



Biodegradable pack research

## Defra calls for waste research

The government is to commission research into biodegradable packaging and collection and recycling systems to aid delivery of its Waste Strategy for England.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) said key research topics would include looking at whether producer responsibility gives the right incentives for product design and waste prevention, re-use and recycling, and the environmental impacts of biodegradable and degradable packaging.

The Waste Strategy for England, published in May, featured proposals for the creation of optimum minimum standards for packaging.

● See Business Savvy, page 39  
 More from [www.defra.gov.uk/environment/waste/wip/research/index.htm](http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/waste/wip/research/index.htm)

# Searle blasts ‘lack of political courage’

by Simeon Goldstein

Packaging Federation chief executive Dick Searle wants the industry to “go on the attack” to counter “political dishonesty”, after packaging was put back on the agenda at party conferences.

Searle said that politicians “understand very well” what the real issues are, but “lack the political courage” to do something about the bigger picture of implementing “a massive change in lifestyle”. He said car use and poorly insulated housing were much greater causes for concern.

“Packaging is being made a scapegoat, but it’s a minute part of the problem and, actually, we’ve dealing with this issue for years,” he added.

In September, the Conservatives went on the offensive against packaging in their Quality of Life policy report, which said the move to a “zero waste economy” would require “focusing efforts on preventing waste in the first place” through, for example, “reducing packaging”.

## POLITICAL PARTY POLICIES ON PACKAGING

### Liberal Democrats

- Create a national body to tackle large-scale producers of excess packaging
- Introduce deposit schemes to encourage the reuse of plastic carrier bags
- Fiscal incentives to reduce excess packaging

### Conservatives

- Create a National Resources Trust to enhance the promotion and enforcement of existing packaging legislation
- No aluminium to be sent to landfill by 2010; 2015 for biodegradable material
- Consider exempting manufacturers of compostable packaging from take-back liabilities

### SNP

- Develop a database to enable targets for recovery and recycling of packaging waste to be set in Scotland
- Review the packaging recovery regulations to improve investment in recovery and processing and to introduce deposit refund schemes to help stimulate recovery

### Labour

- Tighten packaging legislation to allow more effective enforcement action against cases of excessive packaging
- Set “optimum minimum standards” for packaging

The Liberal Democrats, meanwhile, passed a motion at their conference calling for “binding targets” on packaging

reduction to replace the “ineffective” voluntary Courtauld Commitment.  
 ● See Comment, page 31

## PN Food Forum date announced

*Packaging News* will highlight the key trends in food packaging at a forum in November.

The event, which will take place on 20-21 November in London, will feature a supplier exhibition and a series of workshops on the main issues affecting the sector.

The Waste & Resources Action Programme has already confirmed it will present a workshop on the role of packaging in reducing food waste.

The *Packaging News* Food Forum, which will take place at the Victoria Park Plaza in London, will feature a delegate dinner on the evening of 20 November and the supplier exhibition and workshops on 21 November.

For more details contact Antony Hawman on 020 8267 4009, or email [antony.hawman@haymarket.com](mailto:antony.hawman@haymarket.com).



Food forum: 20-21 November

## FaraPack focus on smart packs

Expert insight into ‘smart’ materials for packaging will be one of the highlights of the FaraPack Briefing 2007, organised by Faraday Packaging Partnership.

The session on smart materials, delivered by Professor Richard Jones, the new senior strategic advisor for nanotechnology at the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council, will be followed by an interactive ‘masterclass’.

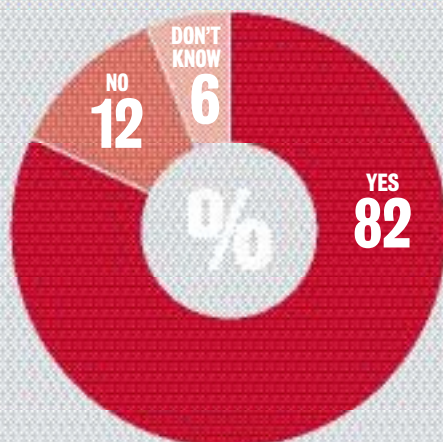
The FaraPack Briefing, which takes place from 6-7 November at York Racecourse, will look at major issues affecting FMCG packaging.

More from [www.faradaypackaging.com/briefing](http://www.faradaypackaging.com/briefing)

## YOU DECIDE

### Last month we asked you...

Should private prosecutions be allowed in cases of copycat packaging?



**This month's question**  
 Which main political party's policies will do most to help packaging?  
 (see above)

To register your vote go to [www.packagingnews.co.uk](http://www.packagingnews.co.uk)

## Stanelco losses up 50% on 2006

Stanelco continues to restructure its business after recording a big increase in losses for the first half of the year.

The bioplastics packaging specialist reported an interim pre-tax loss of £3.47m – a 49% increase compared with the first six months of 2006 – despite revenue growing by a similar proportion to £3.8m.

Stanelco said it had “taken measures” to cut costs and had halved staff numbers at its headquarters. Its loss before exceptional items was £1.7m, £600,000 less than for the same period last year.

Much of Stanelco's revenue growth has come from its Biotec joint venture with French firm SPhere.