

Cosmetic, beauty and perfumery see **SOUTH KOREA** growth uptick

With a population of about 52 million, South Korea is among the smallest countries in the Far East Asia region. Notwithstanding its modest size, its vibrant cosmetics and perfumery sector has driven the container glass industry within this sub-segment to new heights. Indeed, being one of the largest cosmetics and perfumery container glass producers in Asia, South Korea is now a renowned global leader in the sector while being also one of the largest consumers and producers of cosmetics and perfumery products - all of which makes the country a major demand driver of premium container glass products. In addition to a large domestic consumer base, South Korea achieved a significant milestone in the cosmetics and beauty industry with exports surpassing the USD 10 billion mark in 2024, according to government data (Ministry of Food & Drug Safety) released in January 2025. The total value of South Korea's cosmetic exports surged by 20.6 percent annually, reaching an all-time high of USD 10.2 billion. This impressive growth was credited to the Hallyu wave, which amplified the global appeal of Korean cultural



exports like K-pop and K-dramas. China was the largest importer of South Korean cosmetics, purchasing USD 2.5 billion worth of products. The United States followed with USD 1.9 billion, while Japan ranked third with USD 1 billion in imports. Most of these exports were packaged in glass bottles, thus benefiting the South Korean container glass producers. South Korea's cosmetics exports have undergone consistent growth since 2014, when shipments were valued at USD 1.8 billion. This figure

rose to USD 4.9 billion in 2017, USD 7.6 billion in 2020, and USD 9.2 billion in 2021 before a slight dip to USD 8.5 billion in 2023.

INDUSTRY OVERVIEW

Premium container glass for the cosmetics and perfumery industry is emerging as an important segment of the container glass industry. Rapid growth in the consumption of beauty products across the world has prompted container glass producers to focus on this segment over the last two decades. Asian

A continuing boom in the cosmetics and perfumery industry has propelled demand for premium container glass in SOUTH KOREA, making the country a leading player in Asia. In the following feature article, Rajeev Jetley explores the rapid growth, key producers, export dynamics and innovations that are shaping its container glass sector for beauty packaging.



ery sector often face a number of challenges compared to other segments such as food and beverage. Container glass products for this segment entail a lot of differentiation and sophistication, compelling glass producers to experiment with innovative shapes, exceptional colours, geometric shoulders, bodies and thick glass bases. Along with bottle production, container glass producers for the premium segment of the cosmetics and perfumery industry have to invest heavily in the decoration of finished bottles. In fact, decoration units for cosmetics and perfumery bottles often entail substantial invest-

countries are no exception. South Korea is gradually becoming a force to reckon with in the production of premium container glass for the packaging of cosmetics and perfumery products. Known for their pleasing packaging, natural ingredients, and innovation, South Korea's cosmetics and perfumery industry is a major consumer of premium container glass products for packaging. Estimated at USD 410M (end of 2023), the premium container glass industry for cosmetics and perfumery has undergone a major transformation during the last ten years due to a surge in demand and production of cosmetics and perfumery products. The container glass industry and producers for the premium segment of the cosmetics and perfum-



COSMETIC & PERFUMERY



ments. Container glass producers are expected to offer a wide range of solutions including screen printing with organic and inorganic inks, coatings, sandblasting, enamels, precious metals, acid-etching, metallization, hot stamping, iridescent effects and 3D decoration. The threat from alternative packaging materials such as PET and metal packaging is minimal in the premium segment of cosmetics and perfumery.

CONSPICUOUS GROWTH INDICES

Though in the economy and middle segments alternative forms of packaging have displaced container glass in a number of products, glass has remained the dominant packaging medium in the premium segment. Led by French specialty container glass producer Verescence and supported by three other container glass producers -Techpack Solutions, Sankwang Glass and Kumbi Corporation- the South Korean container glass industry for the premium sub-segment of the cosmetics and perfumery industry has grown at a CAGR of more than 6 percent over the last ten years. Verescence is a dedicated premium container

glass producer for the cosmetics and perfumery sub-segment. The remaining three container glass producers have also dedicated a proportion of their total output to cosmetics and perfumery due to increasing volume and higher margins. Imports account for about 20 percent of the total demand for premium container glass for the cosmetics and perfumery industry in South Korea. China, Japan and Europe are the three largest sources for imports of container glass in this segment. A nearly identical 20 percent of the output of container glass for this segment is exported to Europe, the Americas and other Asian countries. The entry of Verescence has increased

the volume of exports in the last few years.

