11/12/2026 Sustainability Press release

Siegwerk's UniLEAF wins Sustainability Award 2026 for Research & Development

Innovative acrylic-free ink solution recognized at the Sustainable Packaging Summit in Utrecht for advancing sustainable ink formulation.



Siegburg, Germany, November 12, 2026. – Siegwerk, one of the leading global providers of printing inks and coatings for packaging applications and labels, has won the Sustainability Award 2026 in the Research & Development category for UniLEAF, its innovative acrylic-free ink solution for water-based flexo printing on paper and board. The award was presented on November 11 in Utrecht, the Netherlands, as part of the Sustainable Packaging Summit.

UniLEAF, which stands for “Low Energy Acrylic Free,” builds on Siegwerk’s established UniNATURE product range. Its formulation replaces conventional acrylic resins with polymers derived from bio-based raw materials. “We are extremely proud to receive this award for UniLEAF. It is recognition of the passion, expertise, and innovative spirit of our teams and confirms that rethinking established formulation approaches can make a meaningful difference,” says Thibaud Liard, Business Unit Head Paper & Board EMEA at Siegwerk. “With UniLEAF, we have challenged a long-standing industry convention by eliminating acrylic resins from water-based flexo ink extender while maintaining the performance and efficiency our customers need. This award encourages us to continue pushing the boundaries of acrylic-free ink development.”

Combining sustainability improvements with operational performance

Initial industrial trials have demonstrated measurable benefits of the new formulation. Compared with Siegwerk’s UniNATURE range, UniLEAF achieved an **additional 50% reduction in CO_2 footprint**. At the same time, the share of biogenic carbon in the formulation more than doubled through the complete removal of acrylic resins. Industrial trials also demonstrated **energy savings of more than 15% during drying**, while maintaining the same production speed. These characteristics underline UniLEAF’s potential to support converters, printers and brand owners in advancing their sustainability objectives while maintaining high performance and operational efficiency. The bio-based resin system can be incorporated into standard ink-manufacturing operations without major investments in production technology, with manufacturing efficiency and finished-product quality remaining unchanged. Winning the Sustainability Award in the Research & Development category recognizes Siegwerk’s continuous efforts to rethink established ink technologies and develop solutions that respond to changing requirements across the packaging value chain. UniLEAF illustrates how material innovation can combine measurable sustainability

improvements with the technical and operational requirements of industrial printing applications.

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