

## Press Release

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### IFCO awarded as German Innovation Leader

**Pullach – 06. March 2019:** [IFCO SYSTEMS](#), the leading global provider of reusable packaging solutions for fresh foods, has been recognized by the F.A.Z. Institute as an innovation leader in Germany. IFCO ranked a top position in the category “Conveying, Packing, Storage”. The award proves the innovative strength of IFCO and its reusable plastic containers (RPCs).

For the study “Deutschlands Innovationsführer” (Germany’s Innovation Leaders), 33,000 German companies were analysed with regard to their innovative strength. The study is based on data from the European Patent Office and was conducted by Prognos on behalf of the F.A.Z. Institute and in cooperation with the IMWF Institute for Management and Economic Research.

“Our spirit is to improve our products and services towards a better supply chain that serves all. We are very proud that the F.A.Z. Institute has recognized our innovative power and named us a German innovation leader”, says Wolfgang Orgeldinger, CEO of IFCO SYSTEMS. “In the past years, we have put a lot of emphasis on product development leading to the creation of product families like our Lift Lock RPCs which ensure easy and save handling. Our innovations also reduce our customers’ environmental footprint and bring the benefit of RPC systems to other industries beside fruit and vegetable, like bakery and meat.”

#### **Innovativeness based on patents**

The study provides a unique overview of the innovative power of German companies. The study is based on an analysis of all patents that have been filed by German companies worldwide within the last ten years. The share of work of German inventors was also included in the analysis. German innovation leaders include companies whose patents have been cited with above-average frequency and who have thus significantly influenced their respective fields of knowledge and technology, who have also registered outstandingly innovative inventions, and who cooperate with German inventors.

The following two metrics form the core of the evaluation of German innovation leaders:

- Leadership: How strongly an invention influences other inventions.
- Innovation: How strongly an invention distinguishes itself from earlier inventions.

#### **Top ranking for IFCO**

IFCO has filed a total of 1,130 patents in the last ten years. These patents form the basis for the company’s top position as a German innovation leader in the category “conveying, packing, storage”. In the metric of Leadership, IFCO came fifth in its category and second in terms of Innovation.

IFCO’s patents include different versions of the foldable Lift Lock RPCs for meat, bread, fruit and vegetables. The Lift Lock mechanism is the most consumer-friendly and ergonomic solution for opening and closing plastic crates. Other patents include ventilation improvement

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for RPCs to increase the shelf life of fresh produce and reduce product waste, as well as folding height reduction to maximize usage, supply chain efficiency, and CO<sub>2</sub> reduction. By patenting and re-designing the bottom of its RPCs, IFCO was able to optimize picking processes at warehouses.

IFCO also introduced the foldable Caja Oro™ RPC in 2011, which is especially designed for the transport of bananas. The crate has smooth internal side walls to protect the produce and reduce product waste. Still, the banana crate is robust enough for long-distance transport on ships – it can be transported both under deck and on pallets. Optimized ventilation ensures for longer shelf life and enables a faster ripening process with less energy.

“IFCO’s top ranking proves that our RPCs, which are used according to the principle of the circular economy, are among the most innovative load carriers on the market. By using IFCO RPCs, companies improve their supply chain processes – they become more flexible, efficient, sustainable and save a considerable amount resources. We therefore pass on our innovative power directly to our customers. For us, innovation does not only mean improving our RPCs but also developing state-of-the-art digital services like our myIFCO Recollect app for efficient return logistics”, says Wolfgang Orgeldinger.

### **About IFCO SYSTEMS**

IFCO is the leading global provider of reusable packaging solutions for fresh foods, serving customers in 50+ countries. IFCO operates a pool of over 290 million Reusable Plastic Containers (RPCs) globally, which are used for over 1.3 billion shipments of fresh fruits and vegetables, meat, poultry, seafood, eggs, bread, and other items from suppliers to grocery retailers every year. IFCO RPCs ensure a better fresh food supply chain by protecting freshness and quality and lowering costs, food waste and environmental impact compared to single-use packaging. More: [www.ifco.com](http://www.ifco.com).

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