



WestRock Named One of 12 Winners of NextGen Cup Challenge

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Company Recognized for Recyclable Cup for Hot and Cold Applications

ATLANTA, Feb. 28, 2019 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- WestRock (NYSE: WRK), a leading provider of differentiated paper and packaging solutions, announced today that its prototype of a recyclable fiber-based cup for hot and cold applications was named one of 12 winners of the NextGen Cup Challenge.

Sponsored by the NextGen Consortium, a multi-year partnership of foodservice industry leaders, the NextGen Cup Challenge was launched to identify solutions to reduce the waste generated by more than 250 billion fiber-based cups produced every year. More than 480 submissions from 53 countries and territories were submitted. Winners represent the most innovative solutions across three distinct categories: innovative cup liners, new materials and reusable cup service models.

WestRock was recognized in the innovative cup liner category for its circular cup, a recyclable and compostable paperboard solution for a hot or cold beverage cup. The cup is being designed to consistently hold hot and cold beverages under a variety of conditions while being easily recyclable, ideally back into paper mills as post consumer fiber where it can be made into new cups. The cup has also recently passed compostability testing with the Compost Manufacturing Alliance.

“The circular cup is an example of WestRock’s commitment to developing innovative solutions to improve the sustainability of our products, help our customers meet their sustainability goals and promote better stewardship of the environment,” said Bob Feeser, president of WestRock’s Consumer Packaging business. “We’re honored by this recognition and encouraged by the potential to advance the recovery of fiber cups globally with a truly recyclable cup.”

WestRock’s participation in the NextGen Cup Challenge represents the continuation of the Company’s effort to increase consumer access to, and recovery of, paper-based foodservice packaging, which also includes the acceptance of foodservice packaging at eight of its 100 percent recycled paperboard mills across the United

States.

For more information about WestRock's recycling and sustainability initiatives, visit <https://www.westrock.com/en/sustainability>.

About WestRock

WestRock (NYSE: WRK) partners with our customers to provide differentiated paper and packaging solutions that help them win in the marketplace. WestRock's team members support customers around the world from locations spanning North America, South America, Europe, Asia and Australia. Learn more at www.westrock.com.

About Closed Loop Partners

Closed Loop Partners (CLP) is an investment platform that invests in sustainable consumer goods, recycling and the development of the circular economy. Investors include many of the world's largest consumer goods companies and family offices interested in investments that provide strong financial returns and tangible social impact. In 2018, CLP launched the Center for Circular Economy, a New York City-based collaboration center for innovators to commercialize products, services and technologies that are leading the transition from a linear take, make, waste economy to a restorative one in which materials are shared, re-used, and continuously cycled. Learn more at www.closedlooppartners.com.

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