

Press release

Mannheim, June 2021

Südzucker is providing new solutions for food packaging made of biobased plastics

Participation in BMEL-funded research projects

Two years ago, Südzucker Group submitted a proposal to a call for funding from the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) entitled "Biobased plastic packaging for food" to develop ideas for improving possible applications of biobased plastics in the food industry. Four very different research concepts have been granted from this call and are being funded by the BMEL through its project agency Fachagentur Nachwachsende Rohstoffe e. V. (FNR) which published a corresponding press release today. Südzucker is proud that its project is one of the four selected:

Biobased shrink films for freezing applications.

At Südzucker subsidiary Freiburger, a leading manufacturer of frozen pizzas, plastic films are used as packaging materials at various stages. Freiburger has been working intensively over the last years to reduce the amount of plastic used, following the motto: "as much as necessary, as little as possible". Films from bulk or outer packaging that accumulate at retailers can be specifically collected and added to the recycling process. However, the primary film in which the pizza is wrapped inevitably ends up as waste at the end consumer, where targeted and proper collection as in retail cannot be guaranteed. Südzucker is addressing this problem in the BioPrima project supported by the FNR – a research project for the production of biobased primary films that applied as shrink films protect frozen pizzas. The aim is to develop a new primary packaging with the special requirements for frozen pizzas and using the highest possible proportion of renewable raw materials based on starch in order to reduce the fossil share as much as possible. The use of the starch-based plastic AGENACOMP® from the Austrian subsidiary AGRANA Beteiligungs-AG will enhance the biodegradability of the packaging and make it home-compostable. In parallel, the possibility of recycling these films is also being evaluated.

Vegetable bags made from bio-based plastics

In addition to the FNR-funded project, Südzucker is also participating in another bioplastics project in Straubing, which is funded by the Bavarian Ministry of Economic Affairs, Regional Develop-

ment and Energy. Vegetable bags previously made entirely from fossil raw materials are replaced in several supermarkets in the region by vegetable bags made primarily from renewable raw materials such as starch. These bags are biodegradable and home-compostable and can be disposed of in the organic waste garbage during the trial period, which lasts several months. In this trial, complete compostability is being tracked and analyzed with other project partners.

"Südzucker Group develops and offers not only the raw material but also the production know-how for bio-based plastics for a world with less fossil-based plastic waste. As a partner in the field test of bio bags, it is our goal to participate in the development of sustainable economic cycles and put them into practice," said Dr. Wolfgang Kraus, head of Südzucker Research.

Press release of the FNR from 1 June 2021:

<https://www.fnr.de/presse/pressemitteilungen/aktuelle-mitteilungen/aktuelle-nachricht/neue-ansatze-fuer-lebensmittelverpackungen-aus-nachwachsenden-rohstoffen>

About the joint project: Biobased shrink films for freezing applications in the food sector directory (only in German available):

<https://www.fnr.de/index.php?id=11150&fkz=2220NR025A>

<https://www.fnr.de/index.php?id=11150&fkz=2220NR025B>

About the field test bio-bags (only in German available):

<https://www.carmen-ev.de/service/forschungsprojekte/praxistest-bio-beutel/>

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About the Südzucker Group

Südzucker, with its sugar, special products, CropEnergies and fruit segments, is one of the most significant food industry companies. In the traditional sugar business, the group is Europe's number one supplier of sugar products, with 23 sugar factories and two refineries, extending from France in the west via Belgium, Germany and Austria, through to Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania, Hungary, Bosnia, and Moldova in the east. The special products segment, consisting of the functional food ingredients for food and animal feed (BENEO) division, as well as chilled/frozen products (Freiberger), starch and portion packs (PortionPack Europe) divisions, conducts business in high-growth dynamic markets. The CropEnergies segment is responsible for the ethanol activities in Germany, Belgium, France and Great Britain. The group's fruit segment operates globally, is the world market leader for fruit preparations and is a leading supplier of fruit juice concentrates in Europe.

In 2020/21, the group employed about 17,900 persons and generated revenues of EUR 6.7 billion.