

PressRelease

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Darmstadt University analysis: packaging is not responsible for mineral oils found in chocolate from advent calendars

The German consumer organisation Stiftung Warentest published test results according to which most chocolates in 24 tested advent calendars in Germany contained mineral oil hydrocarbon residues. Stiftung Warentest also mentioned recycled cardboard packaging as the source of those residues. An analysis of the Technical University Darmstadt published today, shows that this conclusion is not appropriate.

The Paper Technology and Mechanical Process Engineering Unit of the Technical University in Darmstadt obtained each of the 24 calendars tested by Stiftung Warentest to conduct an analysis on the fibre content of the calendars. This is a standard test that Darmstadt University conducts on a regular basis. The results show clearly that 23 out of the 24 calendars tested are made of virgin fibre, only one contained recycled fibre.

The broad statement from Stiftung Warentest that mineral oil hydrocarbons in the chocolate of their tested advent calendars originates most likely from the recycled cardboard packaging is questionable and cannot be correct. The source is not the cardboard used in the calendars.

There are several possibilities of how mineral oils can get into chocolate. The root cause for this still needs to be determined. As potential sources Darmstadt University listed additives and processing chemicals used during food production and other packaging materials (e.g. plastic trays) as well as potential contamination during transportation and storage.

As a precautionary measure the paper-based fibre chain has implemented several voluntary actions on this issue, taking a pro-active and innovative action to solve the case. The industry has also developed self-regulation: Industry Guideline for Food Contact Materials and a guidance on GMP (Good Manufacturing Practise) to ensure a consistent European production of safe food packaging.

Note to the Editor

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Sources

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CEPI aisbl - The Confederation of European Paper Industries

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