



**27.-29.9.2022
NÜRNBERG**

Story

September 2022

How packaging vanishes into thin air

With its packaging made from seaweed, Notpla is a pioneer in bio-based packaging. The company successfully overcame the challenges of scaling-up, and is now offering a whole range of promising packaging solutions that disappear naturally, just like a piece of fruit.

Rodrigo García González and Pierre-Yves Paslier's idea for a completely new packaging did not originate in a typical start-up garage, but their kitchen played an important role in the early days of Notpla. There, the two experimented with a recipe for a material that would not only be practical, but also completely biodegradable. The incentive came from a project the inventors chose during their master's degree in Innovation Design Engineering at Imperial College in London. Concerned about plastic waste, they both developed an interest in finding innovative alternatives to single-use plastic.

Since the peel of fruit is an example of packaging found in nature, they tried to imitate this model. First, they looked at what techniques already existed in the food industry or in the kitchen for encapsulating liquids. They finally discovered a suitable candidate in the form of algae extracts. These extracts are already being used successfully to produce caviar imitations by means of a special technique. After finding the suitable raw material, they tried to enlarge the small caviar bubbles. After many prototypes, they were eventually able to produce larger bubbles that were transparent and edible - the first Oohos were born.

An online video that the two produced at the time attracted a lot of interest on social media, and a Business Insider video gained over 20 million views!

Veranstalter
Organizer
NürnbergMesse GmbH
Messezentrum
90471 Nürnberg
Germany
T +49 9 11 86 06-0
F +49 9 11 86 06-82 28
fachpack@nuernbergmesse.de
www.fachpack.de

Vorsitzender des Aufsichtsrates
Chairman of the Supervisory Board
Marcus König
Oberbürgermeister der Stadt Nürnberg
Lord Mayor of the City of Nuremberg

Geschäftsführer
CEOs
Dr. Roland Fleck, Peter Ottmann

Registergericht
Registration Number
HRB 761 Nürnberg



**27.-29.9.2022
NÜRNBERG**

This motivated them to formally establish the company, Notpla (called Skipping Rock Lab at that time).

On the road to success

Margaux Deguerre knows how important it is to communicate with potential customers and consumers using various media as well as effective campaigns. In her role as Marketing and Communication Lead, she has been supporting sales since the beginning of 2021 and aims to increase awareness of the products. She too has a passion for sustainability and was from the very beginning convinced of seaweed as a promising material. “It is important to me to contribute to one of the biggest challenges in the field of environmental protection: the reduction of packaging waste,” says the Marketing Manager. “What sets Notpla apart from other companies in the packaging industry is its mission. We want packaging to dissolve without leaving any residue after it has served its purpose,” Margaux adds. Unlike bioplastics, Notpla products can be safely disposed of in the compost.

Biodegradable packaging is only one aspect of solving the problem of packaging waste. Where special protective functions and longer durability are required, conventional materials have their justification. Nevertheless, in her opinion it is important to reduce the discrepancy between the long durability of plastic packaging and the required service life. If packaging is only needed for a short time, it should also decompose just as quickly, Margaux says.

Notpla sources the raw materials for the extract through a global network of suppliers. Not all seaweed is the same. As Margaux explains, there are three categories that are suitable for the company's purposes: brown, red and green seaweed. Species grow in different areas, depending on various elements, such as the temperature of the water. Notpla's focus is on European suppliers, but there are also partners in South America and Asia. Red seaweed, for example, mainly grows in warmer waters. “Our goal is to

sell our product worldwide. That is why it is important to have seaweed farmers around the globe,” says Margaux.

Surprisingly versatile

And Notpla is in need of constant supplies. For in the meantime, the Oohos have gotten company: The manufacturer reached a milestone with its seaweed-based coatings for to-go containers. The door opener for this new development was the partnership with the delivery service platform Justeattakeaway.com. The companies worked for three years on a solution for takeaway containers and redesigned the packaging from scratch to achieve this goal. “We worked together to develop a coated takeaway box made from cardboard that contains no PFAs. The cardboard is coated with our seaweed extract coating, which creates a grease and water repellent barrier,” Margaux Deguerre explains. Fortunately, suitable technologies already existed for the coating process. “We just had to ensure the formulation would work standard machines,” she adds. After use, the boxes can go into a compost bin or paper recycling, where the coating does not cause problems, unlike those made of plastics.

But it doesn't stop with the Ohoos and the coatings: “Recently we developed a paper made of seaweed fibres, which consists of by-products from our production. The seaweed paper requires 30% less wood pulp than conventional paper, which reduces pressure on forests while making the most of the raw material,” Margaux points out. Notpla also works with fashion and luxury brands to develop high-quality solutions for secondary packaging such as boxes, envelopes or sleeves. The latest product to be added to the portfolio are pipettes, which are used for portioned edible oils, for example.

The big leap ahead

Next, the company wants to offer film rolls that customers can process on their packaging machines instead of plastic rolls. This would open up completely new applications for this sustainable material. “In order to successfully scale up, many test runs are required in terms of the



**27.-29.9.2022
NÜRNBERG**

composition of the material, the process parameters and the performance. We are therefore working with experts and leading companies who are keen to switch to sustainable materials," Margaux reveals. Notpla's entire portfolio of products as well as prototypes for a rigid packaging range can be examined at the special show "Transition In Packaging By Design" at FACHPACK (booth is located in hall 7 – 432) and visitors will be able to discuss face to face with Margaux Deguerre and Tristan Kaye, commercial director at Notpla. Visitors will also have the opportunity to sample cocktails in the edible Ooho packaging. On the second day of the trade fair (28 September 2022), Margaux Deguerre will be able to answer all open questions about the existing and planned portfolio in person at the PACKBOX Forum in Hall 9, Stand 309 at 1 p.m..

Contact for press and media

Katja Feeß, Christina Freund

T +49 9 11 86 06-83 55

christina.freund@nuernbergmesse.de

All press releases, more information, industry articles, photos, and videos are available from our Newsroom: [**www.fachpack.de/news**](http://www.fachpack.de/news)

Further services for journalists and media contacts:
[**www.fachpack.de/presse**](http://www.fachpack.de/presse)