



Press release

ROMANIA'S PLASTIC BAG TAX CREATES NEW MARKET

Businesses in Romania are waking up to the need to source alternatives to conventional polythene after controversial legislation came into force imposing a tax on non-biodegradable plastic bags.

From 1st January 2009 the Romanian Government began charging an Ecotax of 0.2 RON on bags which are not biodegradable.

The new tax has sparked controversy among Romania's plastics manufacturers and importers, who argue that the legislation is ambiguous.

It has also created a new market in Romania for degradable polythenes as manufacturers and importers rush to catch up with the law.

UK manufacturer CFN Packaging is one of the first overseas companies to explore the emerging Romanian market for degradable polythene for bags and packaging.

Its degradable plastic packaging product Biothene™ is a green alternative to conventional polythene which decays harmlessly on exposure to sunlight within 12 to 18 months.

Biothene™ has just passed the first phase of a stringent international test which proves its degradability.

The material conforms to the first tier of a testing guideline published by ASTM International (formerly known as the American Society for Testing and Materials).

CFN Packaging Director Jayson Clark has been on a fact-finding visit to Romania where Biothene™ generated high levels of interest.

Mr Clark attended an international exhibition for the plastics industry in Bucharest and was encouraged by the interest shown in Biothene™.

CFN Packaging has already secured one major contract and expects to do more business in Romania in 2009.

“There has been a really good response and we hope to secure some exciting new business from the contacts we have made in Romania,” said Mr Clark.

“Environmental issues are now at the top of everyone’s agenda and our new degradable Biothene™ product will make a significant contribution to helping us to live more sustainably.

“A sturdy carrier bag which can be re-used several times before degrading harmlessly is much better for the environment than a cheap plastic bag which will stay in the environment for hundreds of years.”

Discarded plastic litter is a major problem in Romania and as more and more people become aware of the issue the demand for green alternatives continues to grow.

CFN Packaging’s environmentally friendly plastic products are proving popular: Biothene™ already accounts for almost 50 per cent of the carrier bags produced by the company and that figure is growing all the time.

Notes to editors

- CFN Packaging is an established family firm based in Lincolnshire, UK which manufactures polythene products for the packaging trade.

- The company employs 65 people and specialises in printed plastic carrier bags and in plastic packaging for produce for the food and retail market.
- Biothene™ is a revolutionary oxo-degradable polythene which starts to degrade upon exposure to sunlight.
- The process is accelerated by heat and once the material has been broken down into small particles these degrade into a non-toxic residue within 12 to 18 months.
- CFN Packaging has recently invested £1 million in two polythene extruders and a new recycler and is currently spending £250,000 on remodelling its premises.

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