



TOP COFFEE SUPPLIER UCC DOUBLES UP WITH SIPA

Bottled coffee is big in Japan. And SIPA is helping top bottled coffee producer UCC make it even bigger. SIPA recently installed its second XFORM 500 system for high-volume production of PET preforms, intended for production of bottles of coffee, at UCC's plant in Gunma. UCC chose the third-generation system, equipped with a SIPA 128-cavity preform mold, following successful experience with a 96-cavity system from the XFORM first generation that has been operating at another Japanese plant, in Shiga, since June 2014. "Getting a repeat order from a company like UCC means a lot to SIPA," says Gianfranco Perricci, Sales Manager for the region. "Competition anywhere in the world is tough, but especially so in Japan, where quality standards are so high. And of course, UCC

is a big name in food and beverage, with operations not only in Japan, but around the world."





UCC and SIPA Team

UCC knows all about high quality coffee. Founded in 1933 by Tadao Ueshima, affectionately known as “the father of coffee in Japan,” it now cultivates seedlings on its own estates – including the prestigious Blue Mountain Coffee

Estate in Jamaica – imports the beans, roasts them, and sells various coffee products all around the world. The company is constantly developing new technologies and deploying the latest advancements to produce even more delicious

coffee, and actively promotes coffee culture – it has even opened a coffee museum in Kobe, Japan. Obviously UCC (which stands for Ueshima Coffee Co.) also knows a lot about packaging, whether it is for vacuum-packed coffee beans,

grounds and powder, or for putting fresh-tasting coffee drinks in consumer-friendly containers. In fact, Tadao Ueshima invented the concept of ready-to-drink coffee in a can way back in 1969, quickly putting it into production. Its popularity took off when samples were offered at the World Exposition in Osaka in 1970 and today coffee drinks can be bought from any of the five million vending machines in Japan. And now of course UCC is also putting coffee into PET bottles. Its Barista Blend Coffee is offered in 900-mL doses. Says Perricci: “With our latest project for UCC, we have supplied the XFORM 500/128 in a complete package, including PET drying System. In addition, we engaged in a unique light-weighting program to decrease the weight of the preform from 30g down to 28g. Perricci also points out that the preform mold makes use of several important features built into the third-generation (GEN3) cold half that distinguish it from rival designs. These include: X guide and coated neck rings to extend the lifetime of the mold; self-centering gate inserts, precisely centered to the cavities to enhance the quality of the

parting line; water-cooled cavity flanges to further reduce cycle times; and finally the “smart-lock” design. This features special taper design, a wider taper surface, and an optimized parting line location, all of which help reduce flash and improve durability. Optimized cooling in the smart-lock design also reduces cycle time.

