



PLASTICS MAKE IT POSSIBLE™ SHOWCASES EXCEPTIONAL INNOVATIONS IN PLASTIC. THIS MONTH WE LOOK AT HOW PLASTIC IS USED IN PACKAGING.

SPOTLIGHT ON

Winemakers Turn to Plastics

If present trends continue, there soon may be no need to lug home heavy glass bottles of your favorite wine or to gingerly carry them to parties and picnics. Thanks to innovative developments in wine packaging, lightweight and shatter-resistant plastics are bursting onto the scene as a convenient and ecological way to package wine.

While some old-school wine lovers may assume that a plastic bottle or a plastic pouch in a box automatically translates to lower quality wine, winemakers throughout the world are proving otherwise. European and other winemakers have used plastic bottles for years, and it's becoming more commonplace for American winemakers, as well.



In addition to lightening the load in your grocery bag or picnic basket, plastic wine bottles also lighten the load on the planet since they require less energy to manufacture and to transport. One wine company proclaims that its lightweight plastic bottles leave a 60% lighter carbon footprint than traditional glass bottles.

Wine "casks" or bag-in-a-box packaging has the added advantage of keeping wine fresh for weeks after opening since the vacuum-sealed pouch prevents the wine from being exposed to air. And the plastic pour spout makes life easy in the kitchen or at the backyard cookout.

(See WINEMAKERS, Page 2)

Packing the Perfect Picnic



The long, sunny days of summer lend themselves to impromptu outdoor gatherings, al fresco dining and picnics in the country. Here's a number of ways that plastics can help create easier and more stylish outings.

The Essentials:

- **Cool Packs:** These reusable bags are made with tough polyethylene. They're filled with a gel coolant that helps keep food and drinks cool, plus they have the great advantage of being pliable and leak resistant. Don't have some in the freezer? A zippered plastic bag filled with ice cubes is a great, reusable alternative.
- **Plastic food containers:** When preparing and packing the picnic basket, readied foods can be stored in tightly sealed containers in the refrigerator so they are thoroughly chilled and convenient.
- **Plastic Baggies:** Not only will convenient plastic zipper bags help keep food from getting soggy, they are also handy for leftovers.
- **Plastic Tablecloth:** What's a picnic without one? Well, a bit unsanitary. Cover the table or the ground with a clean, plastic cloth and then bring on the food. To spice things up a bit, there are special designs for holidays and other occasions. Red, white and blue plastic tablecloths are already in the stores.

(See PICNIC, Page 2)

Dip or Squeeze?

Negotiating a ketchup packet on the go can be tricky, sometimes resulting in a sticky mess. But thanks to innovations in plastic packaging technology, Heinz® recently announced the Dip & Squeeze™, the company's first enhancement to the ketchup packet in 42 years. The breakthrough plastic packaging allows diners to enjoy ketchup in two ways: peel back the lid and dip or tear off the tip and squeeze. The secure plastic packaging holds three times as much ketchup as the traditional packaging which means more delicious ketchup, less waste!



WINEMAKERS, from page 1

Many winemakers around the world also are shifting to plastics to take the place of traditional corks made from the bark of the Cork Oak tree. One reason for this is a contaminant common to natural corks that can taint approximately 5 percent of bottled wine, resulting in unnecessary waste of resources and money.



Today's winemakers have turned to plastic stoppers to properly seal their wine.

Today's plastic "corks" are innovation in action, often made of two types of plastic: a firm inner core that holds the shape of the stopper and a spongy exterior that is compressed into the bottle neck to form a seal. Many consumers find plastic stoppers easier to remove than cork stoppers that sometimes split or crumble, reducing those frustrating fights with the wine bottle.

There is also a trend towards screw caps. Although in the past screw caps were associated with low quality jug wine, today many medium- and high-end winemakers are turning to screw caps since they are easy to open and seal. These closures wouldn't be possible without the plastic liner that keeps the bottle airtight.



So whether picnicking at the beach or carrying wine to a neighbor's barbecue, innovative plastic wine packaging helps deliver the same bouquet and flavor with less effort and a lighter load on the environment.

Screw caps help keep air out of wine bottles thanks to a plastic liner.

PICNIC, from page 1

- **Plastic Trash Bag:** When spreading a blanket on the ground under a nice shady tree, lay down a few large plastic trash bags to keep things clean and dry. These inexpensive bags have multiple uses: lining picnic baskets, rain gear, packing out recyclables and trash and more.

A Touch of Style

Many new plastic products are designed to handle the great outdoors while showing a bit of style:

- A unique [plastic wine bottle/cup combination](#), designed primarily for events and the outdoors, adds a new twist to serving wine. It's a single-serve, plastic wine bottle with a plastic wine cup that doubles as the closure. No corkscrew – just twist off the top, turn it over, pour and enjoy.
- New [plastic trash and recycling bins](#) that collapse on themselves are easy to carry to picnics and to set up outdoors. Clip plastic trash bags inside to keep them clean or simply wipe or hose them down. The locking lids help keep bugs at bay, and they come in a multitude of colorful designs.

This patterned bin, available at www.bungalowco.com, would keep your picnic clean and stylish



- Want a little mood lighting? Turn liquids into lanterns with innovative, new [plastic LED lights](#) encased in plastic bottle tops. They can be attached to typical wide mouthed, reusable plastic bottles, casting a glow varying from night light to reading light. The sturdy plastic casings allow the light to shine right side up, upside down – even hanging from the nearest tree branch.



WE NEED YOUR INNOVATIONS!

The *Plastics Make it Possible*SM Newsletter is published by the American Chemistry Council to promote innovations in the use of plastics.

Please send stories about your innovations to innovations@americanchemistry.com.

We will be pleased to consider them for publication.

Thank you.

