

walki

Walki Group Customer Magazine 2025

# Cover Stories

READY FOR  
TRANSFORMATION



**A fibre-based  
lid for Nestlé's  
Maggi noodles**

**New wrapping  
for beloved  
chocolate**

**Packaging  
with value**

RECYCLABLE PACKAGING FOR MUESLI • DESIGNING FOR SUSTAINABILITY





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INVESTING SYSTEMATICALLY  
Futureproofing solutions.



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A LAB FIT FOR INNOVATION  
For a smoother process.



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MOVING TO FINLAND  
New experiences.

Ready for Transformation

This summer marked Walki’s 95th anniversary. The company’s founders might have difficulties recognizing the Walki of today, which has evolved from a paper sack producing company into a big player in innovative materials. Yet they would surely recognize familiar elements from the 1930s, such as the will to adapt to changing circumstances and the determination to stay the course even when times are tough.

Agility and resilience are more important than ever in today’s world. Change happens at a breathtaking speed on the geopolitical stage, in legislation, and in consumer preferences.

The packaging industry is now undergoing one of its biggest transformations with the upcoming PPWR (Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation). As with all major changes, it has met some resistance. At Walki, however, we see it as a unique opportunity to reshape the packaging industry for the better. Our mission is to transform materials for a circular future, and the PPWR lies at the heart of this. For us, it means that every solution we provide must support our circular ambition: packaging should be recyclable or compostable.

In this magazine, we present customer cases ranging from a fibre-based lid for Nestlé’s MAGGI noodles to a mono-material pouch for Allos’ muesli.

While the future is increasingly fibre-based, plastics still have a vital role to play. For certain challenging contents, polymer-based solutions remain the best option. After all, food waste is still a major source of carbon emissions, making it crucial to safeguard shelf life and prevent food from spoiling. With polymer-based solutions, our focus is firmly on developing mono-materials that are easier to recycle.

As we continue to invest in new production capacities across several plants, we have kept this material-agnostic approach in mind. Recently, we invested in a state-of-the-art flexographic printing line, including a building extension in Säkylä, and new extruders in Ylöjärvi and Murcia for compostable films.

We have also added a new line in Duffel for construction facings and membranes, helping meet the growing demand for recyclable and fire-retardant solutions in the construction industry. With the right materials, we can support our customers not only in complying with regulation, but also in enhancing circularity and improving the energy efficiency of buildings.

Our efforts to advance sustainability have been recognized externally: our climate targets have now been officially validated by the SBTi, and our systematic commitment to environmental practices, labour and human rights, ethics, and sustainable procurement has earned us a Gold Medal from EcoVadis.

As packaging expert Marius Tent says on page 4, now is the time to rethink the value of packaging. The PPWR gives us a chance to see packaging not as a cost but as a value-enhancing feature. Those who are best prepared for this transformation will be the winners.

We are proud to be the partner that helps our customers transform their packaging solutions for a circular future. Together with our owners Oji, we are ready for the transformation and warmly invite all our stakeholders to join us on this fascinating journey!

Leif Frilund  
CEO



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A RECYCLABLE LID  
Nestlé relied on Walki for  
a fibre-based noodle cup lid.





# Rethinking the value of packaging

The PPWR is shaping the food industry. For packaging design expert Marius Tent, the shift is not a burden but rather an opportunity.

text Lena Barner-Rasmussen photo Marius Tent

The biggest transformation in the food industry in decades is at our doorstep. The PPWR requires all food packaging to be designed for recycling and recycled at scale by 2030 and onwards. What does it really mean for brand owners and how should they respond? **Marius Tent**, a long-standing veteran of the packaging industry and founder of both the European packaging consultancy Via Packaging UG and the insights platform 360PackMastery.com, has emerged as a leading advocate for circular packaging solutions. Having worked with major food brands and consortiums across Europe to make packaging that is sustainable, functional and user-friendly, he has long argued that packaging must do more than just meet compliance.

“Beyond functionality and sustainability, it is the enhancement of user experience that ultimately drives true value,” he says.

Recognized by peers as a passionate and pragmatic voice in the packaging industry, he is often described as a ‘packaging agnostic’ who does not favor one material over another. Instead, he sees value in each format depending on its function and context. The real challenge is avoiding complex, multi-material solutions.

“Packaging should be designed with simplicity at its core, both for collection and for sorting,” he explains. “This means selecting materials that are easily identified by sorting technologies and eliminating components that contaminate recycling streams or reduce the quality of recycled materials. The easier the separation, the more efficient and effective the recycling process.”

Ideally, this is taken into account already in the design phase. Take a package of pasta for instance. Consumers are used to seeing the pasta through a transparent film in otherwise fibre-based packaging.

“We all know what pasta looks like. Do we really need that window, making the package multi-material and more cumbersome to separate for recycling?”

According to Tent, successful food packaging design starts

with five essential criteria. It must be visually compelling and intuitive to use, technically and economically manufacturable, commercially sound, aligned with circularity and environmental goals and on brand, meaning a natural extension of the brand’s identity.

“Balancing all five is a complex equation where even a single misstep can determine whether a packaging solution succeeds or fails.”

## Major shift under way

Tent views the PPWR as the most transformative shift the packaging industry has seen in decades.

