

BIODEGRADABLE/SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING THOUGHTS

1. Biodegradable/Sustainable film is made up on one layer (mono layer) of film. While this is great to put leaves and quite possibly some trash in, it doesn't protect the product (or keep it fresher...longer...which is what Barrier film is made to do...and what clients want it to do).
2. Barrier film is made up of several films laminated together. This prevents any pin holes and/or air, moisture, or odor to get in or go out. Because of all of these layers together, the films are very strong (strong enough and rigid enough to allow the pouches to stand), durable, and protective. Biodegradable film isn't strong enough (it is a very weak film) so the film cannot be made to stand (if someone wants a Stand Up Pouch...fyi we don't just sell Stand Up Pouches, we sell all types and styles of barrier bags (Stand Up Pouches are just one of the styles)
3. Barrier film (like Stand Up Pouches) can be recycled with other types of plastics and ground up to be used in other plastic products...fyi. This ground up plastic can be used as regrind and filler for other plastic products but it is not purely recycled.
4. What about the trees? With the attempt to create "sustainable" packaging...we are destroying trees at an alarming rate. How is this helping the environment?
5. Here's the icing on the cake...if you will. All packaging, whether it is sustainable or barrier film is sent to the landfills as garbage when thrown away. Let's face it, landfills smell (stink), so the first thing they do when the trash gets there is BURY IT (to minimize the smell). The one thing required for any type of packaging to degrade (break down)...whether it is a paper product or a biodegradable film... is sunlight (UV). Because the trash is buried and cannot get UV light, it doesn't break down (or it takes 20 years for it to break down). There have been studies done where they've drilled into a landfill and pulled out newspapers (paper) from 20+ years ago and could still read it...and this is paper! The papers (and other trash) were buried and never had a chance to break down due to not having had any sunlight.

So, until people want sustainable packaging with open air landfills and exposure to sunlight, it's going to be hard for anything to break down. We are not in a position to design packaging for our clients that could quite possibly adversely affect their product's taste, nutrients, performance, appearance, shelf life etc. The "big boys" in the industry have poured millions into research and have had some success but nothing that we feel comfortable recommending at this point...nothing that we could offer and say to our clients, "ship your product with confidence using this packaging." Our commitment is to our clients to help them present and protect their products better than any other company.

Let me make this very clear...we support any efforts to protect our environment. However, we have not seen any product that consistently provides the barrier protection our clients need and demand that also helps the environment.

SEE BELOW:

-----Original Message-----

From: brian@crapola.us [<mailto:brian@crapola.us>]

Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 3:22 PM

To: Chris Brxius

Subject: Re: ABC-Packaging - Stand Up Pouches

Hi Chris, and thanks for the email. I had a problem opening the PDF file, so couldn't view the info you enclosed. I believe the problem is on my end, and I'm having the tech guy look at it, but doubt that he will get anything done before next week. If you have the attachment in another format, I might be able to read that - otherwise I'll wait until he figures it out. I'm not much of a computer guy myself.

I believe I contacted your company perhaps a year ago in my search for packaging. I ended up going with another outfit, though. The decider for me was that the bags they offered were a 100% biodegradable combination of PLA and kraft paper. **Unfortunately, I'm having some water vapor transmission problems with them in the more humid months and have to add a liner bag to prevent the product from getting mushy.**

If I remember right, a representative from ABC told me that you didn't carry a stand-up pouch that was biodegradable. They said that while some layer(s) may be PLA, there had to be a petroleum-based layer somewhere in the sandwich of layers to provide a vapor barrier. **I have since learned that he was right.**

So either I'm getting my companies mixed up, or technology has improved since our last correspondence. As far as more info about our product, we make "Crapola", which is a cranberry-apple granola. You can see our product and the packaging at our website www.crapola.us. We're still a pretty small outfit, but expanding extremely rapidly.

Without being able to view the info you sent me, I can't really respond to it. Now that we've had our product in "earth friendly" packaging for awhile, our customers have told us how much they like that. I don't know if you have anything like that, but if you do have some stand-up pouches (or another product you could recommend) that are totally biodegradable, then I would really appreciate some samples. Our address is Crapola!, 1487 N. White Iron Rd., Ely, MN 55731. Thanks again.
Brian