

Bioplastics for technical applications

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Abstract: Compared to previous years, the ecological awareness of consumers has increased. Before deciding to buy a particular product, they proceed to a more careful reflection. Issues such as ingredients, sustainability, waste prevention and separation are being considered increasingly.

Nature has a self-contained cycle which in terms of efficiency cannot be surpassed. Although our industrially manufactured products are characterized by a high level of complexity and know-how, their recycling is currently only possible to a limited extent. At the end of a product cycle, thermal recovery is often the viable option.

Renewable resources have many advantages in this regard. Bio-based plastics made from renewable resources e. g., which are not biodegradable, can be fully integrated into existing recycling systems. In the case of thermal recovery of biobased plastics ultimately only the amount of CO₂ which has been absorbed in the plants within their growth phase, will be burned.

Biodegradable solutions, on the other hand, offer alternative disposal routes. Thus, bioplastics make a decisive contribution to the circular economy.

Bio-based plastics, such as Bio-PE or Bio-PET can easily be used for existing packaging solutions. As a drop-in solution, they can replace petroleum-based products 1: 1. Other bio-based plastics such as e.g. PLAs can be modified by compounding so that their properties can be adapted to those of conventional polymers.

Bioplastics can also be used in technically more complex applications by appropriate modification. These include e.g. partially bio-based compounds based on PP or bio-based TPE or modified PLA compounds.

However, the most crucial work begins after the product development: the marketing of the products and the clear communication of the benefits to the consumer. A suitable marketing and sales strategy is required.

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