



Web Packaging Solutions
TRUSTED PARTNERS FOR FLEXIBLE PACKAGING

WPS INSIGHT

MAY 2026



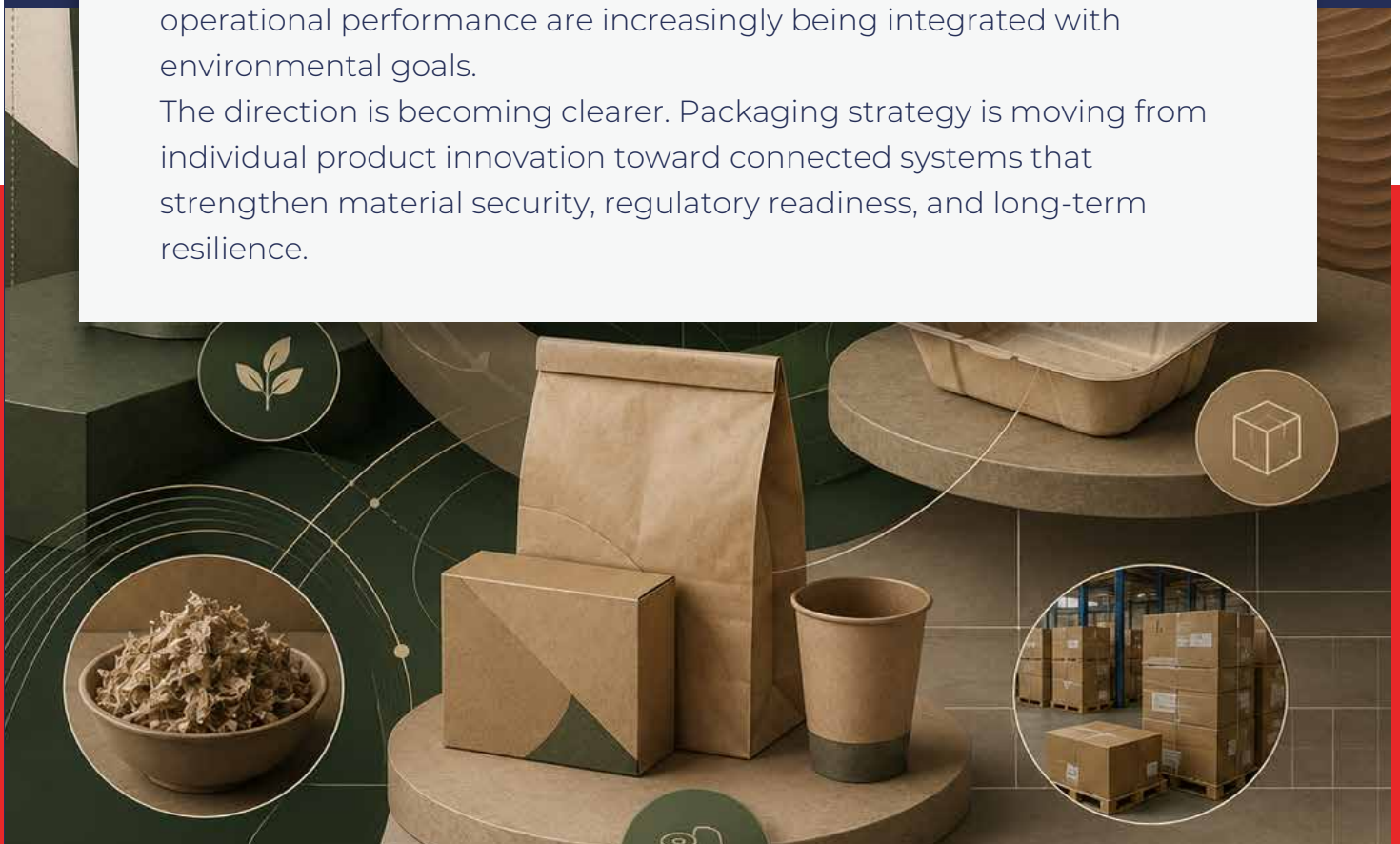
May highlights an important shift in how the packaging industry is approaching sustainability and competitiveness. The conversation is moving beyond isolated packaging improvements toward building systems that can deliver circularity, performance, and long-term resilience together.

