

# Quick Cooking, simple handling and a highquality, tasty product - convenience solutions, are popular with many consumers

*We spoke to Lilly Schmidt, the culinary expert at MULTIVAC, about Mylar® COOK, a packaging technology that was specially developed for the cooking of food at high temperatures.*

## **What is special about Mylar® COOK?**

Lilly Schmidt: Mylar® COOK enables food in the pack to be cooked in the oven or microwave, on a contact grill or in a water bath. Thanks to this process, the aromas, vitamins, minerals and inherent moisture of the product are retained to the maximum possible extent during the cooking process. The seal seam of the pack opens by itself after a period of time due to a combination of the oven temperature and the steam pressure, which is created in the pack.

This enables the food to be browned in the pack, and for example the skin of a chicken to become crispy. The more consistent heat transfer during the cooking phases ensures perfect cooking results are achieved, while reducing the overall cooking time.

Not only will the product take longer to cook, but no preparation or cleaning time is required - thanks to cooking in the pack, hands remain clean, as do the oven and cooking tray. This means that we can also offer new opportunities and benefits to the food service sector.

The Mylar® COOK films do of course have all the relevant certification concerning direct food contact with plastic packaging in high-temperature applications up to 220 °C: they comply with, among other regulations, the directives of the European Union (EU) and the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), as well as with those of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). Mylar® COOK films are also manufactured in accordance with the regulations of the BRC/IOP worldwide packaging standard, and the manufacture is certified to ISO 9001, IMS and HACCP.

## **Which types of food are particularly suited for this packaging technology?**

Schmidt: The technology was specially developed for the cooking of food at a



*The chicken legs are packed in Mylar® COOK film.*



*They are cooked in the pack.*



*The seal seam of the pack opens by itself after a certain time.*



*The consistent heat transfer ensures perfect cooking results.*



high temperature range, up to 220 °C. We achieve excellent results with almost all applications - whether it is meat, fish, poultry, vegetables, ready meals or bakery products. With Mylar® COOK, roast pork or crispy chicken can be prepared as successfully as a juicy salmon fillet or crusty baguette.

**What are the other areas of application?**

Schmidt: If we are talking about the bakery products sector, for example raw dough, we can offer another new solution with our Mylar® BAKE film. Mylar® BAKE allows for perfectly formed muffins without filling the baking pans or having to clean them the disposable solution for bakery products. Thanks to this unique film, the forming cavity remains stable during the entire baking procedure. This means box pans or silicon baking pans are no longer needed, and no subsequent cleaning is required.

**What must food manufacturers pay attention to during the processing of their products?**

Schmidt: The Mylar® COOK films can run perfectly on MULTIVAC thermoform-

ing packaging machines. MULTIVAC has accompanied many companies during the market launch of a wide range of products and the same rules apply with Mylar® COOK or Mylar® BAKE as with any new product. As a general rule, the manufacturer should make sufficient time to develop the product, ideally together with us, since it is a case here of a new cooking method which requires the product development to be taken very seriously. We can support our customers in this area with a great deal of application knowledge and many years of experience.

Product development is a critical part of the success. Mylar® customers have experienced an overall reduction in the seasoning and quantity of salt, since the aromas are retained much more through the almost entirely enclosed cooking procedure.

**How does MULTIVAC support its customers in the development of Mylar® COOK packs?**

Schmidt: We support our customers throughout the entire process. For example, we organise regular seminars and workshops, allowing interested customers to become familiar with Mylar® COOK and its full potential on a no-obligation basis. We also offer targeted and customer-specific help and advice throughout the process of pre-development and product development, as well as answering any questions that may arise. We work in our fully equipped test kitchen in Wolfertschwenden with food technologists on one of our MULTIVAC thermoforming packaging machines.

This means that individually adapted products can be tested in the oven immediately after packing. In order to achieve optimum results and short lines of com-

munication, we cooperate with partners, such as spice manufacturers (Griffith, WIBERG) and food equipment manufacturers (MANITOWOC).

**Freshly cooked products are very popular with many consumers but are there still market opportunities for convenience products, such as Mylar® COOK?**

Schmidt: Various consumer trends in the food sector can be seen worldwide. Freshly cooked, regional products are certainly one of these directions. But another, even greater trend is towards more convenience quick cooking, simple handling and a high-quality, tasty products, and it is here that we offer exactly the right solution with Mylar® COOK and Mylar® BAKE.

**In which markets do you currently see the greatest prospects for success?**

Schmidt: I think that the trend towards high-quality convenience solutions with guaranteed success can be seen everywhere. Various aspects and developments play a role in this; a growing number of working people and single households, less knowledge about cooking and more disposable income all increase the demand worldwide for product solutions like Mylar® COOK and Mylar® BAKE. We are receiving enquiries from all parts of the world from Eastern Europe and Asia as well as from countries like Germany, in total from more than 40 countries. Mylar® COOK was launched onto the market in the USA several years ago and we are currently involved intensively in the European market, as well as having now implemented the first projects in Asia.

**Are there already customers, who offer packaged food in Mylar® COOK oder Mylar® BAKE?**

Schmidt: We are not only receiving enquiries from all parts of the world, we have already implemented many customer projects worldwide. Customers in Canada, the USA, Switzerland, Romania, Norway, Lithuania, Poland, Australia and other countries have recognized that Mylar® COOK film is a real innovation and they are now present in the market with a wide range of new products, such as ready-to-cook chicken, pork, salmon fillets and turkey meat. ♦