

Press Release, 6. March 2026

From PPWR to AI: What visitors can expect at the interpack Spotlight Forum 2026

Around 75 presentations, sessions and panel discussions: The Spotlight Forum at interpack 2026 brings together key debates on regulation, resource efficiency, automation and securing skilled labour. International experts from industry, politics, associations, start-ups and institutions will shape the programme from 7 to 13 May in Düsseldorf.

Under the motto '7 Days, 7 Topics', the interpack Spotlight Forum is entering its second round and positioning itself as the trade fair's central exchange platform. It is jointly organised by interpack, dfv Conference Group and PackReport.

7 May – PPWR: Opportunities and risks powered by REA

Between efficiency and responsibility: The first day of the trade fair will be dominated by the European Packaging Regulation PPWR. The practical implications for the use of recycled materials, reusable quotas, recycling rates and hygiene requirements will be discussed. Tânia Dias da Costa (pacocon Sustainability Concepts), for example, will highlight the steps required for regulatory implementation in companies. Frank Debusmann (REA Elektronik) will show how intelligent labelling systems can contribute to PPWR-compliant recycling, and Patricia Torres Mateus (OMRON Electronics) will talk about the role of automation in data collection, transparency and traceability along the production line. A panel discussion with industry representatives and the European Commission will focus on competitiveness, location issues and the impact of the regulation on companies, customers and consumers.

8 May – Resource efficiency powered by Aasted

On interpack Friday, there will be an extensive programme on resource efficiency. One example is the presentation by Pierre Michaels and Thomas Goetzl (TTE Strategy GmbH). They will show how



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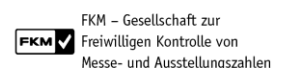
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organisational structures, cross-location benchmarking and data-based dialogue between plants can tap into unused capacities. Aasted, in turn, will highlight the optimisation of chocolate processes and the efficient use of resources. In a panel discussion, moderator Ton Knipscheer (European Co-Packers Association) will talk to industry representatives about how geopolitical uncertainties, tariffs and regulatory pressure are changing supply chains and what innovation impulses this is generating for the packaging industry.

9 May – Smart packaging powered by Domino

Digital identification, networked systems and data-based business models will be the focus on Saturday. Craig Stobie (Domino Germany), for example, will explain the potential of introducing 2D codes. Simon Hill and Ian Richards (TNA Northern Europe B.V.) will use practical examples to show how integrated packaging lines can increase efficiency while meeting safety, sustainability and quality requirements. Jürgen Lochner (Mosca) will demonstrate how machine manufacturers are developing digital services and data-based business models to provide strategic support to their customers. Dr Tobias Jochum (Fraunhofer IAP) will talk about digital product passports, brand protection and end-to-end traceability along the supply chain.



10 May – Intelligent systems and AI powered by Syntegon

On Sunday, the focus will be on automation and data-based production models. Thomas Peter and Stephan Schuele (Syntegon Technology) will show how digital innovation, end-to-end processes and contactless automation can pave the way to the 'Factory of the Future'. Marco Facchin (BIOMETiC srl) will demonstrate in his presentation how 3D computed tomography and explainable AI make food inspection more precise. Jan De Roeck (Esko-Graphics) will highlight how AI-supported workflows bring together regulatory requirements, sustainability goals and market launch cycles. Christian Keßler (SEW Eurodrive) outlines the transition to the software-defined factory. These contributions are examples of the broad programme on intelligent systems and AI on 10 May.



11 May – Circular economy powered by Metsä

Monday is dedicated to circular value creation models. Kaisa Munukka (Metsä Board) explains how data-based life cycle analyses, renewable raw materials and fossil-free energy sources can contribute to reducing the carbon footprint. Thomas Krämer (Wipotec) shows how product labelling and digital transparency enable traceability and thus support the circular economy. Based on strategic futurology, Gillian Garside Wright (Aura Consultants) outlines key trends up to 2050 and their influence on circularity, brand trust and innovation strategies. Carsten Bertram, Head of Packaging Sustainability at Henkel Consumer Brands, also brings the perspective of an international brand company to the stage. He will show how the requirements of the PPWR are being translated into concrete packaging strategies and which practical implementations are already taking place. Many other exciting presentations on this day will delve deeper into current trends and developments relating to the circular economy.

12 May – Innovative materials powered by tesa

On Tuesday, the question of how innovative materials and design approaches combine sustainability requirements and industrial performance will be explored. tesa SE, for example, will highlight the shift towards circular packaging solutions and show how recycling-friendly designs, mono-material concepts and advanced adhesive systems can contribute to resource efficiency. Rosa González (AIMPLAS) will present sustainable polymer formulations for packaging applications. Lynsey Maddison (ProAmpac) will discuss material solutions that are consistently geared towards 'design for recycling', including mono and fibre products for different markets. Finally, Dr Jörg Zacharias (KRONES AG) will focus on the vision of fibre-based beverage bottles and highlight the opportunities, limitations and industrialisation potential of bio-based, recyclable solutions.

13 May 2026 – Young Talents

The last day of interpack 2026 is dedicated entirely to young professionals. The Spotlight Forum is at the heart of the programme – both for young talents and for companies in the packaging industry that





want to become more attractive employers and recruit qualified employees.

In an open discussion round, industry associations such as the VDMA and the Industrial Association for Plastic Packaging (IK) will exchange ideas on effective measures for recruiting young talent. Topics will include cooperation with universities, new qualification profiles and strategies for retaining young talent in the long term. Representatives from leading companies will also discuss how they promote young talent, develop them in a targeted manner and prepare them for key positions. Formats such as 'NextGen Plastics', powered by IK, provide additional impetus and highlight prospects for the next generation in the packaging industry.

The complete programme for the Spotlight Forum is available in the programme database at <https://www.interpack.com/2540>. The content is continuously supplemented and updated.

About interpack

Every three years, interpack brings together the global processing and packaging industry in Düsseldorf for a week. The focus is on packaging materials and packaging, packaging machines and related process technology for the food, beverage, confectionery, bakery, pharmaceutical, cosmetics, non-food and industrial goods sectors. As the leading international trade fair, it attracts experts from all over the world to exchange ideas on the latest technologies and solutions and provides impetus for future topics in the industry. The next interpack will take place from 7 to 13 May 2026. Around 2,800 exhibitors from all over the world are expected to attend.

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