A common thread across the developments is the move away from linear material flows. Dedicated tray-to-tray recycling systems, mono-material structures, and fiber-based alternatives all point toward an industry seeking greater control over material recovery and reuse. At the same time, packaging decisions are increasingly influenced by external factors, including regulations, supply disruptions, and changing economics for virgin and recycled materials.

The month also highlights how closely packaging is now linked to broader geopolitical and market conditions. Disruptions affecting energy and material supply chains are beginning to alter cost structures and competitiveness across packaging materials, reinforcing the need for more resilient systems.

What also stands out is the continued convergence of sustainability and functionality. Product protection, convenience, shelf differentiation, and operational performance are increasingly being integrated with environmental goals.

The direction is becoming clearer. Packaging strategy is moving from individual product innovation toward connected systems that strengthen material security, regulatory readiness, and long-term resilience.





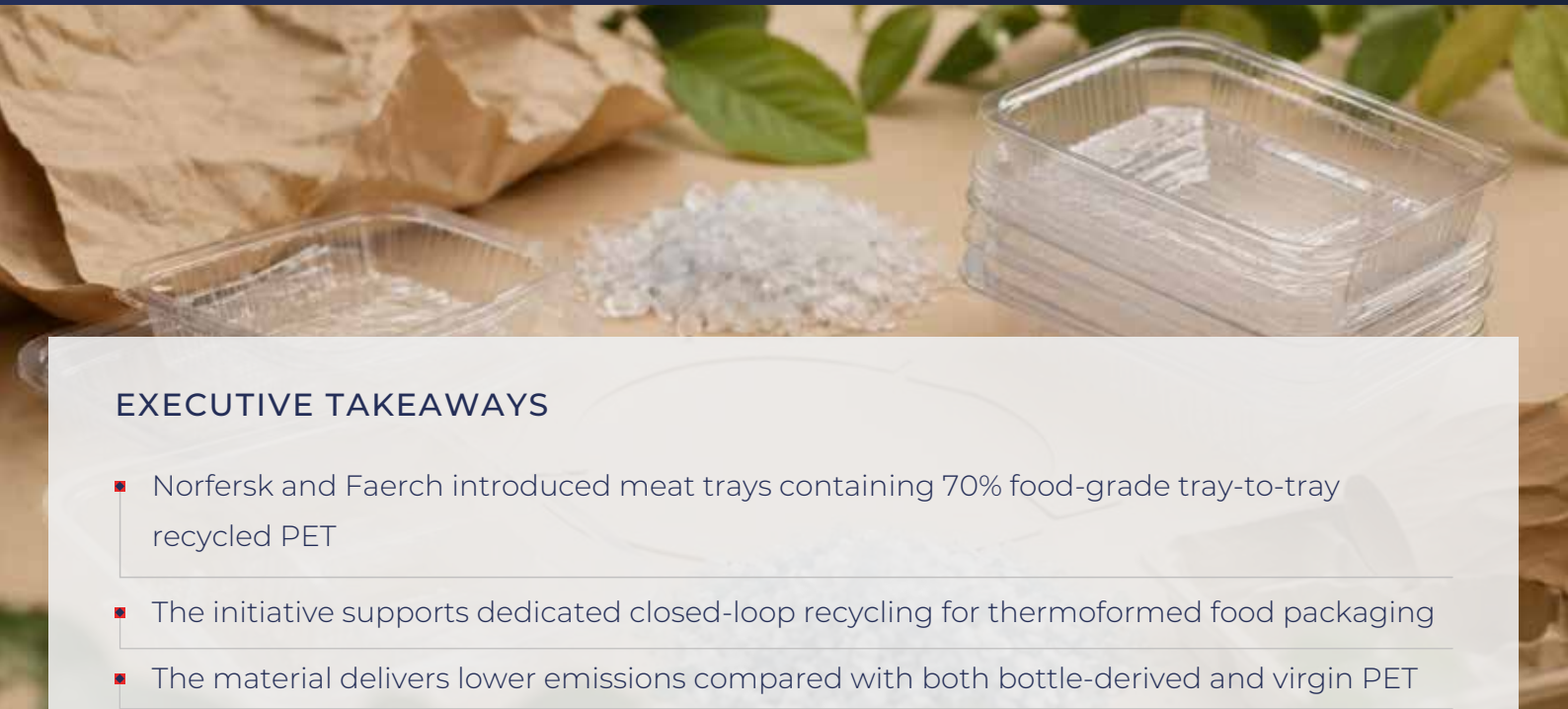
EXECUTIVE TAKEAWAYS

- ◆ **Circular systems are evolving beyond bottle-based recycling models**
The industry is increasingly building dedicated material loops that keep food-grade materials within their intended applications and reduce competition for recycle streams.
- ◆ **Future readiness will depend on measurable sustainability performance**
Packaging companies are moving beyond sustainability claims and aligning product design with infrastructure, regulatory, and data-transparency requirements.
- ◆ **Global disruptions continue to reshape recycled material economics**
Supply shocks and feedstock volatility are creating short-term shifts in competitiveness between virgin and recycled materials.
- ◆ **Performance and sustainability are increasingly being engineered together**
Material protection, convenience, recyclability, and operational efficiency are becoming integrated design requirements rather than separate objectives.

Closed Material Loops Gain Momentum in Food Packaging

WHY IT MATTERS

The industry is beginning to create dedicated recycling ecosystems that preserve food-grade materials within food applications while reducing dependence on traditional bottle-derived recyclate streams.



EXECUTIVE TAKEAWAYS