“It is not a burden, but rather a significant opportunity. With the right approach and a clear sense of urgency, it can drive real progress for forward-thinking brand owners. Packaging is not just a cost but a strategic asset that creates value on multiple levels. For users, for the planet, and for the business.”

He highlights three key benefits. First, being an early adopter builds strong credibility. Brands that lead the way are the ones that stand out and are remembered. Second, under Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), investing in eco-design often results in long-term cost savings. And third, well-designed packaging enhances the overall user experience, which in turn fosters greater consumer loyalty.”

Brand owners face two choices: comply with a minimum-effort mindset or embrace the change as a chance for real innovation.

“You can settle for just ticking the boxes or you can lead the change. The latter means shaping the systems that will define how we live sustainably in the future.”

But to make it happen requires system thinking and large-scale collaboration across the value chain and throughout the whole packaging eco-system.

“While innovation in materials and packaging often grabs the spotlight, equal attention must be given to advancing waste management technologies. Efficient sorting and recycling systems need to be accessible, scalable, and practical for all stakeholders. Achieving this requires a holistic, 360-degree approach to innovation; one that integrates design, infrastructure, and end-of-life solutions.”

The magnitude of the change PPWR is imposing excites Tent.

“The scale of change we’re seeing is unprecedented. This is the moment to lead: those who don’t seize the sustainability agenda risk falling behind.”

Packaging can provide business value if done right, says packaging expert Marius Tent.



“Packaging should be designed with simplicity at its core, both for collection and for sorting.”



Focusing on user experience can unlock new business opportunities.

## Elevating the user experience

The right packaging can elevate the user experience and unlock new business opportunities.

text Lena Barner-Rasmussen photo iStock

While brand owners need to take regulation like the European Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) and functional demands into account when opting for the right packaging, user experience is increasingly on the radar as brand owners are looking for ways to elevate their brand experience.

“Sustainability and recyclability are critical but there are many other levers at play when designing food packaging. Our role at Walki is to connect all these aspects and create a solution that is not only sustainable and functional but also clearly adds value in user experience for the consumer,” says **Annika Sundell**, Executive Vice President, Consumer Packaging and Innovation & Sustainability at Walki.

Fibre-based packaging offers clear advantages as it contributes to circularity through the well-established paper streams, helping brand owners meet PPWR requirements and supporting the decoupling from fossil-based materials. But the right packaging can also come with additional value to brand owners and consumers if it is aligned with today’s consumer trends, expectations and lifestyles.

“We need to ask ourselves how we can support our customers, the brand owners, by enhancing the user experience and how we can do that in a way that elevates the whole brand experience,” says Sundell.

This means considering not just what the packaging is made from, but also how and where it is used. One example is the rising trend of health and wellness where consumers are increasingly looking for products that support healthy lifestyles.

“Packaging can convey this in a subtle but influential way with fibre-based materials that feel natural and sustainable,” says Sundell.

“We need to ask ourselves how we can support brand owners by enhancing the user experience.”

## Creating new occasions

Another growing lever is experience, that is how the packaging feels, functions and fits into consumers’ lives. Is it easy to open, can it be resealed?

“These are all elements that contribute to the user’s interaction with the brand. Packaging is a powerful tool to shape perception and behaviour,” says Sundell.

Packaging can also help brand owners create entirely new product occasions. Take the breakfast classic in many Nordic kitchens: porridge. Once a staple on the breakfast table, it is dipping in popularity with younger generations. With clever packaging, this cereal product can be repositioned to fit younger people with on-the-go lifestyles.

“The breakfast porridge can be reintroduced as a cereal bar which is still healthy but quick to enjoy on the go, creating multiple new occasions for the product. Wrapping the bar in fibre-based packaging will also support the health and wellness trend,” says Sundell.

Combining different levers like sustainable thinking and functionality with user-centered design can help unlock business value. At the core lies a deep understanding of the end customer.

“This means that we need to increasingly gain insights in trends and behaviour of the end consumers.”



# Staying ahead with ongoing investment

Staying competitive in a fast-changing packaging world requires consistent investment to fuel innovation and meet emerging customer demands. Walki is leading the way to turn customers' needs into a competitive advantage.

text Lena Barner-Rasmussen photo Walki & Harri Nurminen

Strategic investments are essential to maintaining a competitive edge. A quick glance at last years' activities shows that Walki takes this seriously.

Last year, Walki completed a line in Steinfurt, Germany, to cater to the fast-growing demands of fibre-based materials. The company's biggest investment to date in Valkeakoski, Finland, has now been successfully up and running for more than two years. The two-stage upgrade to boost production of fibre-based packaging in Wrocław, Poland, is also running smoothly, bringing advanced technology for packaging solutions with ultra-high barrier properties.

The conscious commitment to upgrading production facilities is continuing. In the last 12 months, several investments have been decided on or finalised to make Walki even better equipped to help customers future-proof their business.

As the construction industry is rushing to comply with EU regulations regarding fire safety and low carbon emissions, the demand for flame-retardant and sustainable solutions is increasing.

To meet this growing demand for facings and membranes, Walki is implementing a long-term strategy to help customers in the construction industry comply with these new regulations. An important pillar is a new line at the plant in Duffel, Belgium, that will complement the production of facings and membranes, currently produced mainly in Valkeakoski, with more capacity.

