news release

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Sun Chemical and Archipelago Technology Group announce partnership to boost adoption of fibre-based packaging solutions

The agreement will support packaging manufacturers and major consumer brands as they look to future-proof their operations

MIDSOMER NORTON, UK – September 15th, 2026 – Sun Chemical is pleased to announce a comprehensive partnership with Archipelago Technology Group to support increased adoption of paper-based packaging solutions in the market. The agreement will help customers improve sustainability and navigate EPR and PPWR requirements more effectively through the development and supply of coating solutions, including new barrier layer technology.

By combining Archipelago's proprietary **Powerdrop™** non-contact coater and end-to-end coating process with Sun Chemical's advanced liquid barrier and resistant coatings, including optional heat seal capability, the partnership brings high-performance liquid coatings to paper-based packaging. Applications include 2D substrates and 3D moulded fibre containers, providing consumer brands and packaging manufacturers with durable alternatives to plastic and composite structures.

The first approved coating from the partnership, **BARV656: VAPORBLOC DFC HOTFOOD,** has completed testing and validation and is now commercially available.

"Moulded fibre packaging combines strong sustainability credentials with the potential for lower carbon footprint than many conventional packaging formats," says Pete Saunders, Global Director, Digital Businesses, Sun Chemical. "But untreated cellulose lacks the necessary barrier properties to resist oil, water and gases. Traditional alternative paper-based packaging, on the other hand, relies on the addition of plastic layers, whether lamination or extrusion, making the resulting composite material more difficult to recycle. Archipelago's Powerdrop technology solves this problem by applying a highly efficient, ultra-thin functional coating layer at high throughput and with very low levels of waste, creating a uniform, high-performance barrier layer for demanding packaging applications.

"By then pairing the capabilities of Sun Chemical's advanced barrier coatings with the Powerdrop coating application technology, we can keep the total weight of the coating well under the critical 5% threshold. Crucially, this means that the container remains a highly pure cellulose monomaterial that can be recycled through existing paper infrastructure without specialised sorting."

This collaboration arrives at a critical moment for the packaging industry. **The European Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR)** entered into force and began to generally apply from August 2026, establishing strict, legally binding rules to enforce recyclability across all EU member states.

Under the PPWR's rigorous grading scale, packaging will increasingly be differentiated based on recyclability performance, affecting market access and EPR fee structures.

Pure monomaterials that are at least 95% recyclable qualify as Grade A, granting them permanent market access and the lowest Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) tax rates. Conversely, many heavily laminated packaging structures may struggle to meet future PPWR recyclability requirements, potentially limiting their long-term market viability.

By helping maintain coating levels below the 5% threshold, the Powerdrop platform has the potential to support packaging designs targeting the highest PPWR recyclability grades.

"For years, Archipelago has maintained that barrier coatings must be designed into the fabric of moulded fibre packaging from the outset, rather than treated as an afterthought," said Guy Newcombe, CEO of Archipelago Technology. "With the PPWR taking effect, the window for stopgap, heavily laminated packaging is rapidly closing. Our agreement with Sun Chemical allows us to deliver a complete, proven platform, where pin-hole free coating layers deliver functional barrier performance to protect products. We are giving the industry a practical tool to achieve high barrier performance while supporting packaging designs intended to meet evolving European recyclability requirements."

ENDS

About Sun Chemical

Sun Chemical, a member of the DIC Group, is a leading producer of packaging and graphic solutions, color and display technologies, functional products, electronic materials, and products for the automotive and healthcare industries. Together with DIC, Sun Chemical is continuously working to promote and develop sustainable solutions to exceed customer expectations and better the world around us. With combined annual sales of more than $7 billion and 21,000+ employees worldwide, the DIC Group companies support a diverse collection of global customers.

Sun Chemical Corporation is a subsidiary of Sun Chemical Group Coöperatief U.A., the Netherlands, and is headquartered in Parsippany, New Jersey, U.S.A. For more information, please visit our website at www.sunchemical.com or connect with us on LinkedIn, or Instagram.

About Archipelago Technology Group Ltd.

Based in Cambridge, UK, Archipelago Technology Group Ltd. specialises in the development and deployment of Powerdrop™ non-contact coating machinery The company provides patented hardware, process licensing, and engineering support to enable the mass production of sustainable, high-barrier, fibre-based packaging.

For more information, please visit our website at www.archipelagotechnology.com or connect with us on LinkedIn

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