- Norfersk and Faerch introduced meat trays containing 70% food-grade tray-to-tray recycled PET
- The initiative supports dedicated closed-loop recycling for thermoformed food packaging
- The material delivers lower emissions compared with both bottle-derived and virgin PET
- Food safety, shelf-life performance, and packaging efficiency were maintained
- Production integration was achieved without operational disruption
- Previous collaborations also demonstrated transport and logistics efficiencies through packaging redesign
- Industry movement indicates increasing adoption of tray-specific recycling systems

LESSONS & ACTIONABLES

Circularity becomes more scalable when material recovery systems are designed around application-specific loops.

Sustainable Packaging Moves Toward Measurable Outcomes

WHY IT MATTERS

Sustainability strategies are increasingly evaluated based on performance metrics, infrastructure compatibility, and long-term regulatory readiness.

EXECUTIVE TAKEAWAYS

- Korozi emphasized measurable environmental performance over broad sustainability messaging
- Focus remains on recyclable mono-material structures and circular packaging solutions
- Portfolio includes thermoforming films, pouches, flow packaging, and barrier structures
- The current share of recyclable products stands at 64%
- Targets include fully recyclable packaging by 2030 and renewable energy adoption across operations
- Future compliance is expected to depend heavily on transparency and digital product information systems
- Packaging development increasingly aligns with regulations and circular economy requirements

LESSONS & ACTIONABLES

Future competitiveness will depend on proving sustainability outcomes rather than simply communicating intentions.

Supply Disruptions Continue to Influence Recycling Economics

WHY IT MATTERS

Changes in global trade and energy conditions are affecting cost structures across both virgin and recycled material markets.



EXECUTIVE TAKEAWAYS

- Rising crude prices and supply disruptions increased pressure on virgin PET and polyolefin markets
- Europe remains highly exposed to imported feedstocks and material supply risks
- Immediate effects on recycled PET remained relatively limited due to existing inventories and weaker demand
- Higher virgin material prices may improve competitiveness for recycled materials
- Recycled polyolefin demand remains driven largely by sustainability commitments and regulatory expectations
- Long-term financial pressure continues across parts of the recycling industry

