



How food contact chemicals originