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Sung-Soo Kang,
manager of the SDC packaging and design team

New labels deliver recyclability, enhanced shelf appeal and positioning for market-leading brand in Korea

Seoul Dairy Cooperative (SDC) has been a leading milk producer in Korea for over 75 years, proudly serving its Seoul Dairy Milk to more than 10 million Koreans each day. The company continuously strives to offer innovative product enhancements to honor its loyal customers as well as its commitment to the environment.

Seoul Dairy Cooperative Takes on Innovative Eco-Friendly Packaging Solution



“Delivering the best milk is the corporate value of SDC while focusing on satisfying customers’ appetites,” said Sung-Soo Kang, manager of the SDC packaging and design team. “SDC is also making a conscious effort to be responsible for the health of Korea and the world beyond, while being reborn as the greatest first-class food and life culture company. We open up a happy life and bright future for our customers.”

SDC employs a variety of progressive systems to ensure the highest level of milk freshness, nutrient preservation and overall quality. For example, production and delivery processes are closely monitored by Cold Chain and Milk Master systems.



“The performance of the Fasson wash-off label in testing at KTR put to rest all those fears. Thanks to the progressive approach we took on this project, SDC was able to deliver on all its core needs—quality, excellent appearance and design, and eco-friendly management.”

*Sung-Soo Kang,
manager of the SDC packaging
and design team*

Maintaining the highest level of product quality while upholding its environmental social responsibility is a cornerstone of SDC’s commitment to building the Seoul Dairy brand. It is a commitment that guides everything, even the decision to choose an eco-friendly label solution to increase PET container recycling.

When SDC launched its premium “Fresh Milk” brand, it worked on achieving the best quality and attractive design. So when it came time to address the packaging of the milk and natural yogurt products, the company focused on containers that would help maintain excellent product quality. For that, a PET bottle proved to be the best choice to preserve product freshness and flavor due to the higher gas-barrier properties compared to carton packaging.

Designing for the Shelf and Beyond

In terms of package design, being able to see the product through the transparent PET bottle and simple labeling helped make for superior shelf appeal and an overall fresher look. But the initial label design was printed directly on the PET bottle, which made the bottles difficult to recycle. With environmental stewardship being one of its ultimate corporate goals, the company wanted to solve this concern by finding a labeling option that would help it fulfill its ongoing environmental commitment.

“We have a strong will and responsibility to make the world a better place,” Kang said. “So, we have to give careful consideration to conserving natural resources and ensuring our packaging is recyclable. Our efforts for the environment are not only a responsibility, but an obligation, and it will go on.”

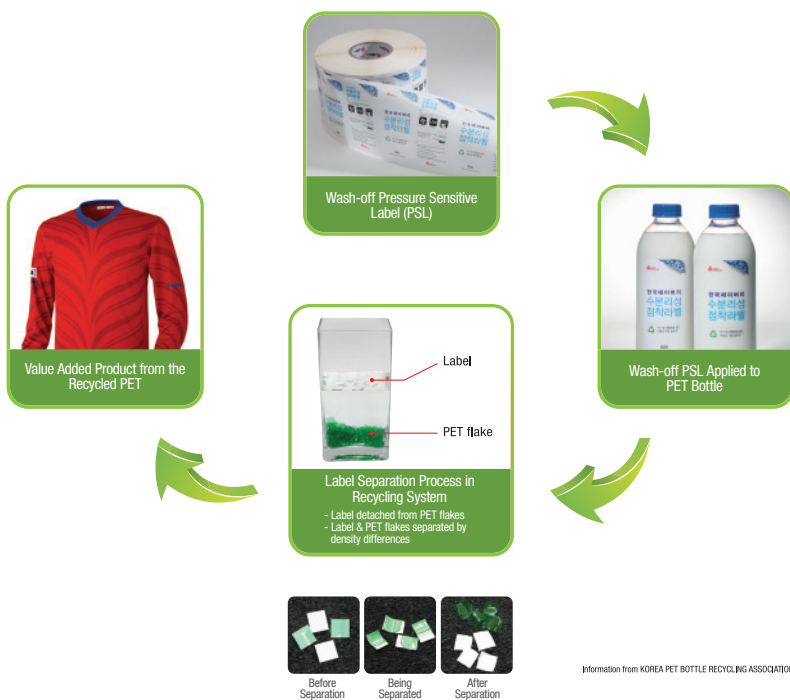
However, SDC initially chose to directly print the labels onto the PET containers, which presented a challenge to that commitment. The technique allowed for simple, clean branding, but it also was a hurdle in that it prevented the bottles from being fully recyclable. In keeping with the same progressive approach that has made it a quality leader in the Korean market, SDC sought a labeling alternative that would better support local recycling efforts. Pressure-sensitive labels were the answer.