VERESCENCE PACIFIC

French company Verescence is one of the largest cosmetics and perfumery container glass producers in South Korea. Verescence entered the South Korean container glass market in 2021 via the acquisition of South Korean container glass producer Pacificglas to acquire a stake in the high-volume and high-value South Korean premium container glass industry for cosmetics and perfumery packaging. Verescence Pacific's production plant, located in Janghang, 150 km from the capital Seoul, is one of the most high-tech container glass plants in the country. Known as Pacific Glass before its acquisition, it has been in container glass production since 1973. A subsidiary of cosmetic producer Amorepacific, the company has supplied more than 2,000 types of glass bottles to nearly 110 cosmetics companies in and outside South Korea every year. At the time of acquisition, the Pacific Glass factory had one furnace with a capacity of 80 tons, four production lines and extensive decorating capabilities, with adequate space for doubling its capacity. A query sent by Glass Machinery Plants & Accessories to Verescence remained unanswered at the time of going to press. Verescence joined the Value



of Beauty Alliance in December 2024. Founded at the beginning of 2024, the Value of Beauty Alliance brings together key players from the European beauty and personal care value chain. Alliance members include leading global cosmetics companies such as L'Oréal, Beiersdorf, Givaudan, IFF, Kiko Milano, Ancorotti Cosmetics, Albéa, DSM Firmenich, Puig, Fiabila, Patyka, Cosmetic Valley and Capua 1880. "We are proud to be the first container glass maker to join the Value of Beauty Alliance and to contribute to this essential initiative, which underscores the richness and importance of our ecosystem. With an annual turnover of EUR 29 billion and EUR 2.35 billion invested annually in research and development, the beauty and personal care industry plays a vital economic and societal role," Thomas Riou, CEO of Verescence, said in a statement.

TECHPACK SOLUTIONS

Founded in 1956, Techpack Solutions is the leading manufacturer of container glass and general packaging materials in South Korea. For the premium segments of the cosmetics industry, the company offers a wide range of glass, plastic and aluminium containers, serving domestic and worldwide markets. With an installed capacity of 260,000 tonnes per year through four furnaces, Techpack Solutions is the largest container glass producer in South Korea. Glass technology supplier EME undertook a complex batch plant upgrade at Techpack Solutions in 2021. In addition to modernizing the batch material dosing and weighing section, EME replaced the high-duty pan mixer in the batch area with very limited space and upgraded the cullet dosing, weighing and addition from a container scale system to a highly sophisticated modern belt scale system. A year earlier, in 2020, Techpack Solutions signed a contract with

industrial gas supplier Air Products to convert one of its furnaces from air-fuel to oxy-fuel for enhanced sustainability and competitiveness. "With Air Products' support, we have successfully converted two furnaces from air-fuel to oxy-fuel combustion and achieved remarkable improvements in NOx emission reductions, energy efficiency and productivity. We are confident in Air Products' innovative technologies, in-depth expertise and professional team and are pleased to continue working with them on our third furnace," said the technical team general manager of Techpack Solutions at the time of signing the contract.

SGC SOLUTIONS CO. LTD

With over 58 years of experience in the container glass industry, SGC Solutions Company

Limited is the second-largest container glass producer in South Korea, with an installed capacity of 600 tonnes per day of container glass products through three furnaces. The company has two production facilities in Nonsan and Cheonan. The majority of the company's container glass output goes to food and beverage companies, but SGC Solutions also caters to the cosmetics and perfumery industry through its premium offerings.

KUMBI CORPORATION

Established in 1957, Kumbi Corporation operates two container glass plants located in Onyang and Icheon, with a total installed capacity of 450 tonnes per day of container glass, utilizing seven individual section machines. ■

