



Packaging Innovations:  
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## Green “Hat Trick” for New Split-it Food Tray

New Product Offers Potential Savings of 100,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>

**February 2012:** A significant breakthrough in recyclable packaging has been made by a new company, **Split-it** Ltd. The product is the result of collaboration between UK carton specialist Benson Group and French tray lining business, Mecapack. The company has announced the creation of an environmentally friendly and efficient alternative to the polypropylene and, ultimately, the C-pet ready-meal tray.

**Split-it** claims a green “hat-trick” of wins over conventional packaging, with significantly reduced weight, reduced embedded carbon, and the potential for significantly greater recycling. The product is expected to have a significant impact on a market that is currently sized at 6.5 billion food trays per year in the UK alone.

The **Split-it** product consists of a board skilket which can be lined at the point of packing with a thin film. This forms the sealing flange, providing an air tight seal. The finished package is easy to open but also easy to recycle, with the consumer able to “**Split-it**”, separating the film from the board with one swift pull. The board packaging is recycled as easily as all other card packaging product.

The board substrate and lining film can be selected according to the desired application. Paul Tye, Sales & Marketing Director of Split-it said: “The **Split-it** product is suited to a wide range of food applications, but the development was particularly created with ready meals and chilled product in mind.”

Ready meals require the creation of a package utilising an oven-able board and PET lining film, whilst chilled short shelf life product could be created from FBB and a film dependant on product life.

With regard to the potential market, plastic trays account for some 80% of the global market in these sectors, whilst pressed board trays account for just 10% along with the same amount for

aluminium trays. In the UK alone, the total market consists of some 6.5 billion trays per annum, with 60% of these in the chilled sector and 40% in frozen.

“These are huge markets,” said Mr Tye. “Currently there is very little promotion of any environmentally friendly solutions. In addition to the ease of recycling, **Split-it** also provides a near 50% weight reduction compared to equivalent plastic tray, adding significant further arguments to its green credentials when calculating distribution costs.” The company is also examining the potential for a similar product for use within the fresh sandwich market.

Controlled tests conducted by the independent Eco3 laboratories in Ashby-de-la-Zouch calculated a saving of 0.054 Kg of CO2 saved per unit when making a direct comparison between the components of **Split-it** and existing polypropylene ready-meal trays. Therefore, if **Split-it** were to take just a 30% market share in the UK the total CO2 savings would be in excess of 100,000 tonnes.

Commenting on the launch of the product, Mr Tye said: “We believe that **Split-it** will have a huge impact on the packaging market due to its environmental credentials. It is the product that many food suppliers have been waiting for.”

For further information on **Split-it** see the [www.split-it.com](http://www.split-it.com) web site; for more details on Benson Group see [www.bensongroup.co.uk](http://www.bensongroup.co.uk); and for additional materials on Mecapack see [www.mecapack.co.uk](http://www.mecapack.co.uk)

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