"This investment brings us closer to our customers as we are the only one in continental Europe with this capacity.



Having similar lines in both Duffel and Valkeakoski helps us balance fluctuating demand," says **Olivier Lucas**, Business Line Manager Construction Facings.

The new investment will also strengthen Walki's sales overseas, which is increasingly coming from the Asia Pacific region as Walki is now part of Oji.



« The growing interest for compostable solutions motivated the investment in Ylöjärvi.

”

The conscious commitment to upgrading production facilities is continuing.

"Now, the team in Duffel can combine its expertise and skills with the team in Valkeakoski, further strengthening innovation capabilities," says Lucas.

## Printing capacity in Säkylä

With the adoption of the PPWR regulation, the food packaging industry is currently undergoing one of the biggest transitions in its history. The demand for high-quality, recyclable flexible solutions is growing fast, which is also reflected in the volumes at Walki Westpak. To maintain the exceptional flexographic print quality and top-notch service the company has always been known for, it was essential to invest in additional production capacity to safeguard responsiveness and flexibility.

"We have to be able to respond to fast-changing consumer trends and retail demands," says **Jonas Skuthälla**, Head of Sales Flexible Packaging.

"As our customers expect short lead times and the highest print quality, even for short-run campaigns, we need to make sure we not only have the latest technology but also the needed speed and capacity," he adds.

The investment entails two parts. The first is a state-of-the-art flexographic printing line, prepared for printing with both water-based and solvent-based inks. The new line enhances both sustainability and efficiency with printing that causes less waste and saves energy.

The second is a new post-processing hall, which will streamline workflow and material logistics while also improving workplace safety by streamlining traffic and separating operational zones more effectively.

"This investment reflects our commitment to offering recyclable and material-efficient packaging solutions that meet the evolving demands of the market, and is a critical step in securing our future competitiveness," says Skuthälla.

## Growing interest for compostable solutions

The interest for compostable products has grown due to the increasing pressure to reduce plastic pollution to meet EU's targets for a circular economy and waste reduction. To answer to this growing demand, Walki has made investments in more extruder capacity in its plants in Ylöjärvi, Finland, and in Murcia, Spain.

"The new extruder in Ylöjärvi is not only ensuring that we maintain the excellent quality of our compostable plastics solutions but also boosts our operational reliability," explains **Sune Kaptens**, Head of Production Cluster Converter, North.

Walki has also made sizable investments in Murcia, where two new blown film extruders, focused on making compostable film products, have been installed.

"Our new extruders have the latest technology, ensuring quality improvements in our compostable products and a greater capacity to meet the growing need for compostable solutions that we expect PPWR to drive," says **Juan Pedro Hernández**, General Manager at Walki Plasbel.

"This gives us new capabilities to continue the necessary transition in our film business towards more sustainable products which will help us guarantee product quality and minimize rejections during the extrusion phase," adds Plant Manager **Alejandro Martinez Sotomayor**.

Investments have also been made in the safety and comfort of employees.

"This will be the third year of a multi-year program to improve safety on the extruder winders. As heat is a challenge in our region, we have also invested in making our plant a bit cooler for the line operators," says Sotomayor. **CS**



# Tried and tested

In the quest of making recyclable packaging, a great deal of testing is needed. To speed up the process of finding out what works in real life, Walki has invested in its own packaging innovation and testing facilities.

text Lena Barner-Rasmussen photo Walki



“The internal lab helps us to be more prepared when we go and meet customers.”

The design-for-recycling criteria, a central part of the European Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR), sets specific requirements for packaging materials to be easily collected, sorted, and processed into high-quality recycled materials. Switching to fibre-based materials from plastics ditto is high up on the agenda for brand owners, as the fibre recycling stream works so well. Usually, a thin coating of polymers is still required to give the needed barrier properties. Finding the optimal mix of fibre and polymer coating is key: you want the packaging to have enough paper content to work in the recycling facilities while maintaining the packaging's functional properties. Finding this optimal level is a delicate feat. Even the smallest addition of polymer may result in a larger than expected reject ratio in the recycling infrastructure.

“What should work mathematically on the design table does not always translate into a real-world solution that works,” explains **Mats Källdström**, Innovation and Development Manager at Walki.

This is why it's important to test smaller batches to verify for recyclability before getting started on large-scale production.

## Swift evaluation

While there are external laboratories that do the testing, it adds more time to the process. To make the innovation process smoother, Walki made the decision to invest in its own recyclability evaluation laboratory.

“Now we can evaluate recyclability of innovations very swiftly and avoid costly surprises in the form of realising that what should have worked in theory is still rejected in the recycling facilities.”

The building of the lab was an extensive project that needed coordinating with external evaluation agencies as there is no standardized method for testing. There are, however, industry best practices like the protocol developed by the 4evergreen alliance, of which Walki is a member. As the alliance brings together the whole value chain to promote fibre-based packaging for easy recyclability, the choice fell on its Fibre-

based packaging recyclability evaluation protocol. It is a framework that helps assess and improve the recyclability of fibre-based packaging, providing scientific and harmonized testing methods to evaluate how well different packaging materials perform in real life recycling processes.

Källdström points out that the internal recyclability evaluation lab is not replacing external validation.

