

## NEWS IN BRIEF

■ Rapak, part of DS Smith Plastics, has added leading French wine producers Prodis, Chais Beaucairois and Vignerons Ardechois to its bag-in-box taps packaging range.

Advances in filling and packaging technology have encouraged the switch from bottle to bag. Enhanced oxygen barriers on the films that line the bag and dispensing fittings minimise the oxygen in the finished pack for an extended shelf life. Website: [www.dssplastics.com](http://www.dssplastics.com).

■ The concept of a small magnifying glass on pharmaceutical packaging to help consumers read dosage instructions will be brought to market, following an investment of £30,000 in the technology from the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA). Website: [www.nesta.org.uk](http://www.nesta.org.uk).

■ According to a survey carried out by the organisers of the easyFairs Process, and Pack and Track Food Shows, leading food and drink manufacturers are looking for innovative packaging to support their expansion plans. Over 45% of the 100 surveyed wanted to reduce their materials usage, 40% want to speed up their packing lines and 30% are looking to packaging to provide greater product differentiation. Twelve per cent believe their packaging suppliers are too complacent.



## Pumped up

Rieke Packaging Systems Englass has launched a new range of airless dispensers.

Available in slim line or wide bore, and in natural, transparent and coloured combinations, the packs can be personalised to individual brand requirements and used for personal care products, including creams, lotions and gels.

The packs feature a pre-assembled, one-piece follower piston and are designed to pump air using a

valve system. There is also a suck-back feature that pulls the product back into the nozzle after dispensing for clean and hygienic operations. Website: [www.englass.co.uk](http://www.englass.co.uk).



## Subsurface security

Commercial trials are expected to begin this year on a new subsurface non-aggressive laser engraving system that could provide a complete track and trace system, deterring counterfeiters of products such as those in the pharmaceutical and cosmetics sectors.

The NAGINELS consortium, – Non Aggressive Glass Internal Engraving Laser System – is a two-year international project that has been funded by the EU and is made up of six SMEs and two universities.

The laser system developed by the partners can subsurface engrave any transparent material, such as individual glass or plastic bottles that contain medicines or perfumes. It can engrave either a special 0.5 x 0.5mm, 16 x 16 data matrix, in less than one second and almost invisible to the eye, or alphanumeric characters where each one is only 3.5 microns in height. The characters are almost invisible but under certain lighting conditions they show up with a rainbow effect and can be read.

The surface engraving techniques, hand labels and security inks that are currently used to mark containers are easily counterfeited, says Adrian Simmons, Managing Director of Total Brand Security, UK, one of the partners in the consortium. Meanwhile, the existing subsurface engraving technologies 'seriously affect the internal structure of the glass. This can be seen by cracks and fissures.'

He explains that the new system uses high technology lasers that can be focused at different depths within the glass container. 'The NAGINELS Passport Mark (NPM) does in no way affect the physical properties of the glass container. That the mark is almost invisible is an advantage because it does not cosmetically influence the appearance of the product.'

Companies can either be supplied with the packs, each with their individual NPM already included, or the subsurface engraving system can be installed at any

position in the manufacturer's production line even if the final product is already in the pack. The consortium advises, however, that the equipment is installed as early as possible and to include readers along the production chain to track each container.

NAGINELS use standard commercially available readers to scan the engraving, alongside portable handheld readers that can be used in the market place to verify product authenticity. The alphanumeric codes can also be read using a small magnifying glass, for example, by a consumer or a customs official.

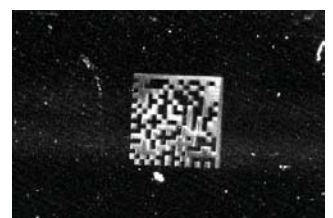
'At the end of the manufacturing process, the bottle can be connected to its secondary and tertiary packaging and then linked into a database for full track and trace capability', says Simmons. Talks are now in progress with various brand names to set up pilots.

■ The NAGINELS partnership is made up of Total Brand Security Ltd in the UK, Solos in Italy, Costet in France, Lasea in Belgium, Amplitude in France,

KST in Belgium, and the technology centres at the Universities of Liege, Belgium, and Bordeaux, France.

For further information, contact Adrian Simmons, tel: 0207 9276785, or e-mail: [adrian.simmons@totalbrandsecurity.com](mailto:adrian.simmons@totalbrandsecurity.com).

*Rupal Mehta*



**Top: An example of an engraved data matrix with a black background to make it more visible. Bottom: Engraved alphanumeric code**