

TC Transcontinental Packaging Establishes its ASTRA Center for Packaging R&D and Innovation

Chicago, Illinois, September 27, 2021 – [TC Transcontinental Packaging](#) is thrilled to introduce its [ASTRA Center](#), the Art, Science, and Technology Research and Applications Center, based in Menasha, Wisconsin, and the result of several months of work. This 12,200 square-foot facility is a key enabler for the company to innovate and identify sustainable solutions for its customers. It is home to a team of more than 20 engineers who are the driving force behind every challenge solved and innovation created for its customers.

“Over the past years, we have aligned our investments and strategy to meet our customers objectives and goals, says Alex Hayden, Senior Vice President, R&D, Innovation and Sustainability. The ASTRA Center is at the core of our operations to drive growth and innovation and be the sustainability partner to our customers. The many tests, instruments, and technology available to us provide enhanced product development knowledge through the entire process of flexible plastic packaging design, allowing the development of innovative films for sustainability, e-commerce, and more.”

Thanks to four different state-of-the-art R&D labs and a team of sustainability gurus, brand owners and retailers can benefit from a deep expertise in compostable, recyclable, and recycled content packaging, increased speed to market from concept to commercialization, optimized solutions for performance and cost, and turnkey packaging solutions.

The [Analytical and Testing Services Lab](#) performs physical testing to simulate real life use of the package from filling to transportation and distribution. It also measures shelf life and consumer end use with analytical testing to develop molecular structures that meet the packaging functionality requirements throughout its entire life cycle.

The [Applications and Packaging Development Lab](#) is a dedicated lab equipped with a 9-layer blown extrusion line which allows designed experiments and optimization of film formulations. The lab also includes FFS machinery to perform production-scale customer prototypes. This FFS testing is designed to gain insights on how films will perform, avoid any surprises on customers' equipment, and ensure packaging performance and efficiency once the development stage is completed.

The [Advanced Compost Lab](#) is the first of its kind within a packaging manufacturer and is fully integrated with the R&D team's expertise and knowledge to develop the next generation of packaging, and improve the turnaround time and cost for certifying compostable packaging. The lab is accredited, under independent auditing, to conform to ISO 17025 and is equipped to test and meet ASTM 6400 standards for compostable packaging.

The [Recycling Technology Lab](#), expected to be fully operational in 2022, will complete the R&D suite of expertise with an in-house recyclability assessment lab. The lab will measure each aspect of a package designed for industry accepted criteria, to ensure that it is truly recycling compatible, per the design guidelines available in the industry. The lab will include an extruder, a recycled plastic pelletizer, and will allow the team to analyze post-consumer resin, waste source, and gel count for better results and package performance.

In addition, the ASTRA Center is key to TC Transcontinental Packaging's sustainability agenda to deliver on its 2025 commitment to have 100% of its packaging recyclable, compostable or reusable, and achieve a 10% use of PCR on average by weight across its plastic portfolio.

Dive into the Advanced Compost Lab with this [video](#).

About TC Transcontinental Packaging

TC Transcontinental Packaging, the Packaging Sector of TC Transcontinental (TSX: TCL.A TCL.B), is a leader in flexible packaging with operations mostly in the United States, as well as in Canada, Guatemala, Mexico, Ecuador, the United Kingdom, New Zealand and China with about 3,800 employees. Its platform is comprised of one premedia studio and 26 production plants specializing in recycling, extrusion, lamination, printing and converting. TC Transcontinental Packaging offers a variety of flexible plastic products, including rollstock, bags and pouches, shrink films and bags, and advanced coatings, servicing a variety of markets, including dairy, coffee, meat and poultry, pet food, agriculture, beverage, home and personal care, industrial, consumer products and medical. For more information, visit TC Transcontinental Packaging's website at www.tc.tc/packaging.

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