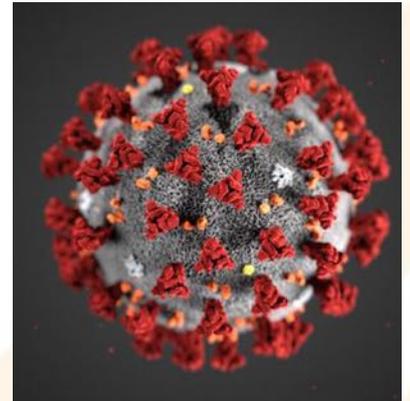


## DEMAND FOR STERILE PACKAGING GROWS AMID COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The coronavirus outbreak is changing attitudes and behaviours of consumers now and for the foreseeable future. Concerns about viral exposure, and its ability to survive on surfaces may, however, fuel a much longer lasting demand for new packaging and materials that exhibit actively antiviral and antibacterial properties. Additionally, existing consumer concerns about handling and cleanliness throughout the supply chain will be amplified, potentially resulting in a new era of communication and trust building to reassure consumers that they are protected.

Obviously, this has an important consequence for Foodservice and FMCG. Consumers still have to handle the products they purchase and bring into the home, without complete certainty of who or what those products have been in contact with. It also has the potential to affect product choice based on consumers' risk assessment of a particular food, packaging type, and so on.

This will stimulate innovation, associated with the Sterilized Society trend. Research is ongoing into antibacterial and antiviral polymers and biopolymers for packaging – materials that are enhanced with active drug elements that are efficient and exhibit low toxicity. Demand for such materials in day-to-day consumer products may rise significantly post-Covid-19, as consumers are likely to maintain concerns and habits learnt during this difficult period.



## BCMPA receives huge number of co-packing enquiries

The British Contract Manufacturers and Packers Association (BCMPA) is receiving large numbers of enquiries with the on-set of the Coronavirus pandemic.

In March its website attracted over 21,000-page views with its highest number of enquiries for the online 'Send a project enquiry' feature.

Rodney Steele, BCMPA Chairman, says that the organisation's contract manufacturing and packing members were showing 'resilience and flexibility', adapting production lines and reorganising packing teams to suit the demands of the rapidly changing environment.



## EUROPEAN INDUSTRY ORGANISATIONS WARN OF CARDBOARD SHORTAGE



Industry bodies from across the packaging value chain are warning of a shortage of cardboard and paperboard, due to decreased recycling collection rates during the coronavirus crisis.

In the UK, a letter has been sent from The Recycling Association to DEFRA asking it to ensure that recycling collections from households are maintained.

Cepi, a European association representing the pulp and paper industry, has also recognised the current strain on recycling systems, due to reduced collections and closing of sorting centres.

There is a strong possibility reduced collection and processing of cardboard could quickly result in the shortage of the raw material that could force production of new card to be stopped which would then cause major complications further up the supply chain.

## Study reveals 'hidden plastic pollution footprint' of major consumer brands



International relief and development agency, Tearfund, has found that the emissions produced from the open burning of Coca-Cola, Nestlé, PepsiCo and Unilever's plastic packaging on street corners, open dumps and in backyards in developing countries is a major contribution to the climate emergency.

The findings, part of the organisation's Rubbish Campaign, are said to show that the food and beverage companies must urgently switch to sustainable refillable and reusable packaging alternatives instead of single-use plastic packaging and sachets.

The report also highlighted the scale of demand for change from consumers in developing countries. In India, for example, 90% of respondents said they would buy their products in refillable and reusable containers as opposed to throwaway containers if it led to significantly less plastic pollution in their community, and the cost was the same.



## Eight European packaging events postponed due to coronavirus

The Covid-19 coronavirus pandemic has had a significant effect on the packaging industry, including the international events at which manufacturers usually showcase their new product lines.

### Specialty Papers Europe 2020

Postponed to an unconfirmed date later this year.

### E-Pack Europe

Postponed with the date yet to be confirmed.

### Interpack 2020

Postponed and will now take place from 25 February to 3 March 2021.

### CosmoPack

After initially being rescheduled from March to June, the show has again been rescheduled to 3 to 7 September 2020.

### Plastipak İzmir 2020 Fair

The event has been postponed to 26 to 29 May 2021

### IFFIP

The event has been postponed to 17 to 19 June 2020.

### EmbaxPrint

The event has been postponed to 19-22 November 2020.

### MetPack

Postponed to 23 to 27 February 2021.

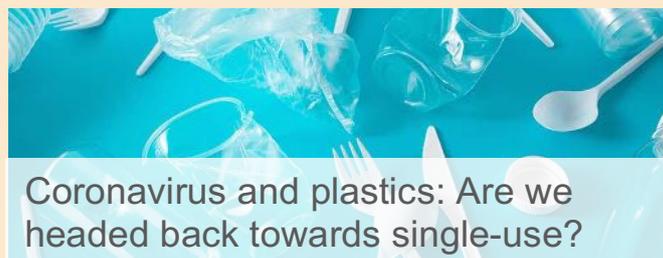


## Scottish government delays publication of beefed up Climate Change Plan

The Scottish government has postponed publication of its updated national Climate Change Plan due to the coronavirus outbreak.

The move comes amidst mounting speculation over how other national timetables will be impacted by COVID-19.

The Paris Agreement requires all signatory countries to submit updated national climate action plans by the end of 2020 and governments had been widely expected to tackle strengthened plans ahead of the COP26 Climate Summit in Glasgow. This was due to take place this November but has now been postponed until 2021.



## Coronavirus and plastics: Are we headed back towards single-use?

As the global economy struggles with the pressures of Covid-19, some industry groups are using the need for more protective equipment as a means to lobby for the removal of charges and bans on single-use plastics.

A knock-on effect of the virus has been the delay to key legislative introductions, with Scotland, New York and Maine all announcing delays to laws that will limit SUPs.

Given its claims for hygiene and easy disposability, it might be assumed that the plastics industry could be one of the main benefactors of the pandemic. However, a BPF survey of plastics producers in the UK suggests otherwise.

Almost 80% of the plastics companies are expecting a drop in turnover over the next six months. In total, 98% expressed concerns over the coronavirus's impact on business operations, while 90% said the outbreak would impact supply chains and more than 50% claimed that it had impacted staff working abilities. The main disruption to the industry is the lack of viability in working from home.

As some parts of the plastics industry push to exploit loopholes and pushbacks on legislation, many are urgently wanting to ramp up productivity to assist with national responses to a pandemic. The balance comes in ensuring that new plastics production doesn't do what it historically always has done, harm the natural environment and drive climate change.

In a time of unprecedented disruption, it is easy to let one prevailing issue consume all our efforts and focus. But there are challenges beyond the pandemic and resorting back to before the "Blue Planet effect" will merely create more issues in the long run.