

WORLD 'FIRST' IN DEVELOPMENT OF DEGRADABLE ALUMINIUM-COATED PLASTIC PACKAGING FILM

Symphony Environmental Ltd, an acknowledged leader in oxo-biodegradable plastic, has achieved a world breakthrough in developing the first degradable, aluminium-coated plastic packaging film, based on its d₂w oxo-biodegradable additive.

The film was specially developed for the snack foods division of Bimbo Bakeries, in Mexico, Latin America's largest food and bakery company, with which Symphony signed a major contract for oxo-biodegradable food packaging last year.

Metallised plastic film is ideal for wrapping snack foods because it has all the flexibility of plastic with the added toughness necessary for a packaging which may have to stand up to a great deal of handling. Aluminium provides barrier properties that maintain freshness and extend the product's shelf life. To date, developing a metallised film that fulfils these requirements and then can be relied on to degrade completely has been a difficult challenge.

This tough, durable film is manufactured by combining three separate layers of d₂w-treated plastic, like a sandwich. The outside layers are polypropylene, one of which is coated electrolytically with a fine coating of aluminium, only a few microns thick. The inside layer is made of polyethylene, which acts as a bond for the outer two layers.

As all three layers of plastic incorporate d₂w oxo-bio additive, they will degrade completely at the end of their pre-programmed lifespan and harmlessly become bio-assimilated. The fine aluminium coating will break down into harmless particles and join the aluminium already in the environment where it is one of the earth's natural elements. (Around 8 per cent of the earth's crust is aluminium).

The film will be used to wrap Bimbo's Takis crisp range (known as 'chips' in Latin America.), which like other Bimbo products, is distributed throughout Mexico and the rest of the Latin American continent.

Symphony's d₂w oxo-biodegradable additive will make most plastics and polymers degrade completely to a pre-set time span from as little as six months onwards, leaving no fragments or harmful residues and without emitting any methane. Because degradation is automatic in the presence of air, the plastic will disappear altogether, even if discarded as litter. It will not emit methane even when buried in a landfill. Plastic made with d₂w is also fully recyclable in a normal waste stream.

Symphony is a quoted British company and one of the world's leading specialists in degradable plastics. Its oxo-bio additive, d₂w, is sold in over 70 countries to major users such as the Zara fashion chain, the Co-op, Tesco, Marks & Spencer (Middle East), French Railways, Tiger Brands of South Africa and the Brazilian Post Office.

Last year, enough d₂w was used round the world to make over 5 billion plastic products.

Says Michael Laurier, CEO of Symphony Environmental Technologies: "We are delighted to be associated with Bimbo yet again in this new initiative. It is proof of their concern for the environment to use packaging which provides the most effective ecological solution. It also demonstrates their confidence in our technology."

"Their decision to use d₂w when they announced their switch to oxo-biodegradable plastic last year was only made after extensive trials into its effectiveness. We look forward to helping them find the right ecological solutions in the future."

For further details, go to: www.d2w.net or www.biodeg.org

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