



## Press Information

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Unilever expands its range of soups in France and Belgium

### **Knorr ligne – indulgence for the figure-conscious: With new recipes in combibloc*Compact***

**July 2006.** Taking care of your figure by watching your diet is turning into a global preoccupation. Eating foods that are nutritious and low in calories, while at the same time being flavoursome and pleasurable to eat, has become part of the modern attitude to wellbeing and lifestyle. Sophisticated soup creations with a vegetable base, providing extra hydration, fibre and a host of vitamins, make tasty, nutritious eating easy. With this in mind, Unilever is expanding its range of ready-to-eat soups.

The 'Knorr Ligne' range appeals particularly to the figure-conscious consumer, principally women aiming for trim physiques. The new soups are nutritionally balanced in composition, and are perfect for anyone who appreciates spicy and well-seasoned fare. 'Knorr Ligne' soups are available in France in Carrot & Leek, Crème of Vegetable, Tomato & Celery, Fish & Vegetable and Mediterranean Vegetable flavours. From September, the Pumpkin & Carrot variety will be offered in Belgium as well.

The soups are available in the combibloc*Compact* 500 ml aseptic carton package from SIG Combibloc. At Unilever, the decision to work with SIG Combibloc was an easy one – the two companies have been working together with great success since 1987. The combibloc*Compact* aseptic carton package provides first-class protection for the 'Knorr Ligne' range of ready-to-eat soups, and is an ideal package format for single-portion products.

Vegetable soups are among the most popular varieties available in carton packages. For carton soups, the recipe for success lies in providing a pleasurable taste experience and creating the feeling of wellbeing associated with the consumption of vegetable soup: flavour, healthiness and naturalness bring together important ingredients that are vital for

healthy nutrition. In winter, soup is a flavourful, balanced and satisfying meal. In summer, light soups provide vitamins, essential ingredients and additional hydration. And people who are short on time unhesitatingly fall back on pre-packaged, ready-to-eat soups. Ready in a matter of minutes, carton-packaged ready-to-eat soup is a convenient alternative to freshly-made soup.

### **Long-life without refrigeration**

The gentle aseptic process used for filling foodstuffs into the cartons ensures that vitamins and natural flavours, colours and nutrients are retained. The advantage over the conventional method of sterilisation is that product and carton are sterilised separately, rather than together.

In the aseptic process, the products are heated very rapidly (depending on acid content) and then rapidly cooled back to room temperature. While this process is going on, SIG Combibloc's filling machines shape the carton into the correct form, seal the base and sterilise the carton interior. The products are then filled into the cartons in the sterile zone of the filling machine. Finally, the top seam of the carton sleeve is ultrasonically sealed above the fill level of the product. This ensures that no pieces of food or fibres become embedded in the seal. The aseptically-packaged products can be kept for a prolonged period without refrigeration and preservatives, with no impairment of quality.

In addition to protecting the product, the material properties of the carton itself – its usefulness as a medium for communicating product information and displaying visual messages – also play a role in the choice of packaging. For Unilever too, the multiple display surfaces, which can be used in their entirety to present product information and eye-catching graphics, and their high print quality, were key elements in the decision to use carton packaging from SIG Combibloc.

### **Package soups in fashion**

Knorr is Unilever's most successful brand. The group of companies is one of the biggest providers of brand-name products in the foods, homecare and personal hygiene sectors worldwide. With more than 200,000 employees, the company has a presence in 150 countries, and has a total turnover of EUR 39.7 billion. In 2005, Unilever France, with 4,900 employees, recorded turnover of EUR 3.5 billion, and on this past year to date has sold 37.6 million litres of Knorr ready-to-eat soups in France.

**Caption 1:**

Sophisticated soup creations with a vegetable base, providing extra hydration, fibre and a host of vitamins, make tasty, nutritious eating easy. With this in mind, Unilever is expanding its range of ready-to-eat soups.

**Photo: SIG Combibloc**

*SIG Combibloc is one of the world's leading system suppliers of carton packaging and filling machines for beverages and food. Employing approx. 3,940 people, the company recorded sales of EUR 1,097 million in 2005. SIG Combibloc is a division of SIG Holding AG, Neuhausen am Rheinfall.*

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