




TECHNICAL NOTICE - SORTING

Detectability of SEALED AIR / MEBxxxNK packaging at sorting centers

APPLICATION DESCRIPTION

GENERAL INFORMATION	
APPLICANT	SEALED AIR
APPLICATION DATE	2023
PACKAGING BRAND - ITEM	MEBxxxNK

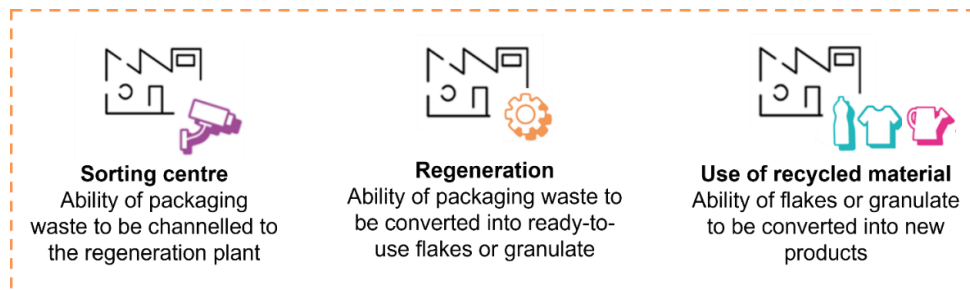


DESCRIPTION OF PACKAGING	
PACKAGING TYPE	Tray
COLOR	Black
TESTED THICKNESS	200 µm

MATERIALS	
BODY	<p>PET, 3% dark colorant</p> <p>Details of the colorant used are confidential. The exact reference of the colorant was provided to COTREP to enable it to issue this notice.</p>

PURPOSE OF THE APPLICATION
To test the sortability at French sorting centers of the dark MEBxxxNK provided by SEALED AIR

This notice relates to the detectability of the packaging and not its recyclability.



 Study scope

TECHNICAL CONCLUSIONS

Given the evidence provided to COTREP, and in view of the results presented in the test reports from optical sorting (O.S.) equipment manufacturers, SEALED AIR MEBxxxNK dark packaging of 200 µm is detectable by optical sorting in conditions representative of the technology used in French household packaging waste sorting centers. Consequently, all SEALED AIR MEBxxxNK black thermoformed trays with a thickness > 200µm can therefore be detected as colored PET packaging with a satisfactory level of performance.

Although COTREP is issuing a positive opinion regarding the detectability of SEALED AIR MEBxxxNK dark packaging, this opinion provides no indication of its recyclability.

Moreover, COTREP reserves the right to review its opinion if the company modifies the packaging composition, e.g. by:

- modifying the resin¹;
- using recycled materials/production scrap potentially containing carbon black;
- modifying the colorant solution and/or its proportions.

¹ The term "resin" is understood to mean the type of polymer used, i.e. "PP", "PS", "PET" or "HDPE". The notice remains valid if the supplier of the type of polymer tested changes.



FIND OUT MORE

The extension of sorting guidelines to all plastic packaging has led to the modernization of sorting centers in France. In particular, centers are automating their processes and acquiring optical separators using near infrared technology.

This step in the sorting process is critical to separating plastic packaging. It enables packaging to be sorted by resin and color.

At this step in the sorting process, undetectable packaging is rejected by sorting centers and sent for energy recovery.

Carbon black pigment, which is currently widely used for dark-colored packaging, absorbs infrared light emitted by the optical sorting equipment and returns no signal. Consequently, the packaging is not detected and therefore neither sorted nor recycled.

SEALED AIR packaging is a range of PET dark tray using an alternative colorant solution to carbon black at a concentration of 3%. Details of the colorant used are confidential. The exact reference of the colorant was provided to COTREP to enable it to issue this notice. The results of static and dynamic tests performed on the premises of two O.S. manufacturers (PELLENC SA and TOMRA) according to the COTREP procedure were positive. The SEALED AIR PET dark trays were detected and channeled to the colored PET stream with the same level of performance (quality, capture rate) as other rigid colored PET household packaging waste.

The conclusions set out in this notice are based on a set of commitments undertaken by each of the parties indicated below.

SEALED AIR undertook to:

- use the sorting procedure provided by COTREP ("COTREP optical sorting test procedure for assessing the detectability of dark packaging at optical sorting stages" - version of January 2019²);
- perform tests on the premises of two O.S. manufacturers representative of existing sorting facilities in France;
- submit test reports to COTREP for its analysis and opinion;
- offer a colorant solution that:
 - o meets the essential requirements of the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive (94/62/EC).
 - o does not alter the density of the packaging: the density of packaging consisting of PP or PE must be < 1 and > 1 for packaging consisting of PET or PS.

The O.S. manufacturers made an undertaking to COTREP to:

- follow the procedure in its entirety;
- perform tests using technologies and machine settings representative of those used in current sorting centres and under normal operating conditions.

Paris, June 19th 2023

² Available on COTREP's website : <https://www.cotrep.fr/content/uploads/sites/3/2019/02/tri-p1-emballages-sombres-v01-2019.pdf>