving demand for resealable bags, portion packs and hybrid formats that combine rigidity with flexibility. Window features remain popular, but are increasingly made from cellulose or other compostable materials rather than plastic.

A good example comes from Marks & Spencer. In the UK, M&S has introduced a new paper packaging for its garlic baguettes, marking a significant step in its ongoing efforts to reduce plastic waste. The retailer, known for its commitment to sustainability, is the first in the UK to switch to paper packaging for garlic baguettes, eliminating 5.5 million units of plastic annually. The new packaging, which is FSC-approved and fully recyclable at home, now wraps all of M&S's single and twin garlic baguettes. These baguettes are a popular choice among M&S customers, with the single garlic baguette alone selling 4.3 million units each year.

Another solution comes from Sabert Corporation Europe, which launched Tray2Go, a fully recyclable packaging solution for sushi, other chilled food-to-go, confectionery and bakery products.

"Practical to use, our new multifunctional and versatile Tray2Go range features a robust and durable double-wall tray design, coupled with an innovative secure fitting click-lock lid," said Sabert UK & Ireland Managing Director Alex Noake. "The Tray2Go range is made using sustainable materials and is fully recyclable. The board bases, manufactured in the UK, are made with FSC certified material, while the lids are made from rPET, at our facility in Belgium, and comprise a minimum of 50% recycled material."

Ideal for confectionery and bakery products, Tray2Go is available in four standard sizes, while custom sizing is also an option. The range features a robust and durable double-wall tray designed for efficient nesting, and delivers secure stacking, while retaining excellent product visibility.

LOCAL PRODUCTION AND SHORT RUNS

Shorter print runs and digital printing technologies are enabling bakeries to produce seasonal or limited-edition packaging without high minimum orders. This flexibility supports product innovation and helps craft bakers stay agile in a competitive retail and foodservice environment.

Overall, craft bakery packaging is becoming a balance of sustainability, storytelling and practicality—less about cost minimisation, and more about reinforcing product quality and brand identity while meeting regulatory and environmental expectations. •

Upgrading the Game in Traceability

Increasing supply chain problems, brought on by climate change and political instability, have taken a toll on cocoa prices. And that affects all producers of baked goods, from the craft bakers in your neighborhood to the global brands you can find all over the world. Ingredient producers have been exploring cocoa-free possibilities and we already have.

By Jo Ilie

As supply chains grow more complex and regulatory scrutiny intensifies, traceability is becoming a critical priority for the baking industry. From raw material sourcing to finished product distribution, manufacturers are under increasing pressure to ensure full visibility across every stage of production. Digital tools, data integration and smarter tracking systems are enabling bakers to respond faster to recalls, improve quality assurance and meet evolving retailer and consumer expectations. In this context, enhanced traceability is no longer just a compliance requirement, but a strategic lever for efficiency, transparency and trust.

BETTER AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES ACROSS THE BOARD

When they think of traceability, consumers think mostly of cocoa, vanilla or palm oil. Faraway lands that produce expensive ingredients. But traceability refers to all the ingredients that end up in your custard-filled croissant, from the corn that makes the starch to the oil, eggs, butter and grains.

Tate & Lyle, for example, has recently established a new regenerative agriculture programme to support corn suppliers in France to farm more sustainably. Developed with farming cooperatives and representative groups, and Regrow Ag, the agriculture resilience platform provider enabling companies to measure, model, and accelerate regenerative outcomes across global supply chains, the programme will enable participating farmers to understand the impact of adopting regenerative agronomic practices. In turn, Tate & Lyle will monitor the environmental improvements it is supporting on thousands of acres of corn used to make many of its specialty ingredients.

