HARMFUL CHEMICALS IN FOOD PACKAGING HAMPER THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY

We need safe food contact materials to use, reuse and recycle, in order to achieve a toxic-free circular economy.

#TOXICFREEPACKAGING

Food comes into contact with many different materials during its production, processing, storage, preparation and serving. The chemicals used in the processing and packaging of our food may contribute to cancer, reproductive disorders and hormone disruption.

These chemicals are not removed from packaging in the recycling process – quite the opposite. Higher levels of chemicals and non intentionally added substances (NIAS) can still be found in recycled food packaging.

1

Recycling is part of achieving a circular economy, but it cannot be at the expense of public health.

To ensure food packaging is safe to use, reuse and recycle, hazardous chemicals should be banned from even entering this material and product cycle.

2

Current EU legislation does not adequately prevent toxic recycling, as it does not properly halt the recycling of hazardous chemicals or contaminated waste into new packaging or foodware.

Due to a lack of transparency and traceability, waste managers themselves have limited information about what they recycle.

3

Several health-harming chemicals **can be** found in recycled paperboard used for food packaging.

Higher levels of phthalates are commonly found in recycled plastic, and brominated flame retardants in black plastic.

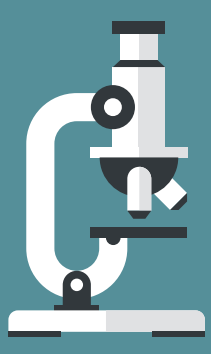
4

Chemical recycling is claimed to remove all contaminants from waste and make new plastics ready for contact with food. But there is not enough transparent information about the toxicity of the solvents and chemicals used in the process or the fate of the waste and by-products.

The technologies require large amounts of energy to process and purify the materials, thus contributing to climate change.

WE NEED EU REGULATION THAT PREVENTS HARMFUL CHEMICALS FROM ENTERING INTO FOOD CONTACT MATERIALS, TO PROTECT OUR HEALTH AND CREATE A TOXIC-FREE CIRCULAR ECONOMY.

TO ADEQUATELY PROTECT OUR HEALTH, POLICYMAKERS NEED TO:



Thoroughly assess, measure and control chemicals in food contact materials, including food packaging.

Prohibit known substances of concern in all food contact materials, to protect health and prevent toxic recycling.

Improve transparency and traceability of chemicals throughout the supply chain, including recycling processes, and throughout the supply chain, including recycling processes and at the point of sale.

Set the same standards for primary and recycled food contact materials, to guarantee the same level of safety and build consumer trust in recycled materials.

Ensure that food packaging is designed to be toxic-free, reusable (as much as possible), and recyclable at the end of their life cycle.

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