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Valved packaging proves successful in foodservice

Spanish meat shop is first to use a tray and film combination with valve to package its new line of meat recipes, for cooking in a conventional steam oven.

By Anne Marie Mohan, Senior Editor, Packaging World

Carns Fuster, a carnicería, or meat shop in Valencia, Spain, has become the first user of the patented Micvac process for in-pack cooking and pasteurization for foodservice applications. Carns Fuster has launched 25 new recipes of traditional Spanish meals, all produced in their own kitchen. The ingredients are packed in a tray, sealed with a film with a valve on top, and then cooked and pasteurized in conventional steam ovens. According to the company, the products have been very successful in its local shop.

“We have gotten a very positive response on the quality of the meals from our customers,” says José Fuster, Managing Director of the company. “This has allowed us to plan further. Due to the long shelf life, 30 days at eight degrees centigrade, we are already thinking of expanding and selling through other sales channels. This was not an option for us before and means that we can increase our sales using the same equipment, but in a more efficient way.”

Until now, Micvac's process has been used for retail products and has employed microwave pasteurization. Micvac Food Service is a new area for the company, providing a way for foodservice operators to cook in commercial kitchens, for catering, and in restaurants. The reclosable Micvac valve has proven very efficient in steam ovens used in large-scale kitchens. So far, the concept has been tested mainly in Spain and Sweden and has resulted in new ways of producing and managing logistics for foodservice companies.

Says Begoña Soliva, who has created the recipes for Carns Fuster's new line, “With this technique, I realized I had the possibility to do something different. We always use high-quality ingredients, and now it is easy to keep the taste and flavor throughout the cooking process. It actually allows me to use less salt and spices.”

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