



For Immediate Release

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SYMPHONY ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGIES PLC
("Symphony" SYM)

THE PLASTIC BAG DEBATE

Symphony Environmental Technologies Plc ("Symphony" or "the Company"), the degradable plastics and waste-to-energy Group, welcomes the debate in the UK press about plastic bags and the interest which the Prime Minister is showing in the subject.

Symphony has over the past seven years made very large investments to create and develop an additive which, when added to normal polymers at the manufacturing stage, renders them oxo-biodegradable.

Oxo-biodegradable plastic bags pass the tests prescribed by American Standard 6954 and they degrade to carbon dioxide, water and biomass within a few months on land or in water leaving no fragments or harmful residues. They are made from a by-product of oil refining which would otherwise be wasted, so nobody is importing oil to make them. The oil is being imported to make petrol and diesel.

Symphony believes that it is wrong to ban plastic bags altogether, as they are so light, strong, durable, and convenient. Instead they (and all other plastic products with a useful life of 5 years or less) should be made oxo-biodegradable. If this were done, further accumulation of plastic waste in the environment would be greatly reduced. In Brazil, Argentina and in the city of Delhi, there is already legislation requiring shopping bags to be degradable.

Commenting on the decision of Marks & Spencer to charge 5p for each bag, Symphony's CEO, Michael Laurier said "The bags they are selling are made partly from recycled material and partly from virgin material, but they are not degradable and will still lie around in the environment for hundreds of years. As an environmentally-responsible company, M&S would be well advised to put our additive into their bags, as the Co-op has already done. The 5p they are charging would pay for the additive many times over."

Customers will not take their goods home in their pockets and the alternatives are worse for the environment. Starch-based bags (complying with EN 13432) made from crops are at least 400% more expensive, they are not strong enough and they emit methane (a serious greenhouse gas) in landfill.

It is the opinion of the directors of Symphony that it is wrong to use scarce land and water resources to grow crops to make plastic bags given that it drives up the cost of food for the poorest people.

The same applies to growing cotton or jute to make durable bags, which are usually transported thousands of miles from the Far East. These become unhygienic and become a durable form of litter quite soon, but they can be made from oxo-bio plastic to last up to 5 years.

Paper bags use 300% more energy to produce and to transport, and they are not strong enough.

Paper, jute and cotton, as well as starch-based plastics, will all emit methane in landfill.

For further information, please contact:

Symphony

Michael Stephen (Deputy Chairman)

**Tel: 020 8207 5900
07917-796444**

Carteret Communications

Max de Trensé

**Tel: 020 7 828-8598
07795-204078**

SYMPHONY ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGIES PLC is a world leader in oxo-biodegradable plastic technology. The technology is recognised by the d₂w[®] droplet logo on thousands of tonnes of oxo-biodegradable plastic products. Symphony develops and supplies environmentally-responsible d₂w[®] pro-degradant additives as well as d₂w[®] oxo-biodegradable plastic film and rigid packaging products.

Symphony has a diverse and growing customer base in the UK and has successfully established itself as an international business after signing distribution agreements for Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada & USA, the Caribbean, Chile, Colombia, France, India, Israel, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Portugal, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Uruguay, Qatar and other countries. Its d₂w[®] products can already be found in more than 50 countries.

Symphony is also developing innovative waste-to-energy technology and is exploring opportunities where there is a demand to convert plastics, tyres and other waste streams into valuable products by cost effective processes.

Further information on the Symphony Group can be found at www.symphonyplastics.com and www.degradable.net Further information on oxo-biodegradable plastic can be found on www.biodeg.org