

## Press release

### 3<sup>rd</sup> European Bioplastics Conference confirms positive climate for Bioplastics

**Berlin, 10<sup>th</sup> November 2008. The 3<sup>rd</sup> European Bioplastics Conference was held in Berlin on the 5<sup>th</sup> / 6<sup>th</sup> November. The 22 exhibitors and approx. 300 delegates from 26 countries ensured that the conference replicated the success of previous years, a success that has confirmed the event's status as the leading congress of bioplastics professionals in Europe. The industry is preparing for a sustained period of growth with worldwide investment in new production facilities.**

The market for bioplastics has expanded vastly in recent years. From an international capacity of 150,000 tons in 2006 production is expected to rise to two million tons in 2011. **Kai Wagner** from the **Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology** underlined this positive development in his welcome address: "Bioplastics promote development in rural areas and provide high-tech industries with excellent opportunities for development. The increasing use of bioplastics creates jobs for skilled staff and bolsters economic growth."

The keynote speakers **Dr. Michael Stumpp**, Group Vice President of **BASF** and **Armand Klein**, Europe Business Director Applied Bio-Sciences at **DuPont**. "The bioplastics market has already become a considerable market, both on a retail and on a resin level. I am convinced that the market will grow quickly and sustainably within the next few years", stated Michael Stumpp. Armand Klein pointed out: "We have to reduce our environmental footprint drastically. Renewably-sourced materials, which are already available today, can provide for a step in the right direction."

Soaring bioplastics production is attracting the attention of brand owners. In a series of speeches **Sant Anna**, leading Italian mineral water producer and **Telecom Italia** presented their new products and set out their visions for the bioplastics sector. **Ferrero** is following the industry's progress with a great deal of interest: „Ferrero is committed to environmentally safe practices throughout the world and bioplastics can be part of a global plan in terms of reducing

environmental impacts”, said Filippo Velli, Packaging Deputy Director.

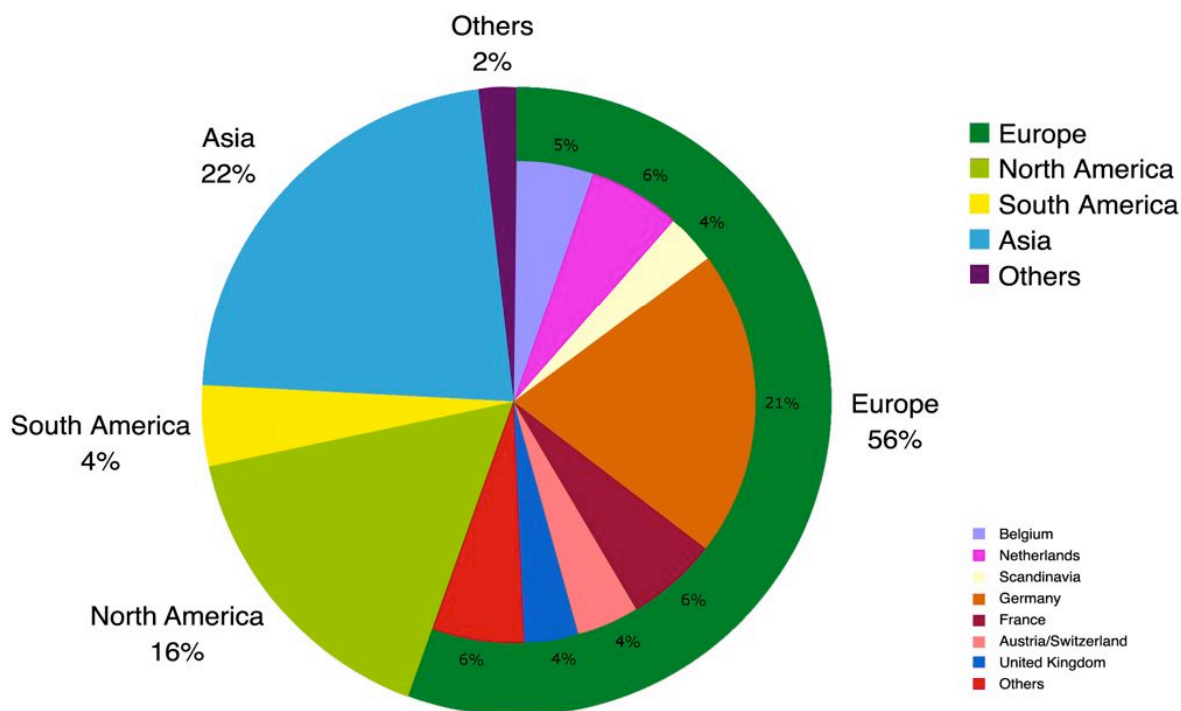
The participants in a panel discussion on the question ‘Is there enough land for Bioplastics Production?’ provided facts and figures. The experts believe that there is indeed enough land for all biomass applications. Bioplastics, therefore, do not compete with the production of food products. **Andreas Pilzecker** of the **European Commission, Directorate General Agriculture**, made it clear that biopolymers cannot be held responsible for the higher prices of agricultural raw materials: “Already in 2006, the European Commission assessed the anticipated impact of a ,10% biofuel target’ on needed land and the grain prices and ascertained that the production of biofuels would only have a moderate impact. Bioplastics require a significantly smaller share of the agricultural production and are therefore even less responsible for a price increase.” **Michael Carus**, Director of the ‘**nova institute**’, underscored Andreas Pilzecker’s statement by showing that currently only 0.05% of the European agricultural land is used to produce bioplastics.

Furthermore, the panel demanded that the European Common Agricultural Policy as well as the strategies for biofuels and bioenergy be more aligned with the industrial utilization of renewable raw materials. “It is high time that industrial and energy utilization of biomass are finally equated in Brussels”, Michael Carus made clear. **Udo Hemmerling**, the Director of the Department for Legal and Social Affairs and Economic Policies of the **German Farmers’ Association** added: “We don’t have to distinguish between the use of crops for food or industrial raw materials. The farmers are flexible and can respond to every demand - for more food or more bio-based products.”

As well as reflecting on the important themes of certification and labelling, over 25 companies presented their latest materials and applications in the bioplastics sector. Speakers covered a wide range of subjects that included new packaging solutions featuring plastic film combinations for improved barrier properties and longer shelf life, improvements in compounds and additives, and technical products. Biodegradable films were described as extremely promising in the area of agricultural applications: a recent study by the **Forschungsgemeinschaft Biologisch Abbaubare Werkstoffe e.V. (FBAW)**, a group conducting research into biodegradable materials, stressed the suitability of mulch films for practical applications and demonstrated the ecological and economic advantages of using them.

**Harald Kaeb**, Chairman of the Association’s Board, was very pleased with the event and summarized it positively by stating: “We are very satisfied with the results of the conference. It once more attracted industry players from all over the world and provided an important platform for the exchange of current industry topics. This affirms our concept for European Bioplastics Conferences, and we are already looking forward to the next event in 2009.”

**Participants of the 3rd European Bioplastics Conference**



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European Bioplastics is the European bioplastics industry’s association. Supporting members of the association are leading companies from the agricultural raw materials, chemicals and plastics industries, foodstuff producers and waste management companies.

Photographs and images are available in the Press Box section on the [www.european-bioplastics.org](http://www.european-bioplastics.org) and [www.conference.european-bioplastics.org](http://www.conference.european-bioplastics.org) websites. We would welcome the opportunity to arrange interviews for you.