

Coronavirus, MPs Letter, Montreal, Australia and the Dominican Republic

Michael Stephen, a spokesperson from the bioplastics industry, shares his thoughts and opinion on important issues impacting the bioplastics industry. Today, Michael writes about the Coronavirus, MPs Letter to the UK Press, Montreal, South Australia and the Dominican Republic.



Michael Stephen

Coronavirus

The plastics industry is helping in the fight against this deadly virus.

For twenty years Symphony Environmental's public health division has been researching and developing low-cost ways to make plastic hostile to dangerous micro-organisms such as bacteria, fungi, and viruses, by incorporating a special masterbatch in the manufacture of the plastic products.

The active ingredient in one of Symphony's d2p masterbatches is known to be effective against viruses of the Coronavirus type.

The active ingredient can also be incorporated into face-masks, aprons, gloves, overshoes, overalls etc.

These viruses can travel through the air and adhere to the surfaces of desks, counters, walls, kitchen worktops, chopping-boards, trays, and thousands of everyday products made from plastic, from which they can then transfer on contact to human beings.

MPs Letter to the UK Press

When I was a Member of the UK Parliament I was asked almost every day by lobbyists to sign a letter or an EDM which they had written to support some cause or other in aid of their clients. I usually declined.

However, I saw on 27th January that 13 MP's had been persuaded to sign a letter to The Guardian proposing "compostable" plastic as an alternative to recycling.

I agree that recycling does not make sense for most post-consumer packaging, but nor does "compostable" plastic. That kind of plastic does not convert into compost – it converts into CO₂ as required by EN13432 and ASTM D6400 (So it's actually deceptive to call it compostable).

The last thing the planet needs is more CO₂.

I mentioned on 21st January that the industrial composters of Oregon, USA, had published 9 reasons for rejecting that type of plastic ([Oregon composters dont want Compostable Packaging](#)) and on 31st January that the City of Exeter, UK, had also rejected "compostable" plastic, as well as paper [Link](#)

We all know that "compostable" plastic is tested to biodegrade in an industrial composting unit (if you can find a composter to take it) and must of course be collected, so it is not a solution to plastic waste which has escaped into the oceans.

The right packaging for that problem is plastic tested to ASTM D6954 to biodegrade if it gets into the open environment.

Montreal

The Mayor has a bad case of plastiphobia, (See report of The Green Alliance – column 14.1.20) and wants to ban all plastic bags in retail stores this year.

In fact all she needs to do is to require them to be made with d2w so that they will become biodegradable if they get into the open environment.

Amazingly she wants to ban that technology as well, so that any plastic that gets into the St. Lawrence River will float around for decades, and may end up in Chicago!

Who can possibly be lobbying her?

South Australia

More Plastiphobia here. As Chairman of the OPA I have just written to the government and to all South Australia legislators, advising them against copying the EU by legislating without sufficient scientific justification.

I told them that theirs is the most draconian piece of legislation against oxo technology that we have seen anywhere in the world.

It seeks to ban plastic products of every kind made with the technology, without any scientific study (comparable to that prescribed by Arts 69-73 of the European Union's REACH Regulation), and it seeks to ban the technology even if the plastic is proved to biodegrade!

We are advised that this is an unreasonable restraint of trade, and an abuse of legislative power which would be restrained by the courts.

By contrast, they would still permit ordinary plastics, which are the source of the microplastics found in the world today, and would also permit "compostable" plastics, which create microplastics if they get into the open environment.

I have drawn their attention to the reasons given by the industrial composters of Oregon, and by the City of Exeter UK, for rejecting "compostable" plastics

Dominican Republic

No plastiphobia here. Oxo-biodegradable plastics are used for bread and pastries, bubble plastic, carrier bags in supermarkets, containers for frozen foods, bags for garbage, gloves and aprons, containers for magazines and newspapers, rigid products such as bottles, cups and spoons, and other products with a short service life.

Earlier Postings in this Column

- 1/ 1/ 20 – [Plastiphobia, Microplastics and A Throw-Away Society](#)
- 7/ 1/ 20 – [Recycling, Lab Testing, Bangladesh and the Right Bioplastic](#)
- 14/1/20 – [Plastiphobia and Bioplastics Definitions](#)
- 21/1/20 – [Composting, the European Union and Unemployment](#)
- 30/1/20 – [Plastiphobia, Malaysia and a Case Against Compostables and Paper](#)

Interview with Michael Stephen

- [Questions and Answers on OXO-Biodegradability](#)

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