



Breaking News on Food Processing &amp; Packaging

## US federal cash for 'estrogenic activity free' plastics

By Rory Harrington, 28-Oct-2009

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**As concern over bisphenol A (BPA) in baby bottles mounts, US company PlastiPure announced it has received more than \$1m in federal funding to develop plastics free of chemicals that may mimic estrogenic activity (EA).**

The Texas-based firm said the \$1.1m grant from the National Institute of Environmental Health and Safety (NIEHS) would be used to boost its range of products that its said contains none of the thousands of substances that may trigger estrogenic activity in the body. PlastiPure said EA was "a common and serious form of endocrine disruption".

### Federal recognition

The company claimed the grant from the body, which is one of 27 research institutes and centres that comprise the National Institutes of Health (NIH), shows federal support for development of its products.

"This NIEHS funding validates our innovative technology and will allow us to expand our development of PlastiPure-Safe materials," said company CEO Mike Usey,

In the past 12 months, the company said it has introduced a number of EA-free resins and products into the market. The firm said it planned to use the NIEHS cash to enhance its product line to develop, or improve several additional colorants, clarifiers, antistatic agents and antioxidants.

"Our extensive research has enabled us to identify thousands of chemicals that contain estrogenic activity," said Usey. "And this allows us to avoid and not re-introduce these chemicals into our formulations and production methods providing a safer plastic for consumers as well as our environment."

He added that consumers wanted products that were certified as being EA free, which he claimed were superior to BPA-free plastics, glass or metal materials.

### Market opportunities

PlastiPure said the number of EA chemicals contained in plastics went far beyond BPA and phthalates – two substances that have received most attention – and could be counted in the hundreds. Studies have linked EA chemicals to a range of health issues including birth defects, cancer and learning disorders, said the company.

The inclusion of BPA in polycarbonate baby bottles and the lining of some canned food has triggered huge controversy in the US that resulted in the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) agreeing to review its continued approval. The agency is due to deliver its decision by the end of November. Concern centres over claims around the leaching of BPA into foods and liquids particularly when heated.

Uncertainty over the safety of such chemicals has seen an increasing number of BPA, and now EA-free, products brought to market in order to meet perceived consumer anxiety. Proponents for the continued use of BPA stress that the chemical has been exhaustively tested and certified as safe by all the world's major food agencies.

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