“This internal lab helps us to be more prepared when we go and meet customers which makes the innovation work smoother. External validation by an independent partner is still important to provide credible, third-party assurance that the packaging can be recycled in real-world conditions.”

The recyclability evaluation lab and the already existing cornerstone of Walki's innovation infrastructure, the roll-to-roll pilot coating equipment, has recently been complemented by a vertical pillow pouch line. This makes the innovation team even more equipped to test the actual runnability on packaging lines of new packaging material combinations prior to trials at customers.

“We can assess the optimum sealing parameters and sealing window and provide guidance to our customers,” explains Källdström.

Walki can also perform preliminary shelf-life tests.

“We can, for example, make a pouch, fill it with a specific product, and see how it behaves during a few weeks. In this way we can discern whether the material combination is the right one for a specific product.”

Packaging material transformation according to PPWR is now within reach, but it requires extensive testing and adjustments. In the Technical Competence Center in Pietarsaari, the Innovation team can handle every step: from coating, laminating, and printing to recyclability evaluation, runnability checks, and shelf-life testing.

The internal pillow pouch line speeds up the innovation work.

# Guiding stars for a more sustainable future

Walki has gained recognition for its systematic sustainability work by EcoVadis and SBTi. These acknowledgements not only show a strong commitment but also help guide the work forward.

text Lena Barner-Rasmussen photo Walki

Walki Group has reached a major milestone on its sustainability journey: the company's climate targets have now been officially validated by the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi). It is a globally recognised corporate climate action organisation that helps companies and financial institutions set ambitious greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction targets that take the world towards limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees.

Walki has always worked systematically with sustainability, and frameworks like SBTi are very useful in structuring and aligning the work across teams and with external partners.

The SBTi works as a compass for meaningful progress, says **Pauliina Saari**.

As the SBTi has become the de facto global standard for setting credible, science-based climate targets in the corporate world, it is something many customers appreciate and even demand.

But for Walki, it's also part of something much bigger.

“Having our targets validated by the SBTi is not just about compliance,” says **Pauliina Saari**, Sustainability Director at Walki. “It's a compass that guides us as we work to future-proof our business and take meaningful steps towards a more sustainable world. Sustainability has long been at the core of our strategy and of how we operate. Now, SBTi gives us the framework to push further in a way that is measurable.”

The validation strengthens Walki's focus on five key areas of impact: designing more sustainable products, advancing recyclability and circularity, improving operational efficiency, developing smarter logistics, and working closely with partners across the value chain. Each of these areas contribute to Walki's broader ambition to lead the transition towards a circular and low-carbon world.

## Recognized by EcoVadis

Walki has consistently worked on making its plants more energy efficient, and takes a continuous improvement approach to increasing the use of low-emission energy. But the biggest impact is made within raw material sourcing, as these by far stand for the largest amount of carbon emissions. Walki is constantly trying to find ways to lower these emissions by carefully selecting raw materials. By finding a more sustainable source of aluminium, Walki has, for instance, succeeded in substantially lowering the carbon footprints of its Walki\*WICO, facings.

Walki's systematic commitment to sustainability has also been recognised by EcoVadis, which recently awarded Walki the Gold Medal. EcoVadis is a global organisation that provides sustainability ratings and assessments for companies. The rating places Walki among the top 5% of over 130,000 companies assessed globally for environmental practices, labour and human rights, ethics, and sustainable procurement.

“It's a meaningful signal that our efforts are not only ambitious but also measurable and transparent,” says Saari.

Still, accolades are not the final goal. “Recognitions like SBTi and EcoVadis matter because it enables us to build trust and accelerate action. But what truly matters is how these recognitions empower us to deepen collaboration across the value chain, drive shared innovation efforts, and accelerate the transition towards circularity and a low carbon future.”



# Reinventing the noodle lid

Instant noodles save the day when things get hectic. Nestlé teamed up with Walki when the time came to switch to a sustainable lid.

text Lena Barner-Rasmussen photo Muhammad Shayan

Deeply woven into culinary traditions, noodles are the staple of Asian food. The instant version, served in a single cup, is particularly popular as it is quick to prepare and easily adaptable to fit diverse local tastes. The long shelf life and ease of use make it the perfect quick lunch or dinner for busy lifestyles. According to World Instant Noodles Association, a global trade organization, over one billion instant noodle servings were consumed in Malaysia alone in 2024.

Typically, the lid in this type of packaging has been based on aluminium as it offers efficient barrier properties.

“The noodles need an airtight seal and strong barrier protection against moisture and contaminants,” says **William Wong**, Sales Manager for Walki in Malaysia.

But the use of aluminium comes with a host of other challenges, both from functional and sustainability points of view.

Aluminium has a very high carbon footprint and tends to tear easily when removed from the cup. This is why many brand owners have made the switch to a plastic-based option. But although the plastics lid has the needed barrier properties, it does give rise to plastics waste that may eventually end up in nature.

Although there currently is no regulation like the PPWR (Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation) in place in Asia, Nestlé wanted, in line with its broader sustainability goals, to find a way to replace the plastics lid of its popular MAGGI noodles with a paper-based option that could be easily recyclable in the paper stream.

“Particularly our commitment to reducing virgin plastic usage by one-third by 2025 has been an important driver.

“In this very competitive noodle category, packaging is a key lever for standing out.”

