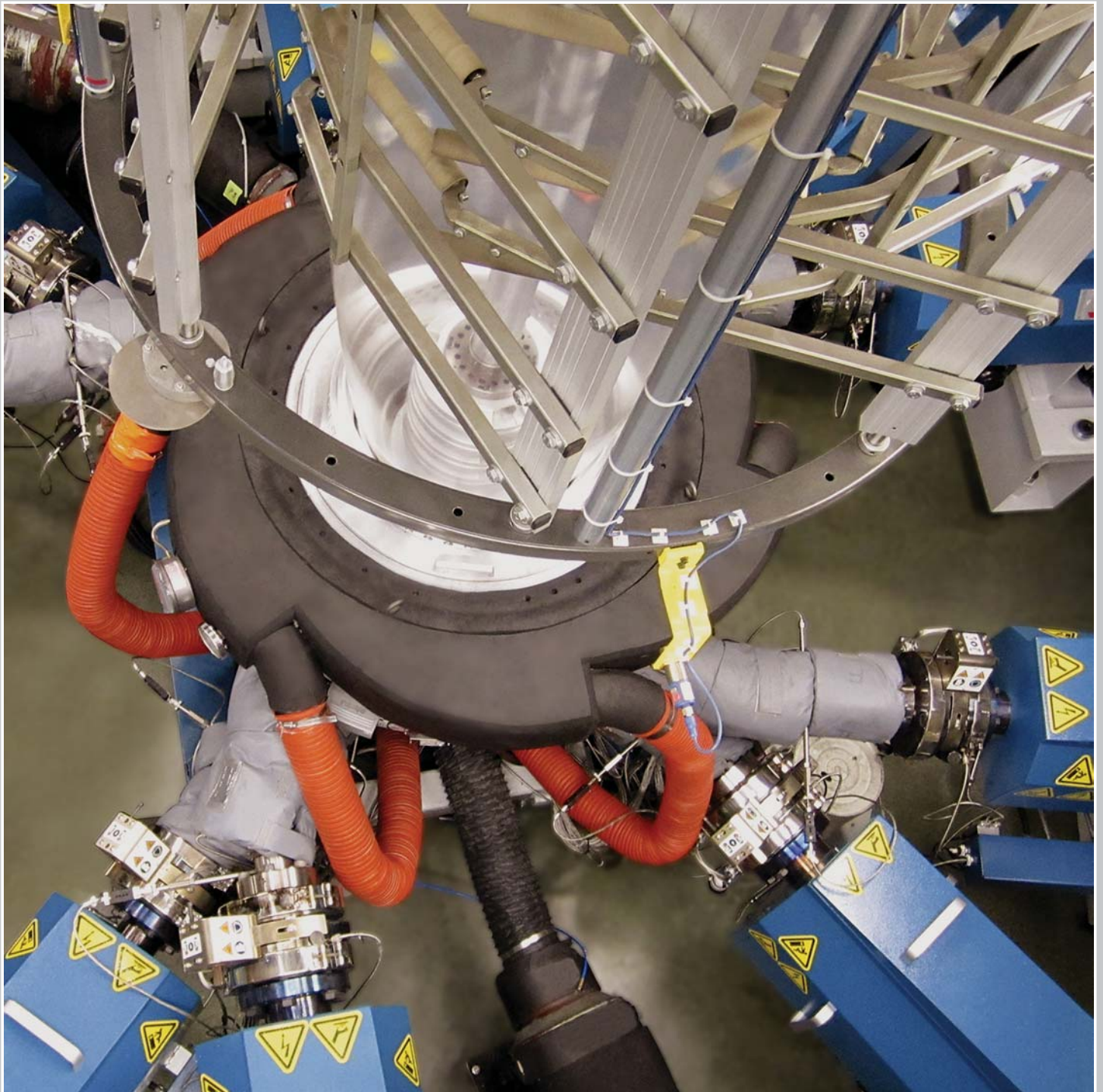


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Editorial Dear Reader

China's growing taste for dairy products in the years between 2000–2009 quadrupled dairy consumption from 7 kg (15.4 lbs) to 28 kg (61.7 lbs) per capita according to »IRISH FARMERS JOURNAL«. This may be a low figure compared with the 86 kg (189.6 lbs) average for the rest of the world, but without doubt in a country of 1.3 billion people it represents a massive increase in demand for milk and packaging. For the moment cheese and butter are niche products which are consumed mainly in the big cities where Westerners tend to be located. But because the more affluent Chinese aspire to Western ways, dairy foods are bound to catch on in the same way as liquid milk products have done.

Why should China's dietary trends be a matter of interest for film producers? Think on this: when the consumption of cheese does take off, the impact will be especially dramatic on those films developed for hard and soft cheeses and butters.

We know from market analysis presented by IHS at the »World Symposium on Performance Films«



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(SPF 2012) that CO₂-permeable, bi-axially oriented Polyamides (BOPA) have seen a growing demand in the West (p. 47). The established European and American BOPA markets together add up to around 75,000 tonnes (165.3 million lbs). However, China's capacity – new on stream since 2009 and which in 2011 topped 90,000 tonnes (198.4 million lbs) shared among ten producers – is set to balloon in size as cheese and butter is added to millions more shopping lists.

A vastly increased cheese production begs the question of where will all the processing whey by-product go? Apparently, some 50% of it gets discarded. A technical article on p. 5 describes a neat solution that uses whey in film manufacturing. The whey-layer study comes up with a timely proposal. News of European research into using olive-oil process wastewater in film manufacture similarly shows how the film sector could be helping mop up the left-overs from food production. Read about the Oli-PHA project on p. 42.

At the other end of the film life cycle, a breakthrough resin is offering to make the problem of plastics waste »disappear« and a US converter is testing it on a commercially scale (see *Tee Group Films/Nichigo G-Polymer* report on p. 54). Machinery designers are being trail-blazers too, by avoiding the use of excess energy and raw material and cutting down on process waste in the production phase. In our Interview (p. 45) we read how *battenfeld-cincinnati* has

achieved savings while improving the film output.

The »PACKAGINGFILMS« team attended PLAST in Milan/I at its bright, shiny new venue and virtually skated around the halls to visit as many companies as we could, both to show off the latest edition (produced just in time) and to find new subjects and topics to interest our growing reader base (see p. 46). From our warm reception on the stands, we can now genuinely say that »PACKAGINGFILMS« is making its name in the marketplace. This is largely thanks to our contributors. We now have a superb mix of big names with established reputations reporting on their commercial breakthroughs. In addition industry experts are improving our converting knowledge; while academics from top institutions summarise their leading-edge research to focus our minds on what will be happening in the future.

Our aim is to make every edition stronger and more varied than the last one, and for that we need you! As I write we are working on October's news and features, so do please get in touch and book your place on our editorial schedule.

Enjoy your reading!

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