From farm to fork, the provision of food is responsible for around one third of greenhouse gas emissions. To satisfy the demands of a growing global population, society must produce much more food, and so reducing the climate impact of the end-to-end food value chain will be critical to solving the climate crisis. Through an agreement with three of its largest farming partners – Armbruster Grande Cultures, Euralis Groupe Coopératif and Groupe Coopératif Maïsadour – who represent growers in the northeast and southwest of France, Tate & Lyle is supporting farmer efforts to strengthen resilience to the impacts of climate change. Practices to support soil health prioritised in the programme include: low and no till, which minimises soil disturbance; cover crops, which support soil health; and nitrogen management to reduce the use of synthetic fertilisers. Tate & Lyle and its partners will use Regrow's AI-driven software platform to quantify environmental impacts and monitor trends in participating farms. Regrow and local agronomists are partnering to support farmers with data entry and analysis to inform farm planning and integrate into Tate & Lyle and its customers' environmental reporting.

This programme builds on Tate & Lyle's existing, more mature regenerative agriculture programmes, which support corn growers in the US and stevia growers in China. Tate & Lyle maintains acres equivalent to the volume of corn it buys annually in its regenerative agriculture programmes.

Another example comes from ADM, who expanded its regenerative agriculture program, re:generation to Hungary. The program helps build and maintain a more resilient food system and create economic value for growers by providing financial and agronomic support to farmers who are taking steps to implement regenerative agriculture practices.

In collaboration with Bayer, the program in Hungary aims to enroll 30,000 acres (approximately 12,000 hectares) of predominately sunflower seeds but also soybeans, for the 2025 harvest and to scale in subsequent years. Through the program, sunflower seed farmers will be provided with financial and technical support to implement qualifying regenerativeagriculture practices, including: minimum

tillage, cover crops, companion crops, 4R nutrient management, use of organic matter/manure, crop rotation.

ADM will compensate participating farmers for each qualifying hectare, measured and verified using Bayer's digital capabilities in collaboration with Trinity Agtech's Sandy platform, a recognized solution backed by science that complies with the highest standards available in the market.

In addition to financial support, participating farmers will receive agronomic guidance from specialized professionals. That support starts with a deep agronomical understanding of issues specific to each region, followed by on-farm assessments, where agronomists visit fields and, together with farmers, design development plans tailored for each farm.

Enrolled farmers will be able to share their experiences with one another and discuss different techniques during field visits and peer learning opportunities. By coordinating peer-to-peer networks, knowledge can be shared with a goal of revitalizing rural communities.

In parallel to the program expansion to Hungary, ADM is conducting a feasibility study to assess the effectiveness of various regenerative agriculture practices in reducing carbon emissions, increasing biodiversity and improving soil health in enrolled farms to build farm resiliency. The study will enable evaluation of the effectiveness of the practices and help shape the larger scale effort.

"We believe we must take actions for our future, we need to find solutions to challenges. Therefore, we try to seize every opportunity that can help us adapt to the worsening conditions. Through ADM's regenerative agriculture program, we hope to be able to rethink our applied technologies from a different perspective. We believe we can learn from it, and this cooperation could be beneficial for us," said Tibor Pokoraczki, a Hungarian farmer from the Észak-Alföld Region.

In the next two years, subject to customer demand, ADM's re:generations program will expand into a broader range of crops such as corn and rapeseed, and geographies including Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey and Ukraine.

This expansion in Hungary marks the fifth country in Europe that ADM has rolled out its regenerative agriculture program to since 2023. In EMEA , ADM has expanded the program to more than 80,000 acres, including wheat and canola in Poland, soy in Serbia, and various crops in Germany and the United Kingdom.

EXPANDED CERTIFICATIONS, EVEN IN WAR

But the expanding regenerative agriculture initiatives is not all that happens in this field. Certification and verification frameworks are becoming increasingly important to ensure credibility and scalability. As more hectares are brought under sustainable practices, stakeholders across the value chain are seeking robust, science-based mechanisms to validate land restoration efforts and document environmental impact. This is particularly relevant in emerging and post-conflict regions, where rebuilding agricultural capacity must go hand in hand with transparent standards and internationally recognised certification systems.

