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| Press release Food Processing and Packaging Machinery |  |
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# drinktec 2025: Positive mood despite global challenges

* Exports grow by 6 percent
* Europe leads the global machinery trade
* Positive market outlook thanks to rising global consumption

**Munich, September 15, 2025** **–** On the occasion of the start of the world's leading trade fair drinktec, the VDMA Food Processing and Packaging Machinery Association sees the industry in good shape despite major challenges. “The mood in our industry is mostly good. Contrary to the trend in the overall mechanical engineering sector, exports of food processing and packaging machinery continued to grow in the first half of 2025.We expect an increase in turnover this year, but it is currently difficult to forecast a growth rate” states Richard Clemens, Managing Director of the VDMA Food Processing and Packaging Machinery Association.

**German exports continue to rise**

With an average of 84 percent in export sales, the food processing and packaging machinery industry is one of the strongest exporting sectors in German mechanical engineering. In 2024, foreign deliveries increased by 6 percent to 10.6 billion euros, followed by another growth of 6 percednt in the first half of 2025. The EU-27 markets, which account for 34 percent of exports, are proving very robust and grew by a total of 10.2 percent during the period under review.

For many years, the USA has been by far the most important market for German manufacturers of food processing and packaging machinery. Exports have risen steadily, reaching a peak of €1.8 billion in 2024. In the first half of 2025, German deliveries were 0.4 percent below the previous year's record level.

Richard Clemens, Managing Director of the VDMA Food Processing and Packaging Machinery Association, expects many visitors from the US to come to drinktec despite the tariff issue. “With over 1.5 million employees, the American food industry is the strongest sector in the US manufacturing industry. Automation and capacity expansion are considered the strongest drivers for investment. American companies are unable to meet their technology needs locally” says Clemens, pointing to EU imports of food processing and packaging machinery, which amounted to €5 billion in 2024.

China is also one of the important markets for mechanical engineering companies. German exports of food processing and packaging machinery to the People's Republic have been declining since 2023 and fell by 29 percent in the first half of 2025 compared to the previous year. In addition to the ongoing economic weakness, China's “buy local” strategy is also leaving its mark. “China still offers business potential for German companies—especially in the high-performance sector. However, this requires companies to make strategic decisions in favor of localization in order to be competitive in the market,” comments Clemens.

More than half of the exports are delivered to countries outside Europe. Strong momentum with double-digit growth rates came in the first half of 2025 from nearly 40 countries in Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America, including Brazil, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Vietnam, Egypt, Algeria, Ghana, Nigeria, and Tanzania. “The industry is very broadly positioned worldwide, which basically ensures good market opportunities,” summarizes Clemens.

**Europe leads the global machinery trade**

The global food and beverage industry is one of the most dynamic growth sectors and is the most important industrial sector in many countries. As a result, not only the German exports are rising, but the global trade volume of food and packaging machinery has also been growing steadily for many years, reaching a preliminary peak of almost €54.5 billion in 2024.

European companies are clear leaders in the international trade of food and packaging machinery. Almost 70 percent of global trade comes from Europe. “This makes food and packaging machinery manufacturing the most successful export industry in the entire European mechanical engineering sector due to its high level of specialization, performance, and innovative strength,” states Clemens. Italy and Germany are at the top of the list of the most important supplier countries, each with a 20 percent share of global trade. Germany is even stronger in some sub-sectors: in 2024, one in three internationally traded beverage packaging machines and one in two brewery machines came from Germany.

**Positive market outlook – global beverage consumption and varieties on the rise**

The future outlook for technology providers is positive, as the global beverage industry is growing. According to Euromonitor International, around 1.1 trillion liters of bottled and packaged beverages were sold worldwide in 2024. According to forecasts by the British market research company, sales will increase by around 14 percent by 2028. Euromonitor continues to predict double-digit growth in the Africa/Middle East and Asia/Pacific regions during this period, while beverage sales in saturated markets will increase only slightly. Here, the focus is on qualitative growth and product innovation.

According to Euromonitor, 7,000 new non-alcoholic beverage products were launched worldwide in 2024 alone, with just under 6,300 new alcoholic beverage products. The largest share of innovations came from the US, Canada, and European countries.

**drinktec 2025 addresses important topics and trends**

Demographic developments, health and nutrition trends, and ever-shorter product life cycles are shaping the development of the global beverage and liquid food industry. In addition, this industry is particularly concerned with high food safety and quality requirements, as well as efficient and sustainable production processes and packaging concepts, which are being taken to the next level through the use of data and digital tools.

The beverage and liquid food industry is focusing on intelligent recycling systems and sustainable resource management in both the production and packaging processes. “We see our industry as an important part of the solution here. After all, who else but the mechanical engineering industry can make a decisive contribution through innovation to making the processes in manufacturing companies economical, efficient, and sustainable at the same time,” Clemens states. In this context, digitalization plays a key role in identifying potential for savings, optimization, and improvement along the value chain.

When it comes to trends, Clemens sees drinktec as a clear source of inspiration. Growing health awareness, the desire for self-optimization, new recipes, functional ingredients, and the increasing importance of proteins in beverages offer new business potential.

Do you have any questions?

Beatrix Fraese, deputy managing director at VDMA Food Processing and Packaging Machinery Association, will be happy to answer them: 069 6603 1418, [beatrix.fraese@vdma.org](mailto:beatrix.fraese@vdma.org)

For more information about drinktec, the VDMA Technology Lounge, and markets, please visit our website: [vdma.eu/drinktec](https://vdma.eu/drinktec). For more information about the VDMA Food Processing and Packaging Machinery Association, please visit: [vdma.eu/nuv](https://vdmaservices.sharepoint.com/sites/ONL-NuV-VtMA-EHEDG/Freigegebene%20Dokumente/Aktenplan/Messen/Messen%20Inland/drinktec/drinktec_2025/03_Kommunikation/Presse/vdma.eu/nuv).

The VDMA represents 3600 German and European mechanical and plant engineering companies. The industry stands for innovation, export orientation and SMEs. The companies employ around 3 million people in the EU-27, more than 1.2 million of them in Germany alone. This makes mechanical and plant engineering the largest employer among the capital goods industries, both in the EU-27 and in Germany. In the European Union, it represents a turnover volume of an estimated 870 billion euros.   
Around 80 percent of the machinery sold in the EU comes from a manufacturing plant in the domestic market.