

McAirlaid's goes green

McAirlaid's Vliesstoffe, one of leading providers of absorption materials for the food, medical and hygiene industries, introduced its next generation pure cellulose biodegradable cigarette filter at WT Europe at the end of May. The company spoke to TJI about the development and motivation behind the environmentally conscious Genia filter.

McAirlaid's has been manufacturing biodegradable absorption materials for the food, medical and hygiene industries for decades. Katja Selle, associate sales director at McAirlaid's for filter media, said that the company eventually decided to use the same biodegradable technology to develop the Genia filter for the tobacco industry. The product, which the company says it has been optimising over the last couple years, is free of plastic and made of 100 per cent cellulose. "The filter has no synthetics, glues, binders or additives, and it is fully biodegradable," Selle added.

Aside from these aspects, the most unique characteristic of the product is the taste and its short decomposition time, says Selle. "The taste of the Genia filter is ▶






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comparable to an acetow filter, unlike other biodegradable filters which can taste really harsh and dry. The Genia filter allows you to enjoy the pure tobacco taste of the cigarette," Selle explained. Panel testing has also come to the same conclusion. "The feedback has been very positive," said Selle.

FAST DECOMPOSITION TIME

In comparison to traditional acetow filters, which can take decades to decompose, the decomposition time of the filter is extremely short, according to the company. McAirmaid's says that the filter can generally break down within a few weeks; however, this depends on external conditions such as outside temperature and humidity. It decomposes faster in warm and wet environments. In the ocean, where plastic waste and pollution are common problems,

the process of biodegradation can be rapid, says Selle.

Peter Gawley, sales director at McAirmaid's, commented on the company's role in developing this sustainable option for the filter industry. "The whole world is talking about

plastic in oceans and plastic in general. There is a desire to reduce the amount of plastic being used. The traditional acetow filter is not technically plastic, but it is a polymerised product which behaves like a plastic because it lies around for years, if not decades. So there is a huge demand out there to replace that technology with something else. We offer a sustainable and compostable solution, which has a low impact on the environment and production."

The company also said that the product can be customised. This includes the length and diameter of the filter. McAirmaid's also added that it provides chlorine free and unbleached filter options for interested customers. Another advantage of the Genia, says Selle, is the pressure drop and filtration efficiency, which can be easily adjusted and designed to match those of acetate tow. Furthermore, the filter is more efficient at removing tar and nicotine than CAT, says Selle.

TJI

Photo: Mc Airmaid's Vliesstoffe

COMPANY INFO

The German-based company, which is headquartered in Steinfurt, has production facilities in Berlingerode and Heiligenstadt (Germany), Tallinn (Estonia) and Rocky Mount (USA). The company is known for developing patented absorbent nonwoven materials without synthetic fibres, glues and binders.

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