

A-maizing packaging

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The international market for "natural" packaging is rapidly expanding, according to a study conducted by Grapentine Co of Britain. The study revealed that 59% of European consumers consider purchasing fresh food in "nature-based" packaging as "very desirable". Roughly 72% said they would pay 10Ec (90SAc) more for fresh foods packaged in nature-based packaging, while 67% were willing to spend an extra 20Ec per food item.

"Consumers want wholesome, fresh meals home, but food is becoming only part of the equation," said Cargill Dow business development manager Stefano Cavallo. "We believe consumers also want to take food home in packaging that contributes to their families' wholesome food experience." Cargill Dow, based in Minnesota, US, is producing polylactide (PLA) plastic pellets, which it has branded as NatureWorks™ PLA, via a fermentation and distillation process. The process taps into the carbon stored in plant starches at present derived from maize (in future other sources like straw might be developed). For more on this, search for "NatureWorks" on www.developotechnology.com.

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