The switch to a clear pressure-sensitive label facestock would enhance the recyclability by making the PET bottles 100-percent recyclable—if the labels could be cleanly removed after use.



That's when Avery Dennison Korea presented SDC with a best-in-class solution—its Fasson® 2.0 mil BOPP top-coated clear, wash-off label. The clear, bi-axially orientated polypropylene film, which was paired with a clear emulsion adhesive, is designed to provide a “no-label” look on clear and dark-colored rigid plastic containers. A key attribute of the adhesive is its ability to cleanly wash off, which preserves the recyclability of PET containers.

“We felt that Avery Dennison’s wash-off label would meet all of SDC’s requirements,” said Jason Jeong, marketing specialist for food and beverage label and packaging materials at Avery Dennison Korea. “But for a brand as strong as SDC, we can’t just meet a need, we have to exceed expectations.”



A Sustainable Performance

The first step in the process meant addressing technical issues. SDC was concerned about the label displacement on the bottle because of the differences between the label applicator and roll. Another challenge was the curl issue of the label at the core of the roll, as well as how environmental conditions might impact the performance of the adhesive. The challenges were overcome by forging a strong collaboration between Avery Dennison personnel and the SDC packaging and design team, as well as thorough testing.

The major test, however, was the performance of the wash-off label during removal. For this component, Avery Dennison worked with the Korea Testing & Research Institute (KTR). To gain certification from KTR, the labels need to float on water, separate from the PET flakes in a hot water tank without leaving adhesive residue behind.

It was important that the labels could be easily removed in the water and float with a specific gravity of less than 1.0 because extra components that are incompatible with the base resin impacts recyclability.

The Fasson wash-off labels performed flawlessly, meeting all standards in repeated testing. Best of all, the results meant SDC’s PET bottles could be easily recycled, strengthening the cooperative’s environmental responsibility promise.

“ We have to give careful consideration to conserving natural resources and ensuring our packaging is recyclable. Avery Dennison Korea’s wash-off solution eases our anxiety for environmental issue. ”

Label Helps Seal Brand Positioning



“At the onset of this project, we had definite concerns on whether a pressure-sensitive label could meet our needs,” Kang said. “The performance of the Fasson wash-off label in testing at KTR all those fears to rest. Thanks to the progressive approach we took on this project, SDC was able to deliver on all its core needs—quality, excellent appearance and design, and eco-friendly management.”

Once the testing was complete, the new packaging began rolling out to the market in June 2011. As of September 2011, SDC 1.0-litre fresh whole milk, fresh low fat milk and fresh nonfat milk products use the new pressure-sensitive label technology. The labels are letterpress printed in four-color and color-coded by product type. A corresponding cap color adds visual continuity for each package and easy recognition on the shelf. In addition to its fresh milk, SDC 1.0-litre strawberry, 1.0-litre tangerine yogurt and .5-litre Gold Kiwi yogurt all now carry the new wash-off labels as well. The “no-label” look was executed without having to make any design changes from the original labels.

The new wash-off label also kept with SDC’s commitment to protecting the environment, communicating directly to consumers via the placement of an eco-friendly logo on all its products. The logo, designed by SDC, informs consumers that they are receiving an eco-friendly product from a company working to preserve the environment. This contribution boosts the corporate reputation and reaffirms their status as a market-leading brand.

“The help from the marketing team of Avery Dennison Korea was essential,” Kang said. “They have not only provided a reasonable price and certification, but also great advice, communication and service. Ten million consumers drink Seoul Dairy Cooperative milk each day. Knowing that all of our PET containers are totally recyclable, thanks to our conversion to wash-off labels, is truly rewarding.”

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