



By Carl Collen

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## Sinclair's label journey



After years of development, the story of Sinclair's fully certified compostable fresh produce labelling solution can now be told

**T**he issue of single-use plastics is in sharp focus; only 9 per cent of plastic packaging worldwide is currently recycled, according to UN Environment. Retailers and some legislators realise urgent action is required and are indicating that all packaging products should eventually be compostable, recyclable or reusable. The pressure is now on for worldwide supply chains to source and implement sustainable packaging solutions.

Global corporations and industry leaders like Sinclair, an automated fresh produce labelling technology provider, have already started their journey towards more sustainable business activities and providing customers with alternative sustainable product solutions.

Sustainability is a key focus of the company's business activities, including product development. In 2008, working with customers, the Sinclair Innovation Team set itself the goal of providing a high-performance, fully compostable label for high-speed automated labelling directly onto fresh produce.

The label construction has three

elements: inks, face stock, and adhesive, so Sinclair first began development on a suitable face stock – a complicated challenge as, in addition to being compostable, the label application performance and food-safety compliance (for direct application onto fresh produce) had to be maintained.

The first success on the journey towards a compostable label was achieved in 2014, when the Sinclair EcoLabel compostable face stock was born. The development of a compostable face stock was a significant achievement, but the Sinclair Innovation Team continued working to pioneer a fully compostable label for use on their automated labelling systems.

2019 has become a groundbreaking year for the Sinclair Innovations Team. After exhaustive research and product trials, the latest Sinclair EcoLabel arrived for the fresh produce industry. The new Sinclair EcoLabel is a fully certified compostable, food-safe, fresh produce label. Every element in its construction – label face stock, inks, adhesive and backing paper – is compostable.

"Delivering the Sinclair EcoLabel is a significant moment for Sinclair and the industry," said Colin Woodward, Sinclair CEO and president. "We have been investing and working hard to meet customer, retailer and consumer calls to provide an independently certified, food-safe, fully compostable labelling solution to work on our automated and high-speed labelling technology. Having achieved this step in our sustainable journey, we continue to invest in reducing our environmental impact and achieving our vision for a more sustainable business and future."

The EcoLabel construction – adhesive, face stock, and inks, as well as the label backing paper, Sinclair EcoLiner – are certified compostable by TÜV Austria under OK compost – Industrial and Seedling certifications and conform to the recognised standard EN13432.

EcoLabel and EcoLiner have been independently tested to show conformance to EN13432, 'Requirements for packaging recoverable through composting and biodegradation – test scheme and evaluation criteria for the final acceptance of packaging.' The tests

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performed under EN13432 simulate industrial composting conditions and show EcoLabel becomes part of usable, soil enhancing compost in a safe and timely manner.

As a leading supplier to the fresh produce industry, Sinclair says that it

is very conscious of the need for its products and activities to be sustainable and respect the environment. The Sinclair Team has taken a "significant step" with the new EcoLabel, which offers retailers, growers, packers and consumers an independently verified, sustainable fresh produce

labelling solution for use with its automated label application technology.