FoodChain ID, a leading provider of certification and technology across the food supply chain, and the Center of Excellence for Life Sciences, Agriculture and Bioingenuity (CE-LAB), an open-access innovation center supporting the Ukrainian agri-food economy, announced a strategic partnership to certify that reclaimed land and water damaged by war and restored through phytoremediation, crater recultivation and field diagnostics are again suitable for agricultural use. In addition, the partnership has established carbon traceability programs to validate and verify transitional regenerative farming practices to support the international credibility of Ukraine's carbon and regenerative farming projects.

According to CE-LAB, an estimated 7.5 million hectares of Ukrainian land are mined or otherwise contaminated because of military operations, posing ongoing threats to farming and food security. Through the new certification and verification initiatives, the FoodChain ID-CE-LAB partnership will deliver an independent assurance framework to certify that remediated land and water are ready for agricultural use. The certification will be based on documented clearance by authorized operators and defined environmental testing and audit criteria. The partnership will also provide laboratory and technology services to support traceable, credible verification of restoration and regenerative agriculture claims.

Dr. Vitaliy Skotsyk, CE-LAB President and CEO, said, "Along with FoodChain ID, we are creating a full certification pathway for reclaimed soils, forests and water systems — connecting environmental recovery with carbon markets, global trust and long-term economic regeneration."

Together, FoodChain ID and CE-LAB will contribute to the global food supply by certifying that remediated land and water — based on documented clearance by authorized operators and environmental verification — meet environmental safety, regenerative agriculture and carbon market standards. The partnership will start with Ukraine and expand to other agricultural regions.

CONCLUSIONS

Ultimately, as the baking industry works to balance efficiency, sustainability and resilience, traceability is emerging as the common thread linking these priorities together. Whether through regenerative agriculture programmes, digital monitoring platforms or robust certification systems, companies are building more transparent and accountable supply chains from field to finished product. In the years ahead, those able to combine verifiable data with scalable practices will be best positioned to meet tightening regulations, strengthen customer trust and secure long-term supply stability in an increasingly complex global market. •

High Productivity Chocolate Forming with **IPCO Rotoform Chip Production**

IPCO, a major supplier of chocolate forming/moulding equipment, will use Interpack to showcase the breath of it ranges, with equipment to suit a wide range of needs. The company supplies market-leading production solutions for industrial ingredients – chips, chunks, drops and blocks – and decorative products such as shavings, rolls, pencils, blossoms and many more.

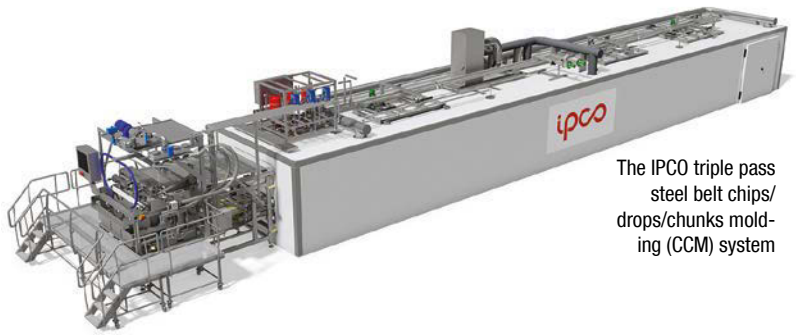
IPCO's ranges include systems for the production of industrial ingredients and decorative products

ROTOFORM HP – HIGH PERFORMANCE CHIP FORMING

IPCO's Rotoform rotary depositor module forms the heart of its high-capacity systems. The latest model – the Rotoform HP (High Performance) – has been specifically designed to brings new levels of productivity to chocolate chip forming and will be demonstrated at Interpack.

The system consists of a heated stator and a perforated shell that turns concentrically around the stator to deposit drops of chocolate onto a continuously running steel belt. The heat of the drops is transferred to cooling air blown onto the product and also to the belt itself. A short cooling time means that very little oxygen can penetrate the product. Chips are free flowing for easy handling, storage and dosing. Different sizes – from 80,000 to 300 pcs/kg – can be produced by simply exchanging the rotary shell and nozzle bar.

