

RESOLUTION GMC NO. 016/93
PROVISIONS FOR RETURNABLE PLASTIC PACKAGING INTENDED TO COME
INTO CONTACT WITH CARBONATED SOFT DRINKS

Art 1 - Returnable plastic packaging intended to come into contact with carbonated soft drinks that are marketed between the Member States of MERCOSUR must comply with the requirements laid down in the Annex attached to this Resolution "Provisions for returnable plastic packaging intended to into contact with carbonated soft drinks".

Art 2 - Article 1 will not apply to packaged foodstuffs intended for export to third countries.

Art 3 - The Member States of MERCOSUR will put into effect the laws, regulations and administrative provisions necessary to comply with this Resolution and to communicate the text of the same to the Common Market Group.

1. This Resolution refers to the general conditions and to the assessment criteria for returnable plastic packaging intended for the end consumer that come into contact with carbonated soft drinks.
2. Returnable plastic packaging will meet the conditions laid down in the MERCOSUR Resolution on "General provisions for plastic packaging and equipment in contract with foodstuffs".
3. The returnable plastic packaging must be registered with the competent authority, following procedures established by stating that they are going to be used as returnable packaging.
4. Returnable plastic packaging referred to in this Resolution must be compatible with the drink that they are going to contain and resistant to all the processes they are going to undergo in the successive return cycles.
5. The packaging referred to in this Resolution must not release in the successive return cycles substances foreign to that of the plastic in question, in quantities that involve a risk to human health.
6. The returnable plastic packaging must have on the labeling the expression "Exclusive use for..." (using here the most appropriate name here for the drink).
7. Returnable plastic packaging must also meet the following specific requirements, in the outlet of the sanitization process:
 - absence of coliforms.
 - Aerobic mesophilic aerobic bacteria count: 1 CFU/ml of the internal volume of the container. The sampling procedures and the methodology established by the American Public Health Association (APHA) will be used for determining these requirements.
8. User establishments of returnable plastic packaging intended to come into contact with carbonated soft drinks must be approved for this purpose by the competent authority.
9. In order for an establishment to be approved it will be required to have:
 - 9.1. written procedures and their application logs on Good Manufacturing Practices that are at the disposal of the competent authority;
 - 9.2. instrumental systems that allow inspection of 100% of the packaging returned, for detecting foreign products in the drink to be packaged and reject those packaging that are not suitable for use;
 - 9.3. appropriate equipment for the sanitization of the returned packaging and their control methodology;
 - 9.4. staff for the operation of all equipment, trained specifically for this purpose;
 - 9.5. facilities for carrying out the periodic microbiological controls.