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By Tom Joyce

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Vog reinforces green commitments

The Italian apple coop is ready to show off its green credentials at Fruit Logistica, including eco-friendly packaging, clean energy and organic investments



At this year's Fruit Logistica, Vog, the South Tyrol apple growers' consortium, is presenting several green innovations as it continues its commitment to environmental sustainability.

Packaging forms a major part of the consortium's efforts, with new 100-per-cent compostable fruitbags, made from sugar cane and thistle and sunflower seed oils, set to be unveiled, along with grass paper packaging.

"This material consists of 50 per cent dried grass, combined with recycled paper or fresh wood fibres," the consortium revealed. "Every tonne of "grass paper" saves about 6,000 litres of water, while electricity consumption and carbon dioxide emissions

are also sharply lower than for paper made from wood by a chemical process."

According to Vog CEO Walter Pardatscher, the new packaging innovations are a mark of the consortium's commitment to sustainability.

"We have always focused strongly on the needs of the environment we live in," he said. "It is worth mentioning, for example, the photovoltaic plants installed at all our cooperatives, our investments in organic production, and the cardboard foodtainers presented during the last few months, which are already a success."

In addition, following a trial phase, Vog's new all-cardboard trays are

now fully operational, enabling the consortium to produce foodtainers that require no plastic film.

Investments in organic production continue at Vog, with a further 170ha of organic apple production being added in the 2020/21 season, to cover the demand all year round, including with new, better-keeping varieties.

"Moreover, the trees planted in recent years are bearing more and more fruit," the consortium stated. "Therefore, in the second part of this season the range will already be expanded with particularly tasty fruit with a long shelf-life: Bonita, Natyra and Story Inored."