

## The anti-waste food packaging is made in Gallarate

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The **European Union** has ready **50 thousand euros** to finance the development of a project that has the ambition to **revolutionise the food packaging**, the one designed and carried out by **MPG Manifattura Plastica Inc in Gallarate**, leader of an alliance in which are working also the **Color System Inc in Legnano** (production of masterbatches) and the **Italian food giant Heinz Inc**, as well as the team of the company of technical consultancy **Europartner-Inspiralia**.

This “team” will work to create a new packaging, made of a single plastic material – and this is the real big news – for **the long-life of those foods that must not get in contact with air and moisture**. “Currently there aren’t any mono-material packaging,” says **Giampiero Perego**, president of MPG Inc, “because all of them are made by starting from different raw materials which then have to be matched, giving life to a whole sequence of energy waste upstream, in the production phase, and of consumption downstream, at the end of which the packages aren’t recyclable because of their heterogeneity in the composition.”

An example would be the one of the existing bins of powdered milk for children made of cardboard, aluminium sheets and plastic. MPG would like to create **a container completely made with a particular plastic** and, at the end of the use, **recyclable**. This is one of the reasons why the European Commission has decided to support the project Claymbar of MPG, admitting it among those deserving of the support given by the SME-Instruments of Horizon2020, the program with which Brussels wants to support researches and development of small and medium-sized European enterprises.

The project therefore wants to improve the environmental impact, reduce the energy consumption of the industry, but especially to longer preserve food, increasing what is called the shelf-life, by **reducing the food** waste, that is a central theme of the imminent Expo2015. “When,” continues Perego, “the consumer goes to the supermarket they focus on the quality of the food that wants to buy, taking for granted the package that preserves it. In reality, behind there’s a whole world of evolving technology that we want to contribute to grow, to allow the food to be on the counters and shelves longer, reducing the risk of deterioration and so of waste. The technological progress of the products of our sector is also in the defence of the right of the people’s food. A right that is inevitably defended by waste reduction. “

The project creates benefits for **both the Italian and European food industry**, thanks to a packaging, able to increase the lifetime of the packaged food, which can increase the range of its commercial capacity on even further markets. “If with the current packaging techniques,” says the president of the MPG Inc, “a certain product has 10 days of life, assuming it will stay at least eight days on the supermarket shelf, the manufacturing company will be able to supply markets to a **maximum distance of two days of travel and storage**. But if we extend the life of a product up to 50 days, everything changes.” For both the manufacturing company of the food and the logistics system and distribution. With also a reduction of costs given that the packaging will be made of one material in a single production phase that will require less energy.

The new packaging may be used to **avoid alterations of the organoleptic characteristics**, for those foods that must not come into contact either with air, water and moisture. For example, products made with fresh pasta, or also for the majority of dairy foods, foods for children (baby food and milk powder), coffee pods, gastronomy in general.

The largest producers of food, are already turning to MPG in Gallarate that supplies companies of the calibre of **Heinz, Igor, Midor, Nestlé, Plasmon, Sterilgarda, Unilever, Valsoia**. With a turnover of 55% from the Italian customers, 25% of the European Union and 20% Extra-EU.

Now the project Claymbar of MPG will continue with the preparation of a study for the development of the new packaging. A study for the realization of which were intended, indeed, the 50 thousand euros designated by the EU which will, in a second phase, evaluate their feasibility and therefore any additional funding for the stages of prototyping and industrialization. The new product should come on the market in the next three years.

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