



UNICOOP FIRENZE: BIOPLASTIC BAGS AND GLOVES STOCKED IN FRUIT AND VEGETABLE SECTION

*A major advance in increasing the convenience and
quality of organic waste collection*

Novara, 21 February 2014 – Unicoop Firenze was the first large retailer to replace shopping bags made from traditional plastic with those made from Mater-Bi[®] and today it is confirming its environmental credentials by ensuring the fruit and vegetable sections in its 103 points of sale are stocked only with bioplastic bags and gloves.

Devised in collaboration with Novamont and the IPT processing company from Scarperia, the project started up **in November 2012** with trials at four points of sale in the province of Siena (Siena, Poggibonsi and Colle Val d'Elsa). These were followed by the inCoop outlets in Poggibonsi and Tavarnelle Val di Pesa, and **from February this year ALL points of sale in Florence and throughout Tuscany.**

“A far-sighted decision, which underlines Unicoop Firenze’s strong commitment to social and environmental responsibility, while also encouraging the **development of a green economy in the country given that these items are 100% Italian made, from research to production,**” said Alessandro Ferlito, Novamont’s Sales Director.

“Replacing bags made from PE with those made from Mater-Bi[®] will provide a major contribution to reducing the production of waste that is not easy to recycle, and instead increase the collection of wet waste. Organic waste is an extraordinary resource from which we can produce renewable energy (biogas) and quality compost. Compostable products like our bags made from Mater-Bi[®] are fundamental for ensuring the quality of wet waste, increasing the efficiency of the entire process, from production to collection to disposal,” added Ferlito. “In the future, the bags and carriers used by Unicoop Firenze will be made from third and fourth generation Mater-Bi[®], with a higher renewables content.”

In this respect, systems that are already using compostable bags and catering products made from Mater-Bi® have demonstrated their superiority and efficiency in achieving these objectives. Compostable products in Mater-Bi® have proven to be more effective in increasing the capture of organic waste and ensuring it is used in anaerobic digestion plants.

Mater-Bi®, the bioplastic developed by Novamont, which is biodegradable and compostable in compliance with the leading international standards, guarantees similar performance to traditional plastics, but using renewable resources of agricultural origin. It reduces greenhouse gas emissions and cuts consumption of non-renewable energy and resources, completing a virtuous circle: raw materials of agricultural origin are returned to the earth through biodegradation or composting without emission of pollutants.

Novamont is the leading company in the development and production of materials and biochemicals through the integration of chemistry, the environment and agriculture. With 323 employees (20% employed full time in R&D), it registered a turnover of €135 million in 2012 and made continuous investments in research and development activities (4.9% of its 2012 turnover). It has a portfolio of around 1,000 patents. It has its headquarters in Novara, a production facility in Terni and research laboratories in Novara, Terni and Piana di Monte Verna (CE). Novamont has subsidiaries in Porto Torres (SS) and Bottrighe (RO). It has commercial offices in Germany, France and the United States and operates through its own distributors in Benelux, Scandinavia, Denmark, the United Kingdom, China, Japan, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

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