



Press Release, 13 December 2023

## **SIG Foundation wins first SAVE FOOD Project competition and plans further investment**

***With “Cartons for Good” the SIG Foundation leverages SIG’s know-how to reduce worldwide food losses and prevailed in the Project Competition organised by the SAVE FOOD Initiative. The project stands for the use of innovation and technology to solve one of the most pressing global problems.***

The SAVE FOOD Initiative sponsors a member’s project with € 20,000. In line with their vision of curbing food waste and losses worldwide, the founding members have decided to make these funds available. The SAVE FOOD Project Competition promotes solutions that contribute to reducing the 1.3 billion tons of food being lost or wasted every year. Special emphasis is placed here on supporting the players in the processing, packaging and distribution stages of the supply chain; the aim is to help them fully exploit their potential for dealing with food sustainably and responsibly.

The first edition of the SAVE FOOD Project Competition saw the SIG Foundation win with “Cartons for Good”. The project uses SIG filling technology to help people in developing countries turn their food into meals locally and extend their shelf life. The winner will be announced as part of pacprocess MEA to be held jointly with Food Africa in Cairo from 12 to 14 December 2023. Both trade fairs form part of the interpack alliance portfolio.

“The SAVE FOOD Initiative actively supports the processing and packaging industries in their key role combatting food waste and losses. The SIG Foundation shows impressively just what the industry can deliver in this respect,” says Bernd Jablonowski, Executive Director at Messe Düsseldorf and one of the SAVE FOOD initiators. “Here innovative technologies meet with local initiatives. The holistic approach ranging from the support of local agricultural businesses and the supply of meals for school children to the recycling of packaging is precisely what we seek to promote with our SAVE FOOD Competition.” The expert jury comprises members from the FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization), the WPO (World Packaging Organisation) and interpack/Messe Düsseldorf.

### **SAVE FOOD Initiative**

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[www.save-food.org](http://www.save-food.org)

An initiative on food loss and waste reduction established by Messe Düsseldorf, interpack and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).



## Local support, global impact

For the “Cartons for Good” project the Swiss manufacturers of carton packaging and filling technology developed an innovative solution: a compact version of SIG’s industrial filling plants, which can also be transported to remote rural areas. Fruits and vegetables are processed into meals without any preservatives and filled into carton packaging. These then have a shelf life of up to nine months without refrigeration at ambient temperature. This proves a major benefit especially in regions where farmers often cannot sell their complete harvest and lack preservation possibilities.

## Closed-loop sustainability

Farmers are paid for their surplus vegetables thereby receiving extra income. The preserved packaged food is then distributed to local schools enabling them to offer underprivileged children a hot meal daily. After consumption the packaging is collected at a local recycling plant. This ensures the materials are reused and fed back into the production cycle – a sustainable and eco-friendly solution.

The pilot project in the Balia region in Bangladesh is already reaping success: in 2022 alone, some 20 tons of vegetables could be saved, 15 permanent jobs created, and 24,600 meals distributed to 180 school children. In addition, 3,000 cartons went to families and people hit by the severe flooding in Bangladesh.

## Commitment in Egypt

At present, the SIG Foundation is planning to also roll out the “Cartons for Good” project to Egypt. 50 percent of the fruit and vegetables grown here are wasted. With prize money of € 20,000 a comprehensive study aims to find out where this project can make the biggest impact. A project shall then be developed locally – together with the local implementation partner, the Natural Resources & Climate Protection Foundation (NRCP).

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### **About the SAVE FOOD Initiative**

The SAVE FOOD Initiative was founded in 2011 by Messe Düsseldorf and interpack, the world's largest trade fair for the packaging sector and the related processing industry, and has since cooperated with, for example, the FAO and the UN Environment programme. As a global alliance, it pursues UN SDG 12.3, fighting to reduce food loss and waste. After a hiatus due to COVID-19, interpack has been involved in new projects since 2022. The goal is to create public awareness about the issue and develop counterstrategies and even solutions in concert with the economic and political sphere, society and industry. A special focus centres on innovations from the packaging industry.

[www.save-food.de](http://www.save-food.de)

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