

Biodegradable packaging

Fact
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A major advantage of moulded fibre compared to plastic

Some packaging materials are biodegradable, for instance wood and paper. It is preferable to use degradable packaging because it will not lead to accumulated waste, e.g. in landfills, and because it makes composting possible.

Almost all materials decompose in nature, but the time it takes varies. A metal can will rust and disappear in time and even plastics decompose. However, much effort has been put into making metals and plastics more resistant to moisture, light, heat and gases. This increases the time it takes to decompose the materials even further. Most plastics get brittle after being exposed to sunlight for some time and the material breaks into small pieces, but it does not disappear.

Undesired results

As the amount of household waste has increased and the difficulties in finding new locations for controlled landfills have been accentuated, the demand for degradable packaging has grown. Some claim that plastic materials that are sensitive to sunlight disappear by themselves thereby avoiding pollution of our environment. This is,

however, not true. It takes so long to degrade conventional plastic that in reality plastic is considered completely non-degradable¹. That is one of the reasons for problems with littering.



Bio-degradation

The microorganisms found in the earth attack and consume food leftovers, parts of plants and cellulose-based packaging materials such as paper. A complete decomposition of paper materials will result in harmless substances, primarily carbon dioxide and water.

Hartmann packaging and biodegradability

The raw material of Hartmann's products is mostly recycled paper, approx. 80% newspaper and 20% magazines. A small fraction of products contain new fibres. There is no mixed office waste or other forms of contaminated paper in the products.

The moulded fibre packaging from Hartmann is easy to dispose of after use and can be composted.

¹ Reference: Affaldsteknologi (Waste technology) by Thomas H. Christensen, 1998.

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