Finding a more sustainable lid for the MAGGI Portable Cup is part of a multi-pronged initiative to reduce plastic components in packaging like cups and lids,” says **Ivy Tan Link Cheh**, Executive of Food business in Nestlé.

## Packaging as a branding touchpoint

Sustainable packaging is also an important way for brand owners to signal its commitment to sustainability.

“Packaging is often the first, and sometimes only, touchpoint consumers have with a product. For MAGGI, the shift to paper lids and cups was not just a functional change but a deliberate brand signal aligned with our broader environmental commitments,” says Ivy Tan.

Consumers are increasingly expecting brands to take visible and meaningful action on sustainability, and by choosing paper lids Nestlé wanted to ‘walk the talk’ on sustainability.

“According to Packaging Research on the MAGGI noodles done this year, packaging that clearly communicates environmental benefits such as recyclability and the reduced use of plastics can enhance brand perception and influence purchase decision,” says Ivy Tan.

The Asian market for instant noodles is highly fragmented with hundreds of brands, both local and international, competing for consumers’ attention.

“In this very competitive noodle category, packaging is a key lever for standing out,” explains Ivy Tan, adding that market research has revealed consumers to associate MAGGI with emotional benefits like family connection and reliability. “These values are enhanced by our sustainable packaging.”

## Smooth collaboration

Although the cooperation with Walki and Nestlé in Asia is fairly new, the idea of making a fibre-based lid for the MAGGI noodles has been brewing for several years. Nestlé started looking for an alternative to its aluminium lid several years ago and engaged in conversations with Wong. He then sent some cups to Walki’s technical team in Valkeakoski, Finland, where **Henri Torkkola**, Technical Sales and R&D Manager, and his colleagues started to investigate different solutions for a paper-based lid.

The demands set on the lid were rigid. The MAGGI noodle is a high-quality product that needs to maintain its properties despite a long-shelf life. The new paper-based lid had to offer the same functional features as aluminium or plastic options.

“We had to balance the demands on functionality with sustainability and managed to significantly reduce the carbon footprint with the switch to a fibre-based lid. We are continuously developing the solution with the focus on recyclability,” explains Torkkola.

As the packaging holds a great deal of brand value, it also needed to be aesthetically appealing and hence have excellent printing properties.

The result is a sustainable, visually attractive lid with great sealing properties.

## Small change, big difference

Now that the cup has been on the market, currently sold in Malaysia and Singapore, everybody is happy with the result.

International brand owners like Nestlé play an important role in introducing sustainable practices to the Asian market, especially in regions where regulations on sustainable packaging are still emerging.

“Our collaboration with packaging innovators like Walki ensures that our sustainability story is backed by science, safety, and smart design. Packaging can enhance brand equity not just with consumers, but also with retails and supply chain partners,” explains Ivy Tan.

“Together, we’re proving that even small changes, like a lid, can make a big difference.”

Instant noodles can be adapted to fit local tastes.





# Back to the soil

Biowaste has the potential to close the loop in food production, but only if it is properly sorted and recycled. What would it take to make progress happen?

text Lena Barner-Rasmussen photo Walki



“We tend to focus too much on how to sort and not why it is important.”

If the organic waste from households and gardens is correctly sorted and processed, this biowaste can be transformed into valuable resources like organic fertilisers which return essential nutrients like nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium back into the soil. This would reduce the need for synthetic fertilisers and support the production of biogas, contributing to a more circular and resource-efficient system.

The European Union has set ambitious targets for its circular economy, aiming to achieve a 65% municipal waste recycling rate by 2035 and limit landfill disposal to 10% by the same year. For this reason, a mandatory separate collection was put in place in 2024, but it has not yet led to a significant increase in biowaste recycling rates. The EU average bio-waste recycling rate hovers around 45%. In Finland, it's slightly lower, around 40%. To shed more light on where we stand and what we need to do to move things forward, Bioska, part of Walki Group, conducted two studies: a large stakeholder survey to find systemic issues and a consumer report to uncover their concerns.

According to the study on consumer behaviour, based on over 1000 respondents, 89% of Finns say they sort their biowaste, up from 86% in 2019. The reasons for sorting biowaste vary with over 54% saying that they see it as a natural part of their everyday lives, while over 30% say they only do it because it is now required by law.

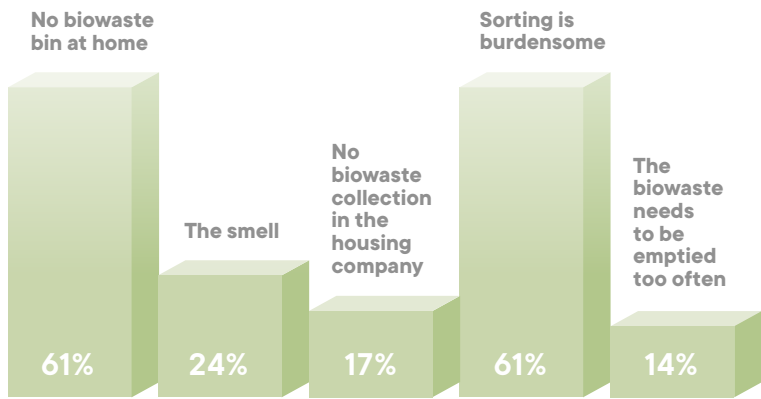
“Sorting biowaste is already a habit for many, but the force of law remains an important driver. This shows that we are on the right track, but more education and practical solu-

tions are needed to make sorting as effortless as possible for everyone,” says **Annika Sundell**, Head of Innovation and Sustainability at Walki Group.

