Innovating Circular Solutions in Food Packaging: Highlights

In a recent webinar hosted by industry leaders in chemical engineering and recycling technologies, experts gathered to discuss the future of circular food packaging, focusing on sustainable innovations and regulatory challenges. The event featured insights from Perstorp's Linda Zellner and Jivan Ibrahim, PETCORE Europe's Argiris Dabanlis, and NGR Recycling's David Hehenberger.

The road towards a more circular economy

Jivan Ibrahim, Business Development Manager at Perstorp, set the stage by emphasizing the critical role of plastics in food packaging, thanks to their properties ensuring food safety and durability. However, he acknowledged the environmental implications of plastic waste, highlighting the need for innovative solutions. Perstorp, with its long history in plastics along with a global presence, is at the forefront of addressing these challenges. Ibrahim introduced Akestra™, an innovative packaging solution designed to meet the pressing demands for recyclability in hot-fill applications, aligning with the upcoming PPW regulations for 2025.

Linda Zellner, VP of Innovation at Perstorp, delved deeper into Akestra™, showcasing its potential to evolve the industry by replacing traditional polystyrene with a more sustainable alternative. This innovative material not only supports the circular economy goals by reducing CO2 emissions but also leverages post-consumer recycled content, marking a significant step forward for more sustainable packaging solutions.

PETCORE Europe's Endorsement of Circular Practices

Argiris Dabanlis provided an authoritative perspective on PET recycling, explaining PETCORE Europe's role in endorsing and facilitating circular practices within the industry. He elucidated the tray-to-tray recycling concept, a critical component in achieving circularity and reducing the environmental footprint of PET products. Argiris concludes, “tray to tray recycling is not a myth but reality”.

Recycling Technologies by NGR

David Hehenberger introduced NGR's cutting-edge recycling technologies, highlighting the LSP (Liquid State Polycondensation)-technology that enhances the efficiency of PET recycling. This innovative approach not only supports the industry's sustainability goals but also addresses the technical challenges associated with recycling processes, ensuring the production of high-quality, recyclable PET materials. David continued with presenting tests with rPET flakes and Akestra ™ blended at 4% and 8 % and processed as received through LSP technology and with positive results. Proof of the technology can be seen in Spain where a new plant is already today producing 5000kg/hof post consume tray to tray recycled material.

Conclusion: Shaping the Future of Food Packaging

The webinar underscored the collaborative efforts required to advance circular food packaging. Innovations like Akestra™, coupled with strategic partnerships and advancements in recycling technologies, pave the way for a more sustainable future. As the industry navigates regulatory challenges and consumer expectations, the insights shared by these thought leaders offer valuable guidance and hope for achieving a truly circular economy in food packaging.

To experience the full content of the webinar register here to get access to the recording.

Akestra™ test results are shared in the Webinar.