

Press release

Deliveries of flexible tubes increase by almost 2 percent in the first half of 2023

European tube market continues to grow

The European flexible tube market was stable in the first half of 2023. The European tube manufacturers association (etma) reports a growth in deliveries of almost 2 percent to a total volume of around 6.2 billion units.

The growth drivers were deliveries to the pharmaceutical market, which increased by a good 5 per cent. Demand from the cosmetics and dental care markets also developed positively with an increase of about 2 per cent each. Deliveries to the food sector stagnated, while demand for tubes for household and technical products declined significantly by around 20 per cent.

"Overall, we are very satisfied with the result in the first half of the year, as the volume-dominant sales markets in particular developed positively," emphasises etma President Mark Aegler.

Bottlenecks in high-quality recycled materials

Customers are increasingly pushing for the use of recycled materials in tubes as part of their sustainability concepts. However, there are bottlenecks in the availability of high-quality post-consumer recycling materials.

"For plastic tubes, the quantities required will certainly not be achievable through mechanical recycling of used plastic packaging alone. Chemical recycling can be an additional option for closing the gap, especially for complex composite structures. Appropriate political guidelines are needed here at the European level so that the necessary investments in recycling capacities can take place," Aegler knows.

Outlook for the rest of 2023 fraught with uncertainty

The situation on the raw material and energy markets has eased further. However, price levels remain above pre-Corona or pre-war levels. Labour costs and labour availability also remain extremely tight. In addition, the weak economy in Europe and continued high inflation are negatively affecting consumers' purchasing power and spending mood.

"The political and economic environment remains difficult. Despite a still high order backlog, some tube manufacturers are now recording a slight decline in incoming orders. Although there is currently no reason to complain, forecasts for the market development in the second half of the year are subject to considerable uncertainty," Aegler sums up.

Düsseldorf, 28 August 2023