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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**European Parliament Misinformed about Oxo-biodegradable Technology**

**Vancouver, Canada (March 31, 2014)** – Central to the corporate vision of EPI Environmental Products Inc. is the development of economical degradable plastic technologies to mitigate the negative environmental impacts of plastic bags, which have a propensity to pollute due to their chemical stability. Thus, EPI fully supports the principle of the European Parliament's goal to reduce plastic pollution. However, it is evident that the European Parliament has been alarmingly misinformed about oxo-biodegradable plastic (OBP) technology. Indeed, their decision to phase out OBP represents a disgraceful triumph for a disingenuous propaganda campaign featuring baseless conjecture led by the bioplastics industry over objective scientific evidence.

EPI categorically refutes the key assumption about oxo-biodegradable plastics made by the European Parliament in formulating their directive:

““Oxo-biodegradable” plastics do not biodegrade in the natural environment, but only fragment into secondary microplastics. It is thus misleading to refer to such materials as “biodegradable”. Fragmentation converts visible littering into invisible littering.”

The degradation products of OBPs are completely transformed into a form that is assimilated by naturally occurring microorganisms. Therefore, OBPs are ultimately converted into water and carbon dioxide that re-enter the natural carbon cycle. 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).

It is entirely untrue that the end-products of oxo-biodegradable plastics are fragments of secondary microplastics, as fragmentation merely represents the first step in oxo-biodegradation. The literature supporting OBP technology is without controversy and recognized by international standards bodies. Oxo-biodegradable 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.

EPI would also like to clarify the European Parliament's description of oxo-biodegradable plastic additives as “typically [being] metal salts”. The term “metal salt” is applied in a technical context – such that sodium, and that most ubiquitous of household items, table salt, should also be described as metal salts. Furthermore, EPI 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 ecotoxicity 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.

It is clear that oxo-biodegradable plastic technology is the victim of misrepresentation. While OBP technology should rightly be a key ally in the fight against plastic pollution, it is being ostracized as a “false friend”. Ironically, the only falsehoods are the baseless claims denouncing OBPs advanced by lobbyists with competing commercial interests. Joseph Gho, EPI President and CEO, reiterates that “legislators worldwide should recognize the primacy of scientific evidence over unfounded rhetoric. The solid scientific foundations of OBP technology are incontrovertible and yet, currently completely ignored. It is to the detriment of our environment if oxo-biodegradable technology were overlooked, 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**

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"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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