

04.04.2023 – 15:10 Uhr

European Bioplastics sides with specific EU Commission proposal / Why coffee capsules should be compostable

Berlin (ots) -

European Bioplastics (EUBP) supports the European Commission's intention of making coffee capsules mandatorily compostable and calls on the EU Parliament and Council to uphold this specific proposal to not undermine its effectiveness.

"While we regret that currently only a limited number of packaging applications have been suggested to mandatorily be compostable, we wholeheartedly support the Commission's inclusion of coffee capsules in the listing of products that, in the future, shall be allowed to be placed on the EU market only if certified compostable", says Hasso von Pogrell, Managing Director of EUBP.

Coffee makes up approximately 80% of a coffee capsule by weight. Capturing the capsules' main component via organic recycling ensures the greatest value retention from the used application, which is in line with the fundamentals of circularity. Compost containing coffee grounds has several benefits when used as a soil amendment. In any other end-of-life option, the valuable organic material is simply lost.

The Commission's Impact Assessment concludes that compostable coffee capsules are a preferred option from a Life-Cycle Assessment point of view. Compostable coffee capsules significantly increase the capture of biowaste, reduce the contamination of compost with non-compostable plastics, and do not lead to increased contamination of other waste streams.

If all single-serve units on the market are compostable in industrial composting facilities consumers can be sure where to dispose their capsules after use. Organic recycling operators have the peace of mind that whatever single-serve unit enters their facilities is safe and can biodegrade like the rest of the input material and does not leave persistent microplastics.

Given that separate collection of biowaste will be mandatory in the EU by 2024, there is no need for a dedicated infrastructure build up for collection, sorting and organic recycling of certified compostable coffee capsules. This is, however, not the case for other forms of coffee capsules on the market, for which recycling schemes exist in very few countries.

"We, therefore, strongly believe that organic recycling is the most environmentally sound end of life option for single serve coffee units and call on the Parliament and Council to keep coffee capsules on the proposed positive list for mandatorily compostable packaging applications as set out in the Commission's proposal for revised packaging rules (PPWR)", von Pogrell concludes. More information can be found on www.european-bioplastics.org.

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Original content of: European Bioplastics, transmitted by news aktuell

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