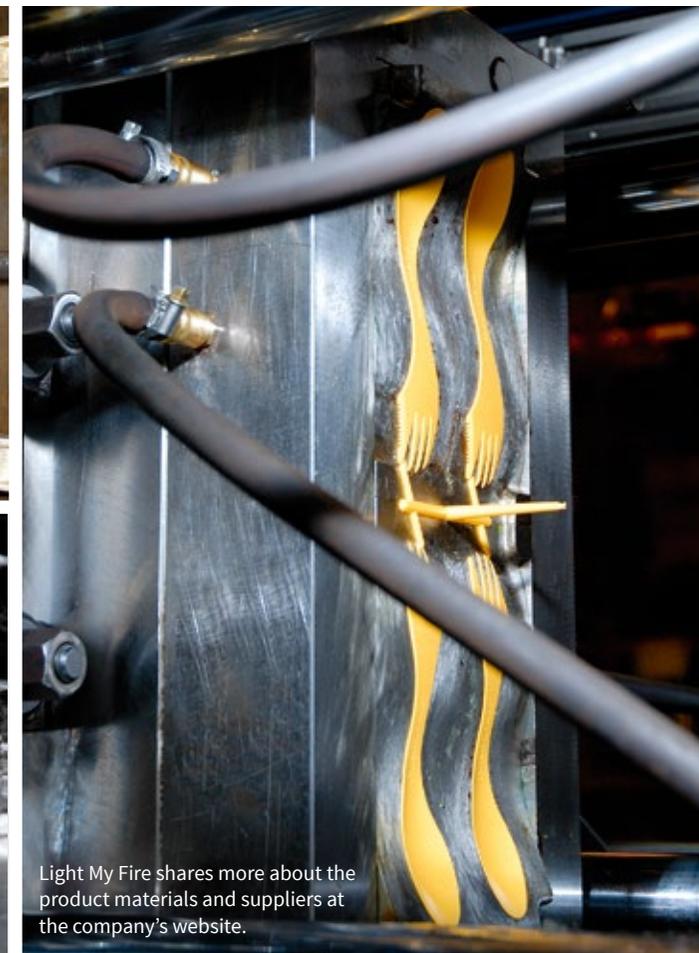
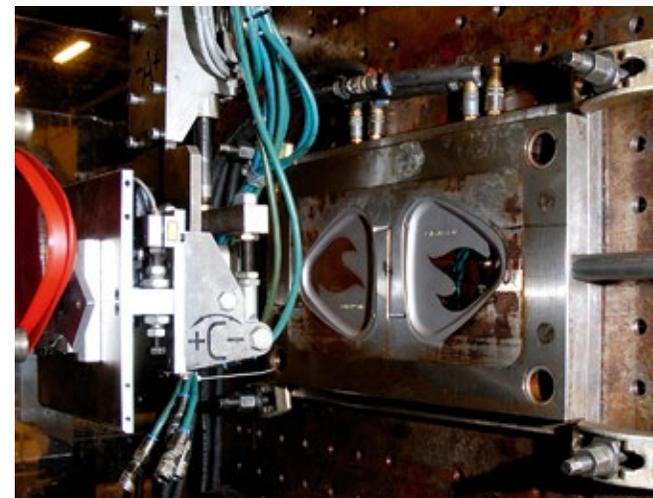




The whole product range from Light My Fire is now biobased.



Light My Fire shares more about the product materials and suppliers at the company's website.

Biobased Step by Step

At the end of 2018, Light My Fire took a big step towards a world less dependent on fossil fuels. Biobased plastics were phased in for all products after two years of intensive research and development.

There has long been a “Catch 22” with biobased plastics. For the development to take off, greater purchaser demand was required in order for manufacturers to have the courage to invest. But for demand to increase, manufacturers needed to have more to offer. The technical solutions exist – but someone had to risk taking the first step.

In 2017, Swedish company Light My Fire decided to be one of the first to stop waiting and start acting.

“We set a goal: In 2019, our entire product range would consist of biobased plastics,” says company CEO Calill Odqvist Jagusch.

The decision was not the result of countless investigations and market research surveys. It was more about being proactive and about the willingness to take responsibility for a growing environmental problem.

“Plastics have become an increasingly controversial material in recent years, among both consumers and politicians.

Light My Fire owns our own factory in Sweden, where we produce products made of plastic. As a company, we have to help change from this mentality of disposable and single-use items, and at the same time start using materials that have less of an impact on the environment. We want to be part of it and help make the change!”

As early as 2013, the company had conducted a pilot project on biobased plastics. For example, could Light My Fire’s bestseller “The Spork” be made out

of a blend of corn and wood?

“We did lots of quality tests. But the materials were not good enough back then. There’s no environmental benefit if our products break down more easily. At the same time, there were a lot of unanswered questions due to the fact that our products are intended to be used with food. Can the materials withstand being used in a microwave, being washed in a dishwasher, and so on?”

The project was shelved up until 2017.

“When we started up again, I thought that the technological development in biobased plastics would have been much further along. But the fact is: It wasn’t,” says Calill Odqvist Jagusch.

Cooperation – a key to development

What was new, however, was that the discussion within the plastics industry had begun. Even multinational manufacturers of various plastic materials were interested once the small Swedish company got in touch.

“The fact that we own our own factory

is a great asset when it comes to cooperating with suppliers. They need to test and adapt their materials. For example, SK Chemicals in South Korea, one of the world’s largest companies in the industry, has had their technicians out visiting us several times.”

“The development has been a joint process, whereby we look at what happens to materials if, for example, temperatures are increased a few degrees during the melting. The suppliers benefit greatly from participating in the manufacturing phase.”

Besides the technical challenges that Light My Fire has been working on since 2017, there have been other aspects that have also taken time. Since the company’s products need to be authorized for use with food, new licenses have to be applied for in several markets. And what sort of conditions are the raw materials for the biobased materials being grown under?

“We are always looking for raw materials that are being produced in a sustainable way, preferably in Europe. Many

consumers want to know if biobased plastics are leading to the destruction of rainforests, etc. But at the same time, I am struck by the fact that no one ever asks about the origin of the oil – which countries it was produced in, and what that leads to there.”

At different percentages and with plastic based on various raw materials, such as corn, sugar cane, etc., Light My Fire has now tried to maximize the utilization of biobased plastics throughout its product range. The products are labeled with the company’s own “Biobased” symbol.

“This way, consumers and other interested parties can visit our website, where we list all the materials and all the suppliers in an attempt to be as transparent as possible. And we also share more information about both biobased and regular plastics.”

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