IPCO's Rotoform HP (High Performance) rotary drop depositor for chocolate chip production



The IPCO triple pass steel belt chips/drops/chunks molding (CCM) system

TRIPLE PASS CHOCOLATE COOLING SYSTEMS

IPCO has developed a range of triple pass cooling systems that enable high throughput rates while minimising floorspace requirements. The product is deposited on the first belt and adheres to the underside for the second pass. It is then removed on to a second conveyor for a third pass.

The company's recently launched piston depositor can be installed alongside existing Rotoform and extrusion equipment on IPCO CCM (Chip and Chunk Moulding) triple pass steel belt cooler lines. This enables three depositing systems to be integrated on a single line for the production of chips, chunks and wafers.

Visit IPCO at interpack 2026 at **Hall 3, Stand 3D20**! •

PACKAGING REPORTER

Supporting the global packaging industry

OUT OF THE BOX PACKAGING NEWS

The Next **Big Twist**

Chimney cake, a traditional Central and Eastern European sweet, has been widely reinvented in modern bakery and street food formats. Originally a simple, sugar-coated, spit-roasted dough, chimney cake has evolved into a versatile product platform that entices children and adults alike. While its margins definitely make bakers happy.

By Jo Ilie

The chimney cake - known as kürtőskalács in Hungarian - traces its roots to the Székely (Szekler) communities of Transylvania, today part of Romania. Historical references date back to the 15th–16th centuries, when the dough was wrapped around wooden spits and baked over open fire, typically for celebrations and special occasions.
Early written recipes appeared in 17th–18th century Transylvanian cookbooks, where the product was considered a festive delicacy among the Hungarian nobility. The technique - rotating dough over embers and coating it with sugar - created its signature caramelised crust and hollow centre, resembling a "chimney," which later inspired its English name.

Over time, chimney cake moved from aristocratic tables to village fairs, markets and public celebrations, becoming a staple of regional food culture across Hungary, Romania and neighbouring countries. Each area developed slight variations in toppings, including walnuts, cinnamon or cocoa.

MODERN REVIVAL AND REINVENTION

After a period of decline in the 20th century, chimney cake experienced a strong revival in the 2000s, driven by tourism, street food culture and growing interest in traditional, experiential foods. Today, it has expanded well beyond its origins, evolving into a flexible bakery concept with both sweet and savoury formats, while still retaining its artisanal, fire-baked identity.
Its journey - from festive heritage product to scalable, modern bakery format - makes chimney cake a clear example of how ethnic European specialties can be successfully repositioned for contemporary markets.

It started as a chimney cake, it is now:

- Cone formats filled with ice cream, soft serve or cream-based desserts

Chains such as Molnár's Kürtőskalács and Kurtos Kalacs Original offer chimney cakes shaped into cones and filled with soft ice cream, creams or fruit toppings. These are widely available in shopping centres and tourist-heavy urban locations across Hungary, Austria and Germany.

- Bite-sized and mini versions for snacking and retail packaging

In Hungary and Romania, producers supply pre-baked, shelf-ready kürtőskalács in sealed trays or flow packs, often flavoured (vanilla, cinnamon, cocoa). Retailers such as SPAR and Kaufland list private-label or local-supplier versions, targeting impulse and snack segments. Artisan bakeries and some industrial suppliers have introduced "kürtős bites"—small, cylindrical pieces sold in cups or bags. These are positioned similarly to doughnut holes or churros, suitable for takeaway and increasingly for packaged snacking

- Fully loaded variants with toppings such as chocolate, nuts, fruit or spreads

Premium bakeries across Central Europe now offer filled chimney cakes—injected with pistachio cream, chocolate

or custard—mirroring trends seen in croissants and maritozzi. These are typically sold fresh but are beginning to appear in chilled retail formats.

- Frozen and ready-to-bake formats for scalable foodservice operations
  Suppliers are developing frozen, ready-to-bake chimney cake spirals, enabling in-store bakery concepts in supermarkets. This format is still emerging but aligns with the broader expansion of bake-off solutions in European retail.

