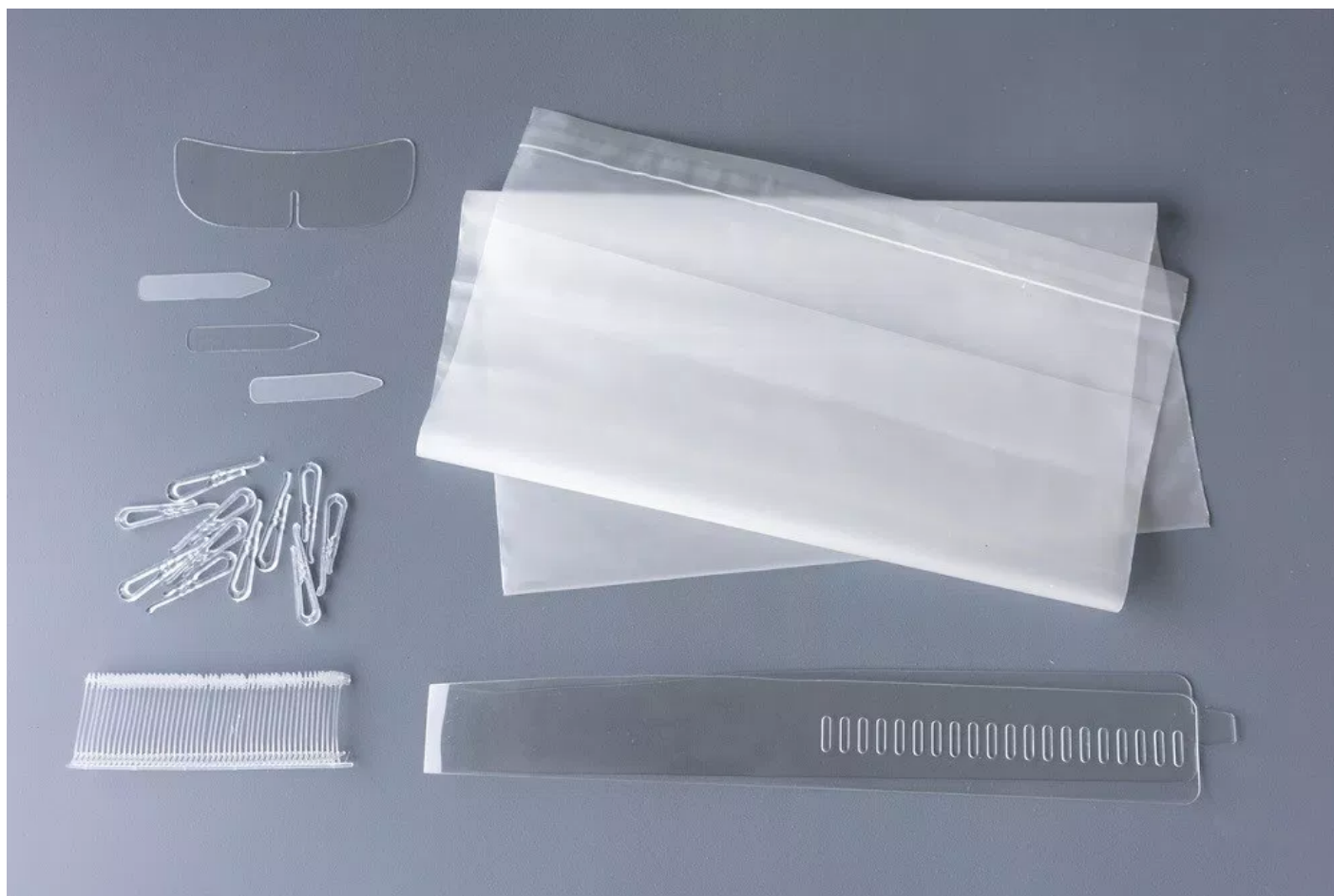


# Garment Packaging Supplier Develops Biodegradable Range of Products

By Arthur Friedman



CREDIT: Rudholm Group

As the problem of [plastic waste](#) becomes more critical, the apparel and textile supply chain is tackling the issue with research and innovation.

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The latest comes from garment [packaging](#) and accessories supplier Rudholm Group, which has developed a new range of plastic packaging products that are naturally [biodegradable](#) in landfill conditions.

Marketed under the name WeCare, Rudholm said the new products are its proposed solution for more sustainable fashion.

In announcing [its own new initiatives in plastic waste reduction](#) Tuesday, Walmart noted that while plastic provides numerous benefits such as low cost, long shelf life and portability compared to other materials, society's ability to collect and recycle plastic waste has not kept up with increases in plastic production, which amounts to roughly 500 million tons annually. Walmart said roughly 35 percent of plastic production goes to packaging, most of which is used once and discarded. Less than 14 percent of plastic packaging is recycled globally.

Using a technology that can be added to any plastic polymer, Rudholm Group said it was able to speed up the breakdown of the plastic's polymer chain, allowing naturally existing microorganisms to consume the plastic. The estimate is that these new products take around 12 to 24 months to break down, but the biodegradation has been observed to be even faster.

The [biodegradable](#) plastics can be used for packaging, including polybags, shipping mailers, PET box-packaging, and shirt collar stands, stays and supports. Rudholm said the new process improves on the standard oxo-degradable technology by speeding up a natural process that would otherwise take centuries to happen. Plus, since the process is natural, it doesn't result in [microplastics](#) or any toxic residue, while oxo-degradable technology leaves fragments and toxins behind.

"We feel a strong and extreme trend toward sustainable products and materials within the apparel industry," Dennis Lau, director of Rudholm Group's U.S. unit, RHG USA, said. "Our biodegradable plastic initiative is just part of a big range of sustainable products that include many recycled and organic items."

All the products are manufactured in Rudholm Group's operating regions, including China, Vietnam, Bangladesh, India and Turkey, and are in compliance with U.S. Food & Drug Administration bio degradation and toxicity tests.

When it comes to cost for the more sustainable packaging, Lau said the additional cost of production will have a minimal impact on the final product cost, making it easily accessible for any brand.

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