

Potential Ban of Industrial Aseptic Bags in EU from 2030 onwards

The Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) requires all packaging to comply with recyclability requirements from 1 January 2030. Industrial aseptic bags are currently considered as “not recyclable”; hence they cannot be placed on the EU market as of that date. This creates an enormous risk of interruption of raw material sourcing for users of products packaged in industrial aseptic bags, thus potentially impacting all companies in the tomato or fruit value chain, such as processors, traders, food manufacturers, importers/exporters or brand owners.

1) Context: why these industrial aseptic bags matter

Industrial aseptic bags provide a **high barrier** to protect product quality and enable up to **24 months of shelf life**, helping manage seasonal harvest. These bags are commonly made of **multi-material structures such as PE/metPET and PE/Alu/PA** and are widely used for processed tomatoes and fruit products in global supply chains, with significant reliance on imports and exports.

2) What changes under the PPWR

The PPWR sets, among other requirements, that all packaging placed on the EU market is **recyclable by 2030, which also includes industrial (B2B) packaging**. Recyclability will be assessed using Design for Recycling (DfR) criteria developed with the support of the European standardisation organisation (CEN).

3) The key problem today: Aseptic bags considered as “not recyclable”

Under the CEN DfR for flexible PE (where aseptic bags are most likely to be assessed), **PET and aluminium foil are considered as non-compatible components**. The result is that typical aseptic bag structures would be **classified as not recyclable and therefore losing EU market access from 2030** if no accepted solution is established before that ensure their recyclability in practice.

4) Why a rapid material structure switch is not a solution

Suppliers of aseptic bags are still working on alternative structures which currently lead to **insufficient shelf life and potential higher costs**. Even if acceptable alternatives were to be developed, scale readiness for products harvested and filled in 2029 to be placed on the market from 2030 onwards is unfeasible.

5) Risk of reduced raw material sourcing possibilities for EU customers

Producers of tomato and fruit raw materials store and supply markets across the globe in standardized packaging (usually 220l or 1000l aseptic bags). Having a specific packaging structure for EU customers would **increase complexity** in their operations, **leading to higher costs and disincentivizing them from continuing to supply EU customers**. Furthermore, this would reduce **sourcing flexibility** to request additional volumes.

6) Recycling Initiative for industrial aseptic bags to secure market access

Objective: Ensure industrial aseptic bags are considered recyclable in practice and remain allowed on the EU market by creating a dedicated Producer Responsibility Organisation (PRO) to handle the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for industrial aseptic bags in EU.

Deliverables by 2028:

1. Qualify recycling technologies treating multi-layer aseptic bags.
2. Build an EPR scheme with national Producer Responsibility Organisations (PROs).
3. Develop a DfR guidance for industrial aseptic bags (aligned with PPWR).
4. Develop high-quality recyclates exploring potential food-contact applications.

Estimated costs (for 3 years): €550,000

7) Company contribution

Target companies: companies in the tomato or fruit value chain, such as processors, traders, food manufacturers, importers/exporters or brand owners and industrial aseptic bag manufacturers.

Category	Turnover	Per year
small	≤ €50M	10.000 €
medium	between €50M and €200M	15.000 €
large	> €200M	25.000 €

Notes (apply to all members):

- 3-year commitment (2026–2028), contributions in 2027/28 might be reduced if more funding than necessary is available
- ABMA members with discounted fee (25% of total)
- 30% of income reserved for coordination issues (staff, communication, travel, others)
- 70% of income available for projects

Benefits to early supporters (joining before 30 June 2026)

- Potential rebate on future EPR costs
- Refund of membership fees for companies that do not pay EPR fees later
- Priority access to recyclates

8) Indicative EPR fee

The indicative EPR fee of up to 1,50€/kg is equivalent to **up to 0.5% of the packaged product price**. This fee would **replace current end-of-life costs (e.g. disposal for incineration)** and EPR fees paid to the existing national PROs (which will be an obligation from 2030).

The Initiating Organisation

ABMA is the Aseptic Bag Manufacturers Association representing about **90% of the global aseptic bag market**. ABMA is a market group of Flexible Packaging Europe (FPE) with a team of experts in recycling, market data, food safety, sustainability, and communications. FPE also co-initiated **CEFLEX**, a cross-industry initiative focused on circularity for flexible packaging.

Call to action

For more information about the initiative, registrations, webinar or others, please contact recycling@aseptic-packaging.org

The initiative contribution is the investment to protect your license to operate in the EU.