

Milliken presents

Pearson Serves Up New Fresh Ramen Grab 'N Go Meal Kit Concept for Busy, Health-conscious Consumers

Clear, recyclable plastic packaging showcases freshness, quality and purity of ingredients to enhance shelf appeal

Everybody loves ramen! And the global market for these tasty and convenient instant noodles continues to expand. But as today's ultra-busy consumers increasingly focus on healthier and fresher foods, traditional ramen products fall short. That is why Pearson Foods Corporation has applied its "Passion for Fresh" to create a sophisticated new convenience meal concept. The new Fresh Ramen line features grab 'n go bowls filled with nutritious, fresh-cut vegetables and fresh ramen noodles with a variety of savory broth seasonings. Only one other element was needed to fully support the new brand: a distinctive, upscale and sustainable package. Something unique that would raise the bar on shelf appeal.

"To literally show consumers how much better Fresh Ramen is than center-of-store brands, we needed a different kind of packaging than the usual paper-board and opaque foam," said Ruta Pearson, Vice President, Sales & Marketing, Pearson Foods Corporation. "We wanted a stylish, crystal-clear ramen bowl to showcase our fresh ingredients and give customers confidence in the quality and freshness. At the same time, the bowl had to be microwavable, heat resistant for fast and easy preparation, and recyclable. Overall, the packaging and design had to be eye-catching, unique and provide a variety of merchandizing options for our retail produce and deli customers. This is definitely NOT YOUR COLLEGE RAMEN!"

Pearson brought in Display Pack, a leading food packaging manufacturer, to design the custom ramen bowl and to recommend the material to be used. Display Pack identified long-time partner Milliken & Company and its NX™ UltraClear polypropylene (PP) for the development of the bowl.

NX™ UltraClear PP was the ideal material for the new Fresh Ramen grab 'n go bowl. It's engineered to handle hot-fill applications and microwaving, which gives consumers the choice of adding very hot water to the ingredients or combining them with room-temperature water and then heating the mixture in the microwave. The versatile Milliken material is also well suited for low-temperature use,



New Fresh Ramen bowl from Pearson Foods Corporation, Made by Display Pack with Milliken's NX™ UltraClear polypropylene (PP)

which is important because Fresh Ramen products are kept refrigerated.

An added benefit is that the NX UltraClear polypropylene offers better environmental performance than other plastics used in single-use packaging. It is easily recycled, which is important to the environmentally minded, especially young adults who place a high value on sustainable product packaging.

Whimsical, Yet Practical

Following material selection, Display Pack's packaging engineering team worked on the bowl design. To convey the aesthetics of traditional ceramic ramen bowls, they incorporated a pedestal and decorated the sidewalls with graceful, wavy lines reminiscent of the noodles themselves.

"We aimed to design a beautiful, functional container with a hint of playfulness - the noodle motif - to deliver a unique brand experience during the whole process of choosing, preparing and enjoying the Fresh Ramen products," said Hope Ramseyer, marketing manager, Display Pack. "The crystal-clear, custom packaging and Pearson's fresh ingredients elevate ramen from a quick meal to an occasion."

The team also had practical goals in mind. One was

designing the bowls so they could be nested and stacked tightly together to expedite shipping, avoid damage and minimize storage requirements. Another was meeting Pearson's tight deadline for its Fresh Ramen launch in supermarkets, convenience stores and universities. Thanks to Display Pack's in-house design, tooling and manufacturing capabilities, and productive collaboration with Milliken on the material, the tooling for the ramen bowl went from concept to reality in just five weeks.

"The NX UltraClear PP Fresh Ramen package stands out for its exceptional clarity and unique design, which boost shelf appeal and gives discerning consumers a complete look at the healthy, fresh contents inside," said Deidre Sandrock, global product line manager, Milliken. "Then, because the PP material tolerates both hot and cold temperature variations, it's a simple trip from the fridge to the microwave for a hot, easy, fast, nutritious meal. New Fresh Ramen is essentially nutrition, cost-effectiveness and convenience in one great-looking package."

Available Soon

Pearson's Fresh Ramen line comprises five varieties: Sesame, Ginger, Miso, Pork and Chicken. The products will be available in stores in the United States beginning late summer 2019.



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