

DeeDee, plastics and sustainability

Sustainability is – and will be – a hot topic. We are aware of this and as a packaging supplier we pay attention to this topic. But is plastic really that bad or less sustainable than other packaging solutions and how easily can you switch to "better" alternatives?

By means of blogs, we would like to give you a look at how we deal with sustainability and what we encounter in our business. In our first blog we would like to discuss our view regarding sustainability, the use of recycling codes and multilayer recyclable PE- and PP bags.

Our mission

DeeDee unburdens you regarding a sustainable packaging solution. It is our mission to develop the perfect stand-up pouch together with our customers, which is suitable for your product and filling process, but is also appealing to your customers.

We strive for the following elements regarding sustainability.

1. *Protection of the product to **prevent food waste***

Without trivializing the waste problem, food waste is one of the biggest problems of our time and packaging is simply necessary to ensure that products have a longer shelf life. The most important thing is that the packaging optimally protects the product and is (food) safe. The changing society also changes the consumer behaviour. More and more resealable and/or portion packages are introduced in the market to prevent food waste.

2. *A compact as possible package with as **minimal as possible packaging weight***

We never make packaging larger than necessary and never use more material than necessary. If it is possible to use thinner materials or fewer layers plastic, ofcourse we do this. We must take into account the wishes and requirements of the customer and ensure that optimum product protection is guaranteed.

Did you know, for example, that a stand-up pouch compared to a glass jar with comparable content contains up to 80% less weight and material? This not only results in less waste, but also in fewer CO₂ emissions because less transport is required to transport an equal number of packages.

3. **Recyclable, innovative and progressive**

Recyclability and circularity are concepts that pass by every day. For multi-layer packaging, it is often still unclear whether they are recyclable and in which category they belong. DeeDee has the ambition to offer packaging to the existing (plastic) recycling systems (which, incidentally, still differ per country, also in Europe). Within the Netherlands this is Plastic Heroes, and internationally this can be checked with local authorities.

We try to make sure that our products can be offered to the current plastic recycling systems by ensuring the following elements:

- replace aluminum packaging with 100% plastic laminates
- In the future we will come to such a composition that we use mono material and / or can use recycled materials.
- Advise our customers on which materials, shapes and sizes are the most sustainable for their product and process
- Advise our customers on how the sustainability of the packaging solution can be incorporated and indicated on the design.



International Recycling Codes

Our pouches, if consisting of 100% plastic, can be identified with Resin Identification Code (RCI) number 7. If you have multilayer packages consisting of different plastic materials combined with an aluminium layer, then Resin Identification Code (RCI) 90 can be used.

RCI is an international identification coding system that was originally published in 1988. The codes have been created to characterize different materials so that they can be sorted correctly for possible reuse. The codes consist of the recycling symbol with a number in the middle indicating which material is involved. Underneath the logo there is often an abbreviation that indicates the corresponding material group, for example PET or LDPE. This is to reinforce the symbol. Sometimes you also see PET / PE or C / LDPE. PET / PE indicates that the pouch contains both a PET and PE layer. C / LDPE indicates that it is a composite material with LDPE as the main component.



The current system works, but certainly for composite (multi-layered) materials that are "new" for this system, there is still much uncertainty. The abbreviations currently used do not indicate which materials are exactly present in the packages. On top of that, code 7 and code 90 are often still associated with "bad", because many packages that used to bear these codes in the past automatically ended up as residual waste. However, the recycling and waste processing systems are making progress, also for composite materials. Therefore, we recommend to check with the national authorities how the symbols can be used best and to which category your packaging actually belongs. We are happy to provide you with solid advice to categorize and display your packaging as well and as sustainably as possible.

Food safety and stand-up pouches consisting of one material

Many of our pouches must be food-safe and suitable for certain processing processes (such as heating). Often, our pouches must have certain barrier properties, such as protection against UV, oxygen and/or water vapor. For these reasons, it is not always possible to use recycled plastic or to remove a layer of material. Because of these reasons, we often work with virgin (original) materials and will have to start at the top of the recycling chain.

However, a number of alternatives are already available from our producers. For example, pouches consisting of one type of plastic. These bags are made, for example, by combining a single or different types of PE (polyethylene) or combining a single of different types of PP (polypropylene).



They are not yet made from recycled material, but are recyclable as mono material, the highest attainable coding for recycling! Are you interested in this packaging and whether it may already be applicable to your product? Then please [contact us!](#)



Conclusion

The market is constantly changing and everyone has their opinion regarding sustainability. We are following all developments and take a clear position with regard to sustainability. As soon as we can optimize packaging in such a way that it can be made completely recyclable or made from recycled material, we will certainly do so. As Pouch Professionals, it is our job to provide you with sound advice!

We frequently consult with our factories, but also with sustainability authorities to increase our joint knowledge about the complexity of laminate packaging and to come to more sustainable alternatives together. Until then, we maintain that every step in recycling (circularity) is a step into the right direction which contributes to a more sustainable world.

Next time we will focus on biobased and biodegradable materials. See you on our next blog ☺!