According to the study, the biggest obstacle to biowaste sorting is the lack of a biowaste bin at home. This tends to be the case in smaller households and in areas where there is no municipal biowaste collection available. Without the proper infrastructure, residents often feel unable or unmotivated to separate their organic waste. Some respondents find

**Bioska bags provide a convenient way for households to collect biowaste.**

## The reasons why Finns don't sort biowaste



## Bioska bags

Walki's Bioska line features industrial and home compostable materials that provides a durable compost bag certified under EN 13432, with proven rapid biodegradation within six months. Available in kitchen-friendly sizes, they provide a convenient way for households to collect biowaste.

the process of sorting biowaste too burdensome in itself: finding the space for an additional bin, remembering to separate food waste and then cleaning the bin. Respondents were also deterred by the inconvenience of having to empty the biowaste bin frequently, as they find it messy. The unpleasant odours and the risk of attracting insects were also cited as reasons to not sort biowaste.

Bioska's stakeholder study also highlighted the key improvements needed in the broader bio-waste ecosystem; mainly stronger collaboration, better infrastructure, and smarter regulation. And most importantly, better communication.

“We tend to focus too much on how to sort and not why it is important,” says Sundell.

So next time you're peeling carrots or clearing your plate, remember: that little bag of scraps is part of a much bigger story. Food scraps not only heat our homes and power our houses, they also nourish our fields. **CS**

# Paper wrapping for a beloved chocolate bar

Walki Westpak tested whether cold seal frame lacquer could work for a paper-flowpack for chocolate. It did, which is good news. Now the packing for Panda Milk Chocolate can be recycled as paper.

text Lena Barner-Rasmussen photo Walki

Few things melt our hearts like chocolate, the perfect blend of indulgent flavour and silky texture. But to brand owners who need to find the optimal packaging that protects this beloved indulgence while also minding sustainability demands, chocolate also comes with challenges.

The culprit is found in the very ingredient that makes the chocolate, that is the cocoa butter. It is sensitive to temperature changes, as these can lead to melting and fat bloom. There is also the risk of the grease seeping into the packaging. For these reasons, you need grease-resistant barriers, which is why brand owners usually opt for a plastic-based or aluminium wrapping because they come with strong barrier properties. But, as brand owners are seeking ways to enhance recyclability, fibre-based packaging has come up as an interesting alternative.

Orkla Suomi, belonging to the Norwegian conglomerate Orkla, set out to explore whether a paper wrapping could be an option for replacing the PP plastics wrappers for its beloved Panda Milk chocolate. Recyclable paper packaging is in line with the company's mission of making everyday life better with local brands that bring joy and make sustainable choices easier.

The choice of paper fell on UPM Specialty Paper's Asendo™ Pro barrier paper. Walki Westpak did the printing of the wrapper and also coated the cold seal frame to allow the paper package to be sealed on Orkla Suomi's existing flowpack packaging machines that normally pack products in plastics.

This was Walki's first development with cold seal lacquer paper packaging. Usually, cold seal is applied on plastic films because of its smooth, non-porous surface.

“Finding a paper-based packaging solution for chocolate is quite challenging due to the grease. This recyclable paper packaging with cold seal lacquer could be a viable option” explains **Arto Musakka**, Sales Manager at Walki Westpak.

Orkla Suomi is currently piloting the fiber-based solution. **CS**

“This was Walki's first development with cold seal lacquer paper packaging.”

Walki helped develop a fibre-based option for the beloved Panda chocolate.





# What's up in Pietarsaari?

As Walki became part of Oji corporation in 2023, the company has welcomed several new colleagues to Finland. Yusei Kawanami and Shohei Sanada are part of Walki's innovation team and have settled with their families in Pietarsaari.

text Lena Barner-Rasmussen photo Bildbolaget Du&Vi / Karolina Isaksson

## Meet Yusei Kawanami

**What are your main responsibilities at Walki?**

My primary responsibility as Development Manager is acting as the project manager for the barrier paper development project where we test different combinations of materials to find the optimal barriers. This means collaborating closely with our R&D team to overcome development challenges and move the project forward. In addition to that, I also explore new technologies and materials for future projects, especially those that may offer synergies with our parent company, Oji.

**Can you tell us about your background and previous experience?**

I studied biochemistry at the Tohoku University in Japan. After joining Oji, I gained experience across a range of development areas such as papermaking, coating, pulp, and resin. Each of these fields gave me several years of hands-on experience and helped shape my approach to innovation and problem-solving. Coming to Finland was a new chapter, both professionally and personally.

**Where do you live and how do you like to spend your free time?**

I live in Pietarsaari with my wife and daughter. I find it to be a very quiet and convenient town because everything you need is within easy reach. It's a wonderful place to enjoy a relaxed lifestyle, and I feel grateful that my family and I could move here when my daughter was young so that we can raise her here. In my free time, I enjoy traveling with my family, cooking, playing outdoors with my daughter, reading, and enjoying the sauna. Last winter, we all took up ice skating. We are also interested in tennis.

