

Mulching film

PST (Park of Science and Technology) of Sicily, Italy will collaborate with the Chinese research institute IBFC of Changsha in a research project financed by the Beijing government on the experimentation and production of biodegradable mulching film.

The Italian partner will provide the technology to produce the PHA (polyhydroxyalcanoate) biodegradable polymer from waste edible oils by using micro-organisms and which, when integrated with a natural fibre developed by IBFC, forms a biodegradable film. This agreement is following the signing of a previous one in November 2006.

Experimentation on the Italian-Chinese mulching film was set up last spring together with the University of Catania on the experimental fields of the faculty of agriculture collecting data on such characteristics as waterproofing, strength, duration and versatility and comparing them with conventional films made from petrochemicals and other combinations of biodegradable ones.

Due to the results, the Chinese authorities have financed IBFC to do further research, part of which will be carried out by PST which will provide the necessary biodegradable polymer for mass experimentation.

At the same time, the chemical laboratories of PST have optimised their production system making it more economical which would fit in with recent developments in Italy towards recycling paper. The Chinese authorities showed a great interest in this line of research because of the implications for the sustainable development of intensive farming and in other sectors which currently use plastic films.

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