

September 3, 2019

KANEKA CORPORATION

Kaneka Biodegradable Polymer listed in the Plastic Implement Measure of the European Commission for all food types

After being added to the positive list*¹ of the EU regulation on food contact materials and articles by the European Commission*², Kaneka Biodegradable Polymer PHBH (referred to below as PHBH) by Kaneka Corporation (Headquarters: Minato-ku, Tokyo; President: Mamoru Kadokura) has passed inspection by the European Commission and through legislation by the European Parliament*³ and Council of European Union*⁴ its use as a contact material for all food types has put into effect since August 28. Accordingly, from now on in all regions of the European Union, PHBH will be usable in straws, cups and cutlery*⁵, as well as for contact with dry foods such as in the fruit and vegetable bags.

In Japan, since May this year, PHBH has been adopted to the positive list of the Japan Hygienic Olefin and Styrene Plastics Association*⁶ describing raw material that can be used for food utensils, containers and packaging materials. Also, in the United States, since March last year, PHBH has been registered as a food contact material of the US Food and Drug Administration*⁷ (FDA). From here on, Kaneka will accelerate their expansion of PHBH in Japan, the United States and Europe.

PHBH is a 100% plant-based biopolymer developed by Kaneka and has an excellent biodegradability under different environmental conditions. Particularly in recent years, marine pollution by microplastic has become a global social issue due to the rising concern of its negative impact on biological system. With “OK Biodegradable MARINE*⁸” certification that guarantees biodegradability in seawater, PHBH would be able to contribute to the reduction of marine pollutions.

*1. A list of chemical compounds authorized for use as materials that come into contact with food.

*2. It is an institution of the European Union (EU), responsible for management of the EU including proposal of the legislation and implementation of decisions.

*3. It is the directly erected legislative body of the European Union, which constitutes the bicameral system together with the Council of the EU.

*4. It is the legislative body that is made up of the leaders of the EU member states and defines the general political directions. (Reference: The legislative procedure is launched when the European Commission submits a legislative proposal to the Council and the European Parliament. After consultation with the European Parliament and decision of the EU Council, the proposal is adopted.)

*5. A collective term for knives, forks and spoons.

*6. An industry group in Japan that aims to realize the supply of safe and hygienic plastic utensils, containers and packaging for use with food.

*7. A governmental organization of U.S. in charge of approval or conformity control of products which consumers have contact within daily life, such as food or medicine in addition to cosmetics, clinical instrument, animal drug or toy.

*8. Biodegrades at least 90% in seawater (30°C) within 6 months. The “OK Biodegradable MARINE” certificate was issued in September 2017 by Vincotte, an international certifying body headquartered in Belgium. TÜV AUSTRIA Belgium NV took over the certification work from Vincotte in December 2017.