**How has your experience been working for Walki and living in Finland?**

Working at Walki has been a very positive experience. One thing that stands out is the closeness between customer needs and R&D, which is both motivating and energising as a developer. I've been exposed to different technical approaches and systems that are quite distinct from what I was used to in Japan. It's been a transformative experience that has challenged and broadened my way of thinking. Culturally, I see some similarities between Japan and Finland, such as the appreciation of nature and a more introverted social style. However, Japan feels much busier, partly due to the higher population density and competitiveness in daily life. The rush hour commute is very much calmer here! Finland offers a more balanced pace that I deeply appreciate.

Everyone in Walki is highly cooperative and bring a deep level of specialised knowledge.

Yusei Kawanami and Shohei Sanada feel right at home in Finland.



of specialised knowledge. It's a great learning environment, and I discover something new every day. With the rapid changes in the packaging industry, it feels especially meaningful to use my experience to develop more circular solutions that contribute to sustainable societies in collaboration with Oji Group.

**How has life in Pietarsaari been for you and your family?**

There are many cultural similarities between Finland and Japan, such as mutual respect and politeness. But Finland has a noticeably more relaxed atmosphere, especially with customs like 'kahvitauko' (informal coffee breaks). I find the work-life balance here to be very good, and I've been especially struck by how warm and friendly my colleagues have been. As for Pietarsaari, it's a beautiful town surrounded by nature, and a very comfortable and international place. I'm very pleased and grateful for the opportunities to connect with the local community through my children's school and football clubs, and local language classes, where we have received a warm welcome.

**What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

In my spare time, I like to play football and go cycling with my children. I've also become fascinated by the Finnish sauna culture, and have even tried ice bathing! I enjoy exploring Finnish food traditions too. 'Laskiaispulla' (a bun stuffed with whipped cream and jam or a sweet almond paste) and 'munkki with sima' (a donut that is enjoyed with a mead-like lemonade during First of May) are among my favourites.

## Meet Shohei Sanada

**What is your title and what are your responsibilities?**

As Development Manager, my main responsibility is to evaluate the recyclability of paper products, both existing ones and those under development. This involves understanding how different materials interact, identifying ways to improve them, and helping make our products even more sustainable. I also support collaboration with the Oji Group to explore new synergies across the wider organization.

**Can you tell us about your background?**

I studied organic chemistry in graduate school, Nagasaki University, and began my career at Oji's R&D centre and plant, where I worked on developing new pulp products. Over time, I built experience in paper making and paper processing and sales support, particularly in the packaging sector. These specialised and broad experiences have provided a foundation for creating innovation from new perspectives.

**What has your experience at Walki been like?**

I'm very happy working here. The R&D team and everyone in the company are highly cooperative and bring a deep level





# A smooth switch

Allos wanted to replace its multimaterial muesli pouch with a recyclable alternative. Walki responded with a monomaterial solution that runs smoothly on Allos' existing production lines.

text Lena Barner-Rasmussen photo Allos

If you want an energetic start to your day, what better way to start it with than a hearty portion of muesli? Even better if you make it organic, such as Allos' popular fruit muesli, sold on the German market. A solid packaging is needed to keep the muesli fresh and guarantee a long shelf time. Up until now, the material chosen has been a triplex laminate which is notoriously difficult to recycle. So Allos wanted to find a more sustainable mono-material option and turned to its long-standing supplier Walki Folian.

There were several challenges to be solved. One was to find a mono-material that could run smoothly on all Allos' existing production lines which vary in terms of age and suppliers.

"The smooth processability of the new material had to be guaranteed on all lines without negatively influencing the output," explains **Carina Jagla**, Packaging Procurement at Allos.

The material also had to be heat-resistant, also on the outside layers. Another challenge was that the packaging needed to comply with different recycling systems across Europe. And then there were aesthetic aspects to consider.

"The outer material also had to be matte as the previous pouch to not lose the familiar look and feel," explains Jagla.

To meet these demands, numerous machine and storage tests were conducted to rule out any deviations.

"After a period of about 12 months, we finally landed on the right solution," says **Emanuel Bohl**, Sales Manager at Walki Folian.

## Only minor adaptations

The team chose a PE duplex-laminate due to its property of behaving completely differently during filling compared to all other materials.

"The PE-laminate is very easy to pull and stretch. And it is also more sensitive to heat than other composites, which meant that the temperatures had to be adjusted during sealing," explains Jagla.

The muesli pouch is constructed as a quadro seal pouch, offering good stability and a premium look. To keep the shape with four corners, minor machine adaptations were needed to produce the same bag with the new duplex film.


Another important condition for Allos was to continue the use of water-based inks as solvent ones give rise to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.


## Smooth collaboration

Allos belongs to Ecotone, a major European organic food company where sustainability is a core value. That is why the group's objective is to switch to recyclable materials by 2025 rather than 2030, as PPWR requires.

"We want to strengthen our pioneering role in the market and resonate with our eco-conscious customer base," says Jagla, adding that in this way Allos was also able to meet the demands of their retail partners.

She describes the collaboration with Walki as smooth.

