FCM policy in the EU
Time to close the safety gap

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By Safe Food Advocacy Europe
About CHEM Trust

• UK and EU registered charity to protect humans and wildlife from harmful chemicals

• Working with scientists, technical processes and decision makers, in partnership with other civil society groups

• Focus on identification of, and action on, hormone disrupting chemicals

• See our blog & Twitter for more: chemtrust.org & @CHEMTrust
The widening gap

• EU FCM policy has fallen behind other chemicals safety rules
  – Public health not properly protected
  – In the absence of EU action, Member States try to ban the most hazardous chemicals (phthalates, bisphenols, PFAS)

• While the policy agenda is moving on
Green Deal for a toxic-free environment

• a deal between the EU and its citizens to tackle climate and pollution crises requiring a deep economic transformation.

• **Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability** (Oct. 2020): Ban the most hazardous chemicals from consumer products, including FCM; accelerate regulation based on a generic exposure assessment and grouping of substances.
Circular economy

- Recycled FCM are often less safe than virgin materials, especially in largely unregulated areas like paper and cardboard or if the most hazardous chemicals are still present.
Our demands

• **By 2030: ban the most hazardous chemicals from consumer products including from FCM**
  – Start immediately with group restrictions, including PFAS and bisphenols
  – More to be done under REACH 2.0, with a generic approach for persistent, bioaccumulative or mobile substances or substance which interfere with human hormone systems.

• **Deliver root and branch reform**
  – Ensure harmonisation for all FCM categories
  – Apply the no data, no market principle
  – Establish positive list of substances, like DWD
Key resources

• CHEM Trust webpage on Food Contact Materials - chemtrust.org/food-contact-materials/

• Where you can sign up to receive the monthly *Food for Thought* newsletter, produced by CHEM Trust, the Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) and Zero Waste Europe.
HAMRFUL CHEMICALS IN FOOD PACKAGING ARE PUTTING OUR HEALTH AT RISK

We need safe food contact materials in a toxic-free circular economy.

The chemicals used in the production, processing, preparation and packaging of food may contribute to cancer, harm reproduction and cause hormone disruption.

MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT FOOD CONTACT MATERIALS:

1. **MYTH**
   - EU regulations guarantee that materials and articles coming in contact with food are free of harmful chemicals.
   - **TRUTH**
   - Not all materials used for food contact are regulated at EU level and many harmful substances can be used. Additionally, many chemicals are still not comprehensively assessed for safety by public authorities. This includes so called non-intentionally added substances (NIAS), that are proven as impurities in the products of manufacturing processes.

2. **MYTH**
   - Single-use containers or paper packaging are always good alternatives to better plastic products.
   - **TRUTH**
   - Food packaging made of paper or cardboard are not regulated at the EU level. They can still cause exposure for the harmful substances and other substances in the future. Other materials marketed as plastic free alternatives, such as bamboo, have not necessarily been approved for food contact use either.

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.

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.

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 eat, reuse and recycle, hazardous chemicals should be avoided when designing the material and product itself.

Current EU legislation does not adequately protect consumers. In many cases harmful chemicals can be found in new packaging or foodstuffs.

Through a variety of means and channels, many managers have found it hard to find information about what they recycle.

Several harmful chemicals are transferred from food packaging, plastic and treated fibres from household textiles to food and water.

Chemical recycling is claimed to transform all kinds of plastics into a so-called reusable raw material ready for use in new products. This claim lacks enough transparent information about the toxicity of the chemicals and chemicals used in the process or the fate of the waste and the products.

The technologies require large amounts of energy to process and products made this way end up contributing to climate change.

https://www.env-health.org/issues/toxicchemicals/#infographics