- Savoury adaptations using cheese, spices or even burger-style fillings

WHY IT WORKS

Chimney cake lends itself well to reinvention due to its visual appeal and interactive consumption, making it ideal for social media-driven sales and experiential retail. Its simple base recipe also allows for easy flavour customisation and localisation.
At the same time, equipment suppliers have developed semi-automated baking systems, enabling consistent production beyond traditional street vendors and helping the product expand into shopping centres, quick-service concepts and even supermarket bakery sections.

This evolution mirrors a wider trend: regional European sweets being transformed into high-margin, customisable formats that bridge craft authenticity with modern consumption habits.

Bakery Tech Poland to Spotlight **Equipment, Automation and Ingredients Innovation**

By Jo Ilie

Bakery Tech Poland will bring together the bakery and confectionery technology sector at Ptak Warsaw Expo, positioning itself as a key regional platform for equipment suppliers, ingredient manufacturers and production specialists. The event will take place at Central Europe's largest trade fair and congress venue, with a strong focus on facilitating business connections across the value chain.

Organisers expect around 5,000 visitors, including approximately 400 international attendees, alongside 90 exhibitors showcasing solutions across 15,000 m² of exhibition space. The event is designed to address both industrial-scale production and artisan applications, reflecting ongoing investments in efficiency, automation and product innovation across the sector.

The exhibition will cover a broad range of categories, including raw materials and ingredients such as flour, yeast, baking mixes, chocolate and fillings. Equipment will be a central focus, with suppliers presenting ovens, mixers, dough sheeters, laminating systems and complete production lines. Automation and digitalisation will also feature prominently, with solutions spanning bakery robotics, MES systems and intelligent ovens aimed at improving throughput and process control. In confectionery, technologies such as chocolate tempering systems, praline equipment and cake decoration solutions will be on display. Additional segments include packaging and storage, with an emphasis on eco-friendly materials and shelf-life extension technologies, as well as logistics and distribution solutions tailored to bakery products. Food safety and hygiene systems, including HACCP compliance and air filtration, will further reflect regulatory and operational priorities.

Beyond equipment, the event will highlight product trends such as gluten-free, vegan and high-protein baked goods, alongside decoration and finishing innovations, including 3D printing applications. Sustainability and circular economy practices, as well as education and training initiatives, will round out the programme, underlining the industry's focus on skills development and resource efficiency.•

2026 FEATURE PLANNING

1 JANUARY/FEBRUARY

Ad closing: Feb 10/Publishing: Feb 24

TECHNOLOGY
Sheeters & Laminators / Freezing Equipment

PROCESS
Designing & Comissioning / Production Lines / Cutting and Forming / Scoring

SPECIAL FEATURE
Business Outlooks 2026
Interviews with industry leaders about their view on the coming year

EXPERT VIEW
Low Pressure / Extruded Snacks

FOOD SAFETY
Hygienic Equipment Design

INGREDIENTS & NUTRITION
Flours / Shelf-life Optimization / Botanicals / CBD

PACKAGING
Secondary packaging

MARKETS
UK & Ireland

SNACKING TRENDS
Expanded / Extruded Snacks

CRAFT BAKING
Freezers, Display Freezers & Coolers

SUPPLY CHAIN & LOGISTICS
Storage & Warehouse Management

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT
Pizza / Laminated Dough-based Innovation

TRADE SHOWS
Trade Shows Outlook 2026

2 MARCH/APRIL

Ad closing: April 08/Publishing: April 22

INTERPACK SPECIAL ISSUE

TECHNOLOGY
Extruders / Topping / Filling / Glazing

PROCESS
Inspection & Monitoring / Product Diversification

SPECIAL FEATURE
Energy Saving & Process Optimization

EXPERT VIEW
Sustainable Packaging Materials

FOOD SAFETY
MAP Packaging

INGREDIENTS & NUTRITION
Oils & Fats / Flavors & Colors / Water

PACKAGING
Packaging Automation

MARKETS
Germany

SNACKING TRENDS
Savory vs Sweet Biscuits

CRAFT BAKING
Craft Bakery Packaging

SUPPLY CHAIN & LOGISTICS
Traceability

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT
Traditional Bakery & Ethnic Sweets / Pies & Tarts

