**Press release**

**Can AI Improve the Sustainability of Plastic Packaging and Promote the Circular Economy?**

**Exciting insights into the world of plastic recycling are guaranteed at the “Open Hub Days”, an event series that will run from November 4 to 12 at four sites across Germany. Selected project partners in Aachen, Darmstadt, Dresden, and Nuremberg will open their doors and introduce the Hub’s topics of Artificial Intelligence and Circular Economy to a broad audience. SÜDPACK, a pioneer in circularity and sustainability, will also be participating. For the film manufacturer and the other participants, the primary focus is on advancing the transformation process in the plastics and packaging industry through new approaches and shared expertise.**

How can we close the loops for plastic packaging? And what methods based on artificial intelligence (AI) can be used to achieve this? These are the two key questions being addressed by 51 partners from industry, science, and civil society as part of the “AI Application Hub for Plastic Packaging – Sustainable Circular Economy through Artificial Intelligence.” The project is supported by the German Informatics Society (GI) and funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research.

The two innovation labs, “KiOptiPack for Design and Production” and “K3I-Cycling for Material Recycling,” are working hand in hand. Their shared goal is to exchange data across laboratories in order to develop and apply a thorough understanding, from the design of plastic packaging to its re-entry into the recycling loop.

**Increasing the recycled content in films and compounds during film production**

… is a focus that SÜDPACK has prioritized in its development work for some time. “We can contribute our comprehensive development expertise in sustainable film solutions, as well as our know-how in compounding,” emphasize the experts at SÜDPACK. They are actively involved in the project and will also be present on November 12 at the Open Hub Days in Dresden.

At the event, the partners of the KiOptiPack innovation lab will present their latest research on packaging development using recycled plastics. According to the organizers, visitors will learn through live demonstrations “how the packaging development process can be significantly optimized by integrating data from material production, testing, processing, recyclability assessments, and eco-balancing – through the establishment and use of a shared industrial data space – and what ground-breaking business models could emerge from this.”

**Questions, insights, and their impacts**

For the 51 participating partners, a major focus is on the key question of how to improve the material recycling of post-consumer plastic waste. For example, studies will investigate how the recycled content in PP-based multilayer films affects the required product properties as well as the processing and manufacturing procedures. But why focus on polypropylene? Like PE, PP is a preferred polymer in packaging applications. Its use in mono-material composites reduces the complexity of the packaging, making recycling possible. In terms of reducing plastic waste or ensuring it is more efficiently recycled, PP packaging is a promising solution.

**SÜDPACK**

… has long been committed to increasing the use of post-industrial and post-consumer recyclates in film production, not just in light of the upcoming PPWR. The film manufacturer laid the foundations for a circular economy early on by establishing its own competence center for regranulation and compounding, and through its involvement in the pioneering carboliq direct pyrolysis process.

SÜDPACK summarizes its expectations for this ambitious project as follows: “With the help of AI modeling tools and insights gained via the AI Hub, we will be able to strategically combine various recyclate sources in the future to achieve the required product properties.” The predictability and reproducibility of compound formulations will also be significantly improved. Additionally, SÜDPACK hopes to gain fresh insights in terms of stabilizing production and optimizing processing through the material analysis methods explored in the course of the project. This should also speed up the implementation of packaging regulations related to the use of recyclates.

SÜDPACK is confident: “AI will pave the way for a sustainable circular economy – and, more importantly, accelerate it!”

Anyone interested in attending the Open Hub Days has four opportunities to do so:

* [Darmstadt](https://ki-hub-kunststoffverpackungen.de/veranstaltung/open-hub-days-in-darmstadt): November 4 – 7, 2024
* [Aachen](https://ki-hub-kunststoffverpackungen.de/veranstaltung/open-hub-days-in-aachen): November 6, 2024
* [Nuremberg](https://ki-hub-kunststoffverpackungen.de/veranstaltung/open-hub-days-in-nuernberg): November 7, 2024
* [Dresden](https://ki-hub-kunststoffverpackungen.de/veranstaltung/open-hub-days-in-dresden): November 12, 2024

The event in Dresden, featuring SÜDPACK, will take place at the Fraunhofer Institute for Process Engineering and Packaging, Processing Technology Department Dresden, at Heidelberger Strasse 20, 01189 Dresden, from 9 am to 6 pm.

Admission is free. For more information and registration, visit: <https://ki-hub-kunststoffverpackungen.de/veranstaltung/open-hub-days-in-dresden>

**About SÜDPACK**

SÜDPACK is a leading manufacturer of high-performance films and packaging solutions for the food, non-food and medical goods industries and also of customer-specific compounds for technically demanding applications.

The family business, which was founded by Alfred Remmele in 1964, is headquartered in Ochsenhausen. The production sites in Germany, France, Poland, India, Switzerland, the Netherlands and the USA are equipped with cutting-edge plant technology and manufacture to the highest standards, including the capacity to operate under clean room conditions. The global sales and service network ensures a high degree of proximity to the customer and comprehensive application technology support in more than 70 countries.

With its state-of-the-art Development and Application Center at its headquarters in Ochsenhausen, the innovation-oriented company offers its customers an optimal platform for developing individual and tailor-made solutions and also for performing application tests.

SÜDPACK is committed to sustainable development and fulfills its responsibility as an employer and towards society, the environment and its customers. For its sustainable product developments and consistent commitment to a functioning circular economy in the plastics industry, SÜDPACK has received numerous awards. Further information is available at [www.suedpack.com](http://www.suedpack.com)

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