

# REDESIGNING THE MUESLI TOPCUP

## FOR ZUIVELHOEVE

Famke Poortier | Industrial Design Engineering | University of Twente | The Netherlands

The Zuivelhoeve is a supplier of high-quality dairy products for the retail and foodservice industries in the Netherlands, Belgium, and Germany. The term 'retail sector', refers to supermarkets, such as Albert Heijn and Jumbo. The foodservice sector includes a diverse range of industries catering to various segments, including institutions, schools, airlines, hospitals, fast-food restaurants, kiosks, and gas stations. It is part of the Roerink Food Family, which also includes the Dessertmeesters, a producer of desserts for supermarkets, and over 80 franchised Zuivelhoeve stores. The company produces and packages most of its dairy products in-house with one facility that is located in Twekkelo. The company also has another factory in Oldenzaal responsible for producing and packaging the ice cream, solely for private label customers. The Roerink Food Group employs a total of 150 individuals spread across the three branches of the company. Zuivelhoeve offers a diverse range of products, including the Muesli Topcup, which is depicted in Figure 1. This product consists of two parts: the bottom part is a cup filled with yogurt, and the top part is a lid that contains muesli and a spoon. Both components of the packaging are predominantly made of plastic. Currently, societal changes, partly driven by the European Union (EU), are prompting a critical examination of the use of single-use plastic packaging. The EU has introduced new laws and regulations focusing on reducing plastic waste. Due to the Muesli Topcup's primary reliance on plastic for packaging, it has become essential for Zuivelhoeve to examine its current packaging.



Figure 1: Zuivelhoeve Muesli Topcup aardbei (Zuivelhoeve, n.d.)

This research commenced with an inquiry initiated by Zuivelhoeve concerning sustainability and one of their products: the Muesli Topcup. Subsequently, an exploration was undertaken to establish the actual underlying issues.

Following refinement and greater specification, the ultimate primary question emerged:

“In what way can Zuivelhoeve modify or change the existing packaging of the Muesli Topcup to align with evolving laws and regulations, with the goal of ensuring continued sales in retail for at least the upcoming three years, with the objective of minimizing hindrance to the consumers' motivations for purchasing the product?”

Currently, there are numerous sustainability developments taking place within the EU (Commission, 2018). The major focus of the main question has been on examining the legislation that holds significance at the present moment. This primarily pertains to the Single Use Plastics (SUP) directive. This directive is enforced

since 2021, and it is currently being implemented. Its impact extends to both consumers and businesses, with measures primarily revolving around financial aspects.

The study looked at various aspects of the current packaging for Muesli Topcup, as well as to the different stakeholders and their impacts. Based on this, twelve key requirements were identified for the new packaging solution. The emphasis was on upholding packaging quality while avoiding additional costs for the company and consumers, ensure continued sales for the next three years in the Netherlands, Germany, and Belgium and must be cost-effective. The packaging also had to cater to on-the-go consumption, align with breakfast and in-between meal occasions, reflect the image of Zuivelhoeve, and preserve product freshness. From these considerations, three distinct packaging concepts were developed: glass or ceramic packaging, packaging made from alternative (eco-friendly) materials, and the 'Kies&Mix' concept. Each concept was detailed in terms of potential implementation, cost implications, and strategic benefits. The potential benefits and drawbacks of each packaging concept were also highlighted.

The outcome of the study is a well-defined roadmap that outlines the necessary steps for implementing the chosen packaging concept. This roadmap outlines the subsequent steps that can be taken in order to move forward with choosing and implementing one of the three concepts, while taking into account Zuivelhoeve's constraints and concerns.

Overall, the study provides a comprehensive and detailed plan of action that will enable Zuivelhoeve to comply with the evolving regulations while ensuring continued sales and profitability of Muesli Topcup for the next three years.

## References

Commission, E. (2018). *Briefing note for the OECD DAC peer-learning visit*. Brussels

Zuivelhoeve. (n.d.). Zuivelhoeve Muesli Topcup aarbei 170g. In <https://www.zuivelhoeve.nl/assortiment/aardbei-muesli-170g/>.