TRADE SHOWS
Food & Drink Expor, Sigep World China

3 MAY/JUNE

Ad closing: May 14/Publishing: May 28

Published together with Asia Pacific Overview

SNACKEX SPECIAL ISSUE

TECHNOLOGY
Turnkey Lines / New Oven Technologies

PROCESS
Vacuum Cooling / Seasoning

SPECIAL FEATURE
Smart Production & AI

EXPERT VIEW
Efficient Product Transport: Conveying Systems

FOOD SAFETY
Trainings and Program Implementation

INGREDIENTS & NUTRITION
Plant-based Bakery / Enzymes / Free-from Alternatives

PACKAGING
Snacks Packaging Innovation

MARKETS
Spain & Portugal

SNACKING TRENDS
Pies & Cakes

CRAFT BAKING
Dividers / Rounders

SUPPLY CHAIN & LOGISTICS
Supply Chains & NPD

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT
Plant-based Bakery Products / Cookies

TRADE SHOWS
Thaifex Anuga, IFT First

4 JULY/AUGUST

Ad closing: July 16/Publishing: July 30

TECHNOLOGY
Smart Bakery Systems / Conveyor Belts

PROCESS
Depositing / Mixing & Hydrating Ingredients

SPECIAL FEATURE
Sustainability: Challenges & Outcomes

EXPERT VIEW
Oils, Fats & Dough Rheology

FOOD SAFETY
Certifications, Regulations & Compliance

INGREDIENTS & NUTRITION
Dough Improvers / Inclusions / Pulses / DRI & EU regulations

PACKAGING
Sustainable Materials

MARKETS
Scandinavia

SNACKING TRENDS
Sandwich Breads / Flatbreads

CRAFT BAKING
Deck and Rack Ovens

SUPPLY CHAIN & LOGISTICS
Handling & Transport

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT
Donuts / Cakes

TRADE SHOWS
Pack Expo, Anuga

5 SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER

Ad closing: Aug 20/Publishing: Sept 03

Published together with North America Overview

PackEpo SPECIAL ISSUE

TECHNOLOGY
Software and Sensors / Proofers

PROCESS
Extrusion / Handling / Pick & Place

SPECIAL FEATURE
Product Quality Management

EXPERT VIEW
Plant-based Formulation & Production

FOOD SAFETY
IoT in Food Safety Management

INGREDIENTS & NUTRITION
Sweeteners / Emulsifiers / Antioxidants

PACKAGING
Robots / Cobots

MARKETS
France

SNACKING TRENDS
Enrobed / Filled Sweets

CRAFT BAKING
Packing Equipment for Craft Bakers

SUPPLY CHAIN & LOGISTICS
Cold Chain

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT
Frozen Pastry / Sourdough Bread

TRADE SHOWS
SIAL

6 NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

Ad closing: Nov 02/Publishing: Nov 16

Published together with Middle East Overview

Gulfood SPECIAL ISSUE

TECHNOLOGY
Dough Dividers/ Rounders, Mixers & Kneaders

PROCESS
Conveying / Hygiene & Sanitation

SPECIAL FEATURE
Sustainable Sourcing of Ingredients

EXPERT VIEW
Pans, Trays, Racks & Bakeware

FOOD SAFETY
Process, Product & Staff Protection

INGREDIENTS & NUTRITION
Yeast & Sourdough / Proteins & Fibers / Starches

PACKAGING
Active Packaging

MARKETS
France

SNACKING TRENDS
Italy

CRAFT BAKING
Wafers

SUPPLY CHAIN & LOGISTICS
Small Footprint Technology

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT
Winter Holiday Treats / Meringues

TRADE SHOWS
SIRHA Lyon 2027, ISM ProSweets 2027

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  Suitable for all baking production, balancing efficiency and perfect taste.

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