

Customer Success Story

A NEW MARKET SEGMENT FOR TOPS FOODS – WITH PROVEN PACKAGING FROM ETIMEX



How sustainably companies establish themselves is not defined merely by environmentally conscious actions. Sustainability in the corporate strategy is also crucial for future viability – for example, through diversification, the expansion of the range of products and services in new directions. The company **Tops Foods**, a well-known manufacturer of high-quality ready meals, is taking precisely this approach – and for the further development of its product palette, it is once again obtaining active support from its longstanding packaging manufacturer **ETIMEX Primary Packaging**. This yields a new offering for the market. What this looks like: a complete success!

Tops Foods is known on the EU market for high-quality, nutritious ready meals that are also delicious. The Belgian company has already made a name for itself with these meals in the in-flight and retail market and is now conquering the healthcare market with a product innovation. In collaboration with two Belgian universities, Tops Foods has developed well-balanced ready meals with the optimal consistency for people experiencing swallowing difficulties due to illness. These are now offered under the brand *Nutrition for care*.

Established partnership for the success of new products

With ETIMEX Primary Packaging, the company has once again brought an important partner on board for the new product

development. This is because Tops Foods and ETIMEX are united by many years of successful collaboration.

Michael Tops, Managing Director of Tops Foods, explains:

» *Tops Foods values ETIMEX as longtime supplier. Their know-how and support in combination with a straightforward mentality and out of the box thinking from the development process up to the supply of our products is a value we truly appreciate.* «

This is because the Tops Foods ready meals have been supplied to date in CPET and PP meal trays from the packaging manufacturer from Dietenheim.

Yet the newly developed product also involved changed requirements. The new packaging is to be recyclable and also sterilizable with the microwave technology patented by Tops Foods and thus meet high standards with regard to shelf life in order to reliably enable delivery throughout Europe.

Mono PP as an efficient solution for all requirements

ETIMEX assumed multiple responsibilities in this project: development work in Research & Development, the complete cost calculation, as well as the design of the new ready meal trays.

It soon became clear that no new development was necessary. All of the requirements could be met with a solution that can be further developed on the basis of an existing ETIMEX product: a mono PP ready meal tray. The existing ready meal tray only needed to be made somewhat deeper and a new molded part for the Tops Foods trays was thus developed. The benefit: an economically extremely efficient development process with regard to time and budget.

A successful new product development with the best prospects for the future

Tops Foods was able to quickly advance the development of the new market and, with its unique product portfolio, establish an interested channel of distributors from pharmacies and pharmaceutical science. Continuously increasing sales figures confirm that Tops Foods identified a need and can meet it with an appropriate, high-quality product – promising prospects for the future.