"We were able to proactively develop a solution that was tailored to our needs. We have taken a big step forward towards sustainability for our packaging and look forward to exciting new projects with Walki in the future." 

 The big variety of Allos' organic mueslis comes in recyclable packaging.

“The smooth processability of the new material had to be guaranteed on all lines without negatively influencing the output.”

## Solving a complex challenge

Jimmy Anderberg recently joined Walki, bringing with him a wealth of experience from the packaging industry.

text Lena Barner-Rasmussen photo Walki

With more than three decades of experience, Jimmy Anderberg can be seen as a real veteran in the food packaging industry. During his career, he has constantly been reshaping the food packaging industry by bridging the gap between innovation and execution with a rare blend of factory-floor insight and technical expertise. In January 2025, he joined Walki as Technical Service & Development Manager for Consumer Packaging. Here he gets to combine his experience from working with big brand owners, deep technical knowledge and his extensive network with the machine providers to help find new circular food packaging solutions.

## Can you walk us through your interesting career journey?

I've studied food technology production and upon graduation, I got the opportunity to work with packaging development at Felix, a well-known food brand (now part of Orkla Group). I stayed there for over 20 years, during which I advanced to concept development, where I worked very closely with customers to address the challenges to their specific packaging problems and learnt all the ins and outs of the food packaging. I then switched to another big food brand, Findus, where it was all about optimising the production lines. I worked very closely with the customers in finding the right technical solutions and we did a lot of different prototypes. Since then, the focus shifted to understanding how different materials work on the production lines.

## You are now working at Walki. What makes your role special?


At Walki, I get to combine my technical knowledge with development work in a company that's serious about circular solutions. I work closely with all our plants in developing mono-materials

and fibre-based solutions that are recyclable and still meet all the functional demands of modern food packaging. What I love is that I'm encouraged to contribute across the whole process: testing, developing, educating, and connecting dots between departments and partners. I also really like the culture at Walki because it is open and warm.

## Food packaging today needs to be both sustainable and functional. How do you ensure you meet all the requirements?

By staying close to the production floor. I've never been someone who just sits at a desk, because I believe in troubleshooting hands-on and watching the machines run. During my career, I have built an extensive network with packaging machine providers and my relationships span over 30 years. It's an invaluable resource especially when you make completely new solutions because whatever the innovation, if it doesn't work on the line, it will not serve the brand owners. You always have to ask: how will this solution behave on the machines? These are the conversations I constantly have with the machine manufacturers. And I always look at the full production system, not just one point. You can't test a material in isolation, it's about the whole flow.

## What kind of future do you envision for food packaging?

The future is circular, and this is one of the reasons I am happy to work for Walki. The strategy is a perfect fit for me. We need to design for better recyclability and use less materials which requires deep collaboration. True progress comes when you involve everyone from material suppliers, converters, machine manufacturers, and brand owners. When we all sit down early in the process, we can together translate needs and helping turn good ideas into solutions that run well on the production lines. 

“At Walki, I get to combine my technical knowledge with development work in a company that's serious about circular solutions.”


 Jimmy Anderberg's experience in the packaging industry spans three decades.






Walki is an international manufacturer of sustainable packaging and engineered materials. With nearly a century of experience, we develop innovative, resource-efficient solutions that help our customers reduce their environmental footprint, without compromising on quality or performance.







Part of the  
OJI Group



Operating in  
11 countries



92% of energy  
from renewable or  
non-fossil sources



82% of packaging  
portfolio is recyclable,  
compostable or designed  
for recycling



We’re not just a supplier, we’re your strategic partner in sustainability.

At Walki, our purpose is to transform materials towards a circular and sustainable future. We are committed to replacing non-recyclable materials with recyclable, compostable and renewable alternatives that support long-term environmental goals. Through continuous innovation and cutting-edge technologies, we aim to reduce waste and improve energy efficiency across production and supply chains. In doing so, we empower our customers to meet their sustainability and regulatory targets with high-performance, future-ready material solutions.

We bring value to our customers in three distinctive areas:



Consumer Packaging

Packaging that protects products, promotes brands and minimises environmental impact.



Packaging Materials

Durable and recyclable materials for industrial and specialty packaging needs.



Engineered Materials

Advanced technical materials for construction, insulation and other demanding applications.

Walki supports a wide range of clients looking to meet both functional and sustainability targets.



Retailers & consumer brands



Packaging converters



Industrial & logistics sectors



Construction & insulation companies



Specialty & technical industries



What makes Walki different?

Walki goes beyond materials to deliver solutions tailored to specific needs. Through close collaboration with customers, the company ensures speed, flexibility and precision in every project. With innovation at its core, Walki leads in recycled materials, fibre-based packaging and advanced barrier technologies that support plastic reduction through recyclable and bio-based alternatives.

Let’s build a sustainable future together.



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The background of the entire page is a photograph. It shows a person's hand, palm up, holding a butterfly. The butterfly has orange and black wings with white spots. The background of the photo is a soft, hazy sunset or sunrise sky with warm orange and yellow tones at the top and a blue gradient at the bottom.

walki

# Explore our 2024 Sustainability Report



At Walki, we are committed to accelerating the shift towards a circular and resource-efficient future. Explore our 2024 CSR report online to see how we turn ambition into action.

[www.walki.com/sustainability.html](http://www.walki.com/sustainability.html)