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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Australasian Bioplastics Association (ABA) Escalates Smear Campaign against Oxo-biodegradable Plastic Technology**

**Vancouver, Canada (February 18, 2014)** – Oxo-biodegradable plastic (OBP) technology is substantiated by a robust foundation of peer-reviewed scientific research. The environmental benefits of OBP technology are clear – it reduces plastic pollution and promotes sustainability. Nonetheless, OBP continues to be the target of a concerted and underhanded smear campaign led by the bioplastics industry. Bioplastics lobbyists have employed baseless conjecture and alarmist claims – and a notable lack of credible scientific evidence – to discredit OBP. Unfortunately, the European Parliament has been misled into phasing out oxo-biodegradable plastics. It appears that the Australasian Bioplastics Association (ABA) is once again trying to escalate the smear campaign against OBPs.

EPI refutes the key claims raised by the ABA about oxo-biodegradable plastic technology:

1. “Oxo-biodegradable additives contain heavy metals and are disruptive to human health and the environment.”

EPI categorically reaffirms that its additives contain neither heavy metals nor any environmentally toxic ingredients. Indeed, OBP is subjected to the same environmental safety standards (EN13432) and eco-toxicity tests used to regulate compostable plastics. Furthermore, OBPs have been used in agricultural mulch film for many years, with no incidence of bio-toxicity or reduced soil fertility. Thus, neither oxo-biodegradable additives nor their degradation products cause any toxicity.

EPI’s oxo-biodegradable additive, TDPA, is certified to be safe according to American and European Standards. For example, the UK Food Standard Agency’s Expert Group on Vitamins and Minerals has carried out a risk assessment on trace elements and has shown that the transition metal salts in EPI-based plastics are in fact, trace elements necessary for healthy plant and human growth. Moreover, independent experts agree that EPI formulations comply with the food packaging safety requirements prescribed by the US Food and Drug Administration.

2. “OBPs fragment but do not biodegrade.”

The degradation products of OBPs are completely transformed into a form that is assimilated by naturally occurring microorganisms. Ultimately, the OBP degradation products are converted into a biodegradable material in the presence of oxygen. A substantial body of high-quality, peer-reviewed scientific research has accumulated in support of this incontrovertible fact. Recently, for example, Jakubowicz *et al.* observed 91% biodegradation in a soil environment within 24 months (Jakubowicz, Yarahmadi and Arthurson).

The literature supporting OBP technology is without controversy and recognized by international standards bodies. Oxobiodegradable plastic additives, such as EPI’s TDPA, which conform to BS8472 (UK), ASTM D6954 (USA) and AFNOR Accord T51-808 (France), are consequently, products of high integrity.

It is evident that these claims denouncing OBP technology are uniformly unfounded and devoid of scientific merit. Indeed, they are advanced to support the vested interests of the bioplastics industry. Joseph Gho, EPI President and CEO, calls for “clear reason to prevail, especially amongst legislators worldwide. When the bioplastics industry makes such alarmist claims about oxo-biodegradable plastics, we should remember their vested commercial interests, and balance it against the solid scientific foundations of OBP technology. We must not forget the environmental benefits of oxo-biodegradable plastic technology, especially since it offers an affordable and widely applicable strategy to minimize the environmental impact of plastic usage.”

## Press Release

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### **References**

Jakubowicz, Ignacy, Nazdaneh Yarahmadi, and Veronica Arthurson.

"Kinetics of Abiotic and Biotic Degradability of Low-Density Polyethylene Containing Prodegradant Additives and Its Effect on the Growth of Microbial Communities."

*Polymer Degradation and Stability* 96.5 (2011): 919-28. Print.

### ***About EPI Environmental Products Inc.:***

*Established in 1991 in Canada & USA, EPI Environmental Products Inc. (EPI) with its UK subsidiary EPI (Europe) Limited has become a world leader in the fight against plastic waste. EPI licenses proprietary technology that causes plastic to degrade. Plastic bags, plastic film, plastic packaging and other single-use plastics can remain in the environment for decades. When these products are manufactured using EPI's additives, they will degrade and subsequently biodegrade when discarded in soil, in the presence of microorganisms, moisture, and oxygen.*

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