

27th April 2020

Dear {See list of companies to be contacted on page 2},

RE: Preventing PFAS pollution by removing forever chemical from food packaging

We are a group of long-term investors who are committed to investing in companies that uphold the highest environmental standards. As consumers, retailers and regulators seek to minimise packaging, waste and pollution, many companies are rising to the challenge and looking to use safe, sustainable packaging. However, there is increasing concern about a group of industrial chemicals, PFAS, that are added to paper, cardboard and moulded fibre food packaging to repel oil and water¹. PFAS, per- and poly-fluorinated alkyl substances, are a group of over 4700 industrial chemicals widely used in everyday products. PFAS have been associated with a range of environmental and health issues and two chemicals in the PFAS group have already been banned due to their toxicity and persistence. As investors, we are concerned about the widespread presence of PFAS in food packaging and the environmental consequences of their continued use.

PFAS are known as *forever chemicals* because they can last in the environment for over 1000 years. The vast majority of PFAS ever produced are still in our environment and more are being made and released every day. They are accumulating in food chains and contaminating soils, seas and wildlife. PFAS are now found at levels high enough to cause neurological problems in polar bears and harm a range of wildlife species from otters to porpoises and harbour seals. PFAS have been found in 99% of people tested². With links to a wide range of human health concerns, from growth and behavioural problems to cancers, fertility issues and obesity, we feel the risk of continued use is too great to ignore.

Although some PFAS have already been banned, *all* PFAS, not just those that are currently regulated, should be avoided as they persist in the environment and are likely to have similar negative effects due to their shared chemical structure. Further bans, focusing on the whole group of PFAS rather than individual chemicals, are now being proposed around the world. We believe that companies trying to reduce the environmental impact of their packaging and future proof their supply chains, should be proactive and move away from all PFAS.

We are writing to request that your company commits to removing all PFAS from your food packaging. Removing PFAS from food packaging is feasible. Alternatives are already in use. Denmark's leading supermarket, Coop, stopped using PFAS in their food packaging in 2015, and US restaurant chain Taco Bell has committed to removing all PFAS from their consumer facing packaging by 2025.

We look forward to your response and would be delighted to discuss the matter in more detail with you. Please contact Dr Kerry Dinsmore Kerry.Dinsmore@fidra.org.uk or visit www.pfasfree.org.uk/for-retailers for further information.

Yours sincerely,

¹ *Forever chemicals in the food aisle: PFAS content of UK supermarket and takeaway food packaging*, Fidra, 2020.

² *PFAS the 'Forever Chemicals': Invisible threats from persistent chemicals*, CHEMTrust, 2019.

List of companies

Retail:

Ahold Delhaize (Netherlands)
Colruyt (Belgium)
Carrefour (France)
Cencosud (Chile)
Dairy Farm (Hong Kong)
Familymart (Japan)
Future Group (India)
Kroger (US)
Marks & Spencer (UK)
RT Mart (China)
Sainsburys (UK)
Seven & I (Japan)
Sun Art Group (China)
Tesco (UK)
Vanguard Group (China)
Walmart (UK)
Wesfarmers (Coles, Australia)
Woolworth (Australia)
Woolworths (South Africa)
Yonghui Group (China)

Restaurants:

Coca Cola (US - Costa Coffee)
Domino's Pizza (US)
McDonald's (US)
Starbucks (US)
Yum! (US – Pizza Hut, KFC, Taco Bell)