

Cheaper alternative to plastic and card

A Swedish packaging company has launched a new range of materials based on compounding calcium carbonate with biodegradable plastics. EcoLean has devised a range of materials formed by co-extruding up to 70 per cent by volume of powdered chalk with recycled polypropylene or polyethylene to produce an environmentally friendly and cheap alternative to plastic and card. Called 'LeanMaterial', the compound is being used for beverage bottles, pouches, wrapping film for butter and disposable fast-food boxes. According to EcoLean, the new material uses only 20 MJ of energy per kilogram compared with 52 MJ for polystyrene, 48 MJ for paper and 200 MJ for aluminium foil. (Website: www.packaging-technology.com)