

The Flexible Jug™ Offers Sustainability, Cost Savings, and Savvy Marketing

By Bob Kelly, President, General Packaging Equipment Co.

The Flexible Jug™ is a unique, positively re-closable package with a cap and a carrying handle. The Flexible Jug™ offers significant sustainability, cost savings, and marketing advantages when compared to stand-up bags and plastic pails. Manufacturers that want to improve their relative standing on the Wal-Mart scorecard, while at the same time bettering their bottom line and increasing sales, should explore this new and one-of-a-kind packaging option.

Examples of Flexible Jugs™



Some of the most important ways to improve the sustainability of a package is to:

- Drive down the amount of material sourced, used, and transported prior to manufacture
- Reduce energy consumption and emit less greenhouse gas on the packaging line
- Maximize cube utilization when transporting the package to the wholesaler or retailer and increase the number of packages per foot of retail shelf space.

The Wal-Mart scorecard rates these attributes highly.

Flexible Jugs™ are made using film or paper based roll stock, which is, in many cases, the lightest and most economical packaging material available. Shipping roll stock to a plant is more cost effective than pre-made bags or plastic pails.

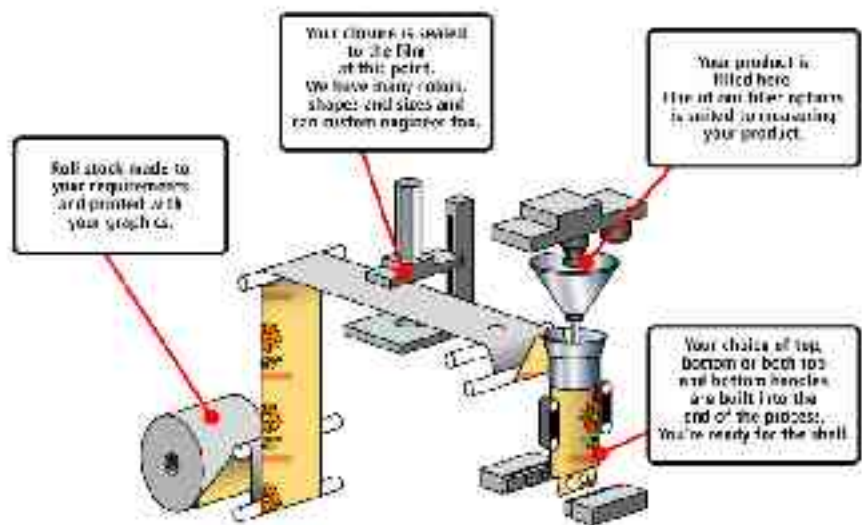
Switching to film roll stock from plastic pails, for example, will deliver significantly more packages per load while decreasing incoming freight cost by roughly 95 percent. More material per load improves transportation efficiencies — including a

decrease in the consumption of non-renewable petroleum and reduced overall carbon dioxide emissions. Furthermore, roll-stock substitution for plastic pails reduces packaging material cost by up to 75 percent and cuts the amount of warehouse space by 95 percent. Upon disposal, landfill requirements are also reduced by 95 percent.

The Vertical-Form-Fill-Seal (VFFS) machines used to make Flexible Jugs™ are manufactured by General Packaging Equipment Company of Houston, Texas. These small footprint machines are energy efficient and, since they are automatic, decrease labor costs over the manual filling of pre-made bags and pails. General Packaging engineers estimate that labor costs will decrease by up to 80 percent when one of its Flexible Jug™ VFFS machine is substituted for manual filling.

VFFS is a highly efficient process during which film is converted into Flexible Jugs™ with minimal scrap. General's VFFS machines apply fittings used for pouring the product out of the bag. A variety of fittings are available. Three different styles of handles — top, bottom, and top and bottom — are available. Versatility in fittings and handles gives manufacturers a wide range of convenience options to offer consumers.

The following diagram illustrates the process by which Flexible Jugs™ are made on a General Packaging Equipment VFFS machine.



Flexible Jugs™ pack into less space than pails and stand-up bags for shipping to wholesalers and retailers, another plus for Wal-Mart scorecard rankings and sustainability in general. Companies can increase shelf presence with up to 90 percent more Flexible

Jugs™ per foot of shelf space than stand-up bags. This is something that Wal-Mart and a host of other retailers want from their suppliers.

Flexible Jugs™ are ideal for many packaging applications previously covered by pre-made bags, plastic pails, and stand-up bags made on horizontal form-fill-seal machines. A 9-inch face (230mm) with a 5-inch side (125mm) is the current maximum size for square-bottom bags. This size allows for a weight of up to 20 pounds (10 kg) for products with bulk densities of 45 LB/FT³ (specific gravity .72) or higher. Larger size capabilities will be available in 2008. A patent on the Flexible Jug™ is pending.

Flexible Jugs™ and the General Packaging Equipment VFFS machines used to make them are designed to fulfill the growing need for greater sustainability, cost savings, and to offer consumers a host of convenience features.

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