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Sukano Launches Breakthrough BOPLA Masterbatch Technology to Enable Barrier Properties for Compostable Plastic Packaging

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Schindellegi, Switzerland, October 2, 2025 – In response to the EU Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR), which restricts the introduction of certain small single-use plastic packaging formats to the EU market, the packaging industry faces increasing pressure to find alternatives that meet regulatory requirements without sacrificing convenience. Sukano, in collaboration with NatureWorks, has developed an innovative compostable plastic packaging solution that offers both environmental benefits and commercial viability.

Compostable Packaging: A Smart Alternative for Small Formats Packaging

Compostable packaging is a suitable alternative for small-format packaging such as condiment packets, snack and candy wrappers, salad bags, lidding for containers, coffee pods, and sauce dippers, which are among the packaging types most affected by the PPWR, as they must meet strict recyclability requirements by 2030, or they will no longer be allowed on the EU market. These formats are often too small to be properly sorted by conventional recycling equipment, often ending up being mixed with other waste streams.

Compostable materials can be disposed of together with food waste, eliminating the need for sorting and cleaning. Thus, composting is the best end-of-life option for small format packaging, diverting organic waste and packaging from landfills and preventing multiple materials from entering the recycling streams. Composting reduces the carbon footprint of packaging, making them environmentally responsible and future-proof under the PPWR¹.

Collaboration to Leverage Powerful Research & Development

In the past, compostable packaging has faced challenges such as limited processability, poor barrier performance, and high investment costs. Sukano and NatureWorks have overcome these hurdles by respectively developing a masterbatch and a tailored biobased material. Together, they enable scalable production, making the transition from fossil-based plastics to compostable materials more feasible than ever. With over 20 years of experience in pioneering color and additive polylactic acid (PLA) based masterbatches, Sukano continues to lead in developing technologies that help customers stay ahead of market demands and regulatory changes.

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“By combining NatureWorks’ Ingeo™ biopolymer innovations with Brückner’s biax technology and Sukano’s proprietary S/AB surface additive, we’ve opened the door to a new generation of ultra-thin, cost-effective barrier films. These advances make it possible to reduce thickness while still delivering the sealability, barrier performance, and lamination strength brand owners need. They advance compostable packaging and enhance paper-based solutions, where Ingeo™ PLA coupled with Sukano masterbatches provides the functionality required for recyclability in the paper stream. At a time when brands are navigating evolving packaging regulations, this collaboration offers a sustainable and cost-competitive pathway forward.”- Roger Tambay, Chief Grow Officer, NatureWorks

Unlocking the Potential of BOPLA Films

The newly developed SUKANO® Antiblock masterbatch enhances the performance of NatureWork’s Ingeo™ Extend 4950D, enabling efficient processing of biaxially-oriented PLA (BOPLA) films on existing BOPP equipment. This allows customers to produce high-performance, compostable films with up to 7x transverse direction stretch, offering smoother processing, excellent printability, and enhanced optical properties.

The SUKANO® Antiblock masterbatch significantly improves the surface quality of BOPLA coex films for efficient film handling and enhanced barrier properties. In the inner layer, the masterbatch increases surface roughness, preventing the film from sticking during winding and secondary processing. In the outer layer, the masterbatch helps create a smooth and uniform surface to obtain a continuous layer of aluminum with strong adhesion. This results in fewer defects in the metal coating, which is key to achieving excellent barrier properties that meet market requirements. The positive results were confirmed by extensive trials at Bruckner Maschinenbau GmbH.

“In this important bioplastics project, we were able to bring in the complete equipment of our unique R&D environment. Overall, it was a great collaboration with the best in their field along the complete value chain – and with outstanding results. The great thing about it: the results achieved can also be applied to production facilities, making the whole topic commercially available.” - Martin Wolf, Head of Laboratories, New Technologies.

Our biopolymer portfolio is designed for compostability, enabling end applications to meet the requirements of the EN 13432 standard.

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Daniel Ganz, Senior Product Development Leader from Sukano, will present the SUKANO® Antiblock for BOPLA at the Bioplastics Business Breakfast, held during K2025 in Düsseldorf on October 9th, from 9:05 AM to 9:25 AM. Join the session to learn how this breakthrough technology enables efficient processing of compostable BOPLA films on existing BOPP equipment.

Visit the **Sukano Group at Booth H28, Hall 8A** to explore BOPLA coffee capsule lids and flexible portion packs designed for the hospitality sector.

About Sukano

Sukano is a global specialist in the development and production of additive and color masterbatches and compounds for polyesters, biopolymers, high-temperature polymers, and specialty resins. The company is driven by expertise and devotes its technical knowledge to developing innovative products and highly specialized solutions that go into packaging, consumer durables, building and construction, healthcare and fibers.

The pioneering and entrepreneurial spirit that the company was founded upon continues to this day. The emphasis on partnerships and collaborations that catalyze change and drive sustainable business models and innovative products is at the heart of this effort.

For more information, visit www.sukano.com.

Source:

¹ European Bioplastics. "Environment." European Bioplastics e.V., www.european-bioplastics.org/bioplastics/environment/. Accessed 30 Sept. 2025.