



HOLDING STATEMENT

Background: On 4 October 2018, WWF Germany publicly criticised the presence of plastic packaging residues in animal feed, citing concerns around the release of plastic particles into the environment and the introduction of microplastics into the food chain.

Statement: EFFPA is fully committed to stimulating the very best practices in the former foodstuff processing sector as regards the effective and efficient packaging removal of former foodstuffs. As an unavoidable consequence, very small packaging residues remain in the end product and are present in the animal feed. This is typically paper, cardboard and plastic-based film wrap, while metal and glass are always filtered out. In most countries where EFFPA members operate, a maximum level has been set between 0.15-0.20% as an acceptable tolerance that is not injurious to animal health.

EFFPA understands that concerns can be raised about the release of plastic particles into the environment through manure on agricultural fields and according to the ALARA principle EFFPA members are committed to continuously work on their innovative capacities to reduce the amount of packaging residues in processed former foodstuffs. EFFPA does not want to downplay the issue of packaging residues in processed former foodstuffs, which should be avoided as much as possible. However when it comes to environmental pollution on agricultural fields of plastics, (sharp) metal and glass by other external factors should be of greater concern from a risk perspective. As far as EFFPA members are aware, plastic residues in processed former foodstuffs do not result in microplastics that are absorbed into the bodies of farm animals.

EFFPA is convinced that from an environmental perspective, the industrial valorisation of former foodstuffs still makes sense as it allows for a significant reduction of cereal use in compound feed production, leading to large amounts of saved land use. Alternative outlets to former foodstuff processing would result in more plastics ending up in landfill or at incineration plants, which are significantly worse from the highly sought after circular economy solution that keeps vital nutrients in the food and feed chain. Further reducing the amount of (plastic) packaging residues from processed former foodstuffs will come from improved technological innovation, closer engagement with supplier industries and the legal enforcement of best practices on all former foodstuff processors active in the EU.

Notes to the editor:

1. EFFPA, the European Former Foodstuff Processors Association, was founded on 1 January 2014. It represents 4 national associations (UK, NL, DE, FR), 3 full member companies (BE, IT, ES), 2 associate member companies (CA, US) and 1 observer company (GR).
2. EFFPA estimates approximately 3.5 million tonnes of former foodstuffs annually are processed into animal feed in the EU. EFFPA estimates the turnover of the European former foodstuff sector industry was over € 1 billion for 2017.
3. For more information see our website (www.effpa.eu) or contact Anton van den Brink, Policy Advisor. Tel. +32-2-285.00.58, Fax +32-2-230.57.22, e-mail: a.vandenbrink@effpa.eu