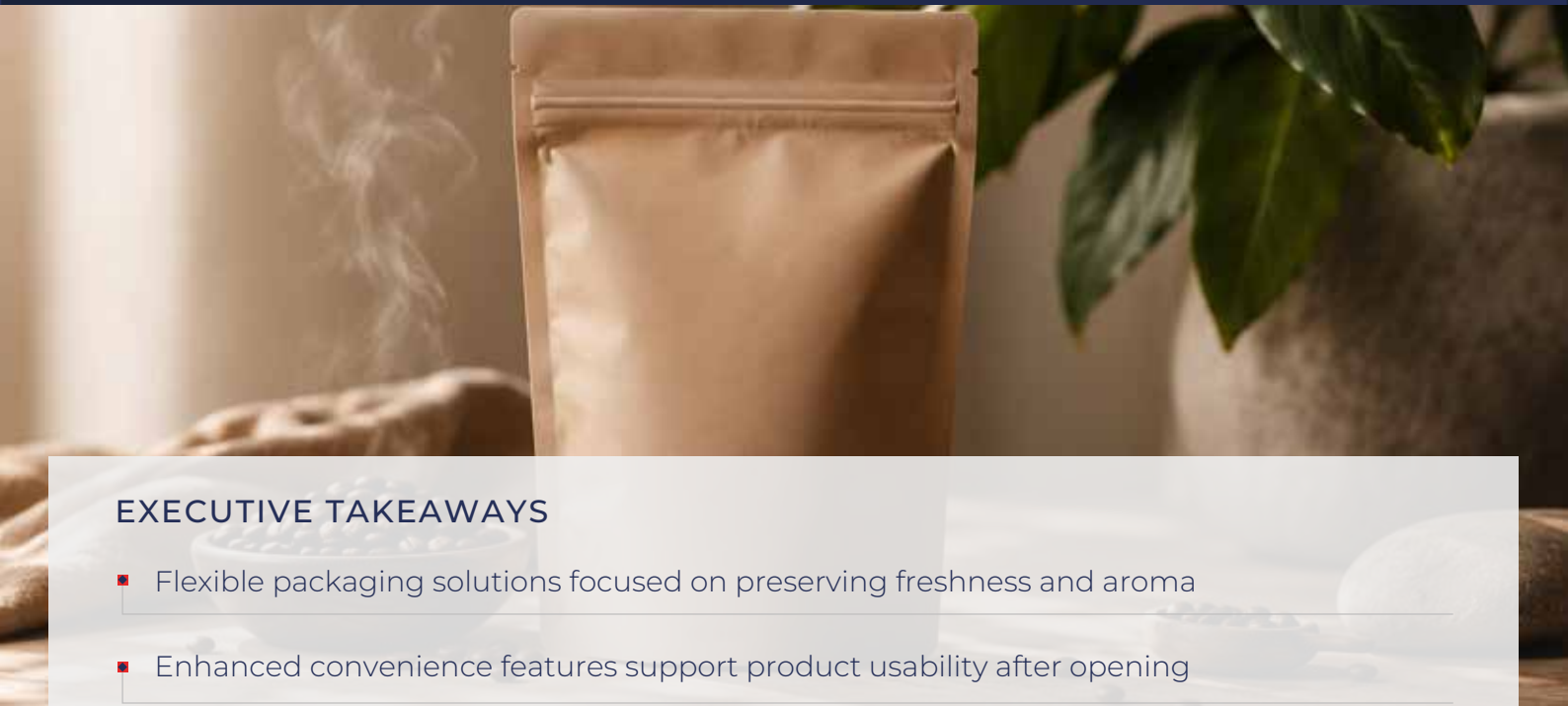
LESSONS & ACTIONABLES

Short-term market shifts can create opportunities, but long-term resilience requires stronger structural support for recycling systems.

Coffee Packaging Expands Beyond Protection into Experience

WHY IT MATTERS

Packaging is becoming an active contributor to brand differentiation by balancing product protection, convenience, and sustainability expectations.



EXECUTIVE TAKEAWAYS

- Flexible packaging solutions focused on preserving freshness and aroma
- Enhanced convenience features support product usability after opening
- Recycle-ready structures help brands align with environmental goals
- Printing capabilities strengthen shelf visibility and brand identity
- Solutions support multiple coffee packaging formats and applications
- Guidance also includes support around regulatory requirements and packaging selection

LESSONS & ACTIONABLES

Packaging increasingly influences both product performance and consumer perception.

Fiber-Based Flexible Packaging Continues to Advance

WHY IT MATTERS

Customizable barrier solutions are enabling fiber-based structures to move closer to applications that have traditionally relied on multi-material packaging.



EXECUTIVE TAKEAWAYS

- UPM and Felix Schoeller developed recyclable fiber-based flexible packaging solutions
- Packaging targets applications, including chocolate and snack products
- Barrier coatings can be customized based on specific protection requirements
- Solutions address oxygen, moisture, grease, sealing, and durability requirements
- Designed for converting efficiency and high-speed production environments
- Recyclability performance was evaluated using industry protocols and standards
- Supports movement toward replacing conventional multi-material structures

LESSONS & ACTIONABLES

The future of flexible packaging will depend on combining recyclability with application-specific performance.



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