



## USABLE PACKAGING – PRESS RELEASE

### USABLE PACKAGING CONSORTIUM WRITES TO EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS WITH SEVEN-POINT STRATEGY TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BIOBASED AND COMPOSTABLE PLASTIC INDUSTRY AS PART OF THE EU'S BIOECONOMY

September 2022 – As the European Commission prepares to publish its Policy framework on biobased, biodegradable, and compostable plastics, academics and industries who constitute the USABLE PACKAGING project partners have submitted a seven-point strategy for European Institutions to support the development and deployment of these circular solutions to help grow the EU's bioeconomy. The EC paper aims to lay down the framework within which these materials should be placed upon the EU market. The USABLE PACKAGING consortium believes the EU should seize the opportunity to develop a new industry that provides biobased and compostable solutions to plastic pollution and can play a key part in the bioeconomy.

Launched in June 2019, the USABLE PACKAGING project – funded by the Bio-Based Industries Joint Undertaking (JU) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation programme - aims to reduce the use of environmentally harmful fossil-fuel-based packaging by developing high-performance bio-alternatives derived from food industry by-products, to cover packaging and product needs for the food, drinks, pharmaceutical and clothing industries.

Signed on behalf of all project partners by project coordinator Prof José Maria Lagarón, of the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC), the letter reflects on recent EU policy reports and strategies as well as market trends and innovations across the globe, before urging EU institutions to capitalise without delay on these favourable conditions:

*“It would seem that now the momentum is behind biobased alternatives to plastics and that this is a golden opportunity for the EU to grasp to restore Europe to the leadership for the production of such materials,”* he writes. *“However, policy has to be aligned and clear,”* and he then warns: *“Those participating in the Usable Packaging project fear that the slow pace of policy change in the EU to promote and enhance the growth of biobased and compostable or biodegradable plastics, will lead to production growing outside of the EU”.*

Prof Lagarón then sets out the **seven points of action for European Institutions to support the development of a new industry based on the substitution of traditional plastics with biobased and compostable materials** and the reduction of plastic pollution.

These include:

- Relaunching the Bioeconomy Strategy in line with Finland's model
- Recognising the value for the EU market of the innovative industries that produce biobased and compostable materials
- Recognise the environmental and economic advantages of biobased and compostable plastics in food waste collection systems and recycling infrastructure
- Mandate the obligatory use of biobased and compostable materials in applications in which traditional plastics can only ever be contaminants
- Promote policies which ensure market space for innovation in materials manufacture
- Promote clearly identifiable labelling to avoid cross contamination in recycling and food waste collection
- Promote consumer communications to develop public understanding of compostable plastic recycling back to soil cycle

[READ THE LETTER TO EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS](#)



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#### About USABLE PACKAGING:

- Launched in June 2019 in Valencia, Spain, the Usable Packaging project aims to develop a portfolio of new bio-based, compostable packaging materials for application in the food, clothing, and pharmaceutical industries. The core objective of the project is to dramatically reduce the use of environmentally harmful fossil-fuel-based packaging by developing high performance bio-alternatives with adequate packaging properties.
- A consortium of 25 partners representing businesses, universities, research centres, trade associations and other organisations from all over Europe are working together on the project, led by Spain's Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Cientificas (CSIC).
- USABLE Packaging project consortium members:  
Agricultural University of Athens (AUA) – Greece ; Barilla – Italy ; Bio Base Europe Pilot Plant (BBEPP) – Belgium ; Biobased and Biodegradable Industries Association (BBIA) – United Kingdom; Bioinicia – Spain ; Bio-Mi – Croatia; Caviro – Italy; Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Cientificas (CSIC) – Spain; Gaiker – Spain; InnoExc – Switzerland; Innoven – Italy ; Institut National de la Recherche Agro-economique (INRA) – France; Koruma – Turkey; Euramaterials – France; Nova ID FCT – Portugal; Nuova OMPI – Italy; OROGEL – Italy; PHR – Poland; Sphere Distribution – France; Sabiomaterials – Italy; Sonae – Portugal; Universidade de Santiago de Compostela (USC) – Spain; Università di Bologna – Italy; Sapienza Università di Roma (UNIROMA) – Italy; Université de Montpellier – France
- The project has received funding from the Bio-Based Industries Joint Undertaking (JU) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation programme under grant No 836884. The JU receives support from the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation programme and the Bio-Based Industries Consortium.
- The project will close on 30 November 2022 – An end-of-project conference will take place on 9<sup>th</sup> November, during the [Ecomondo Green Technology Expo](#) in Rimini, Italy.
- Find out more about the Usable Packaging project at [www.usable-packaging.eu](http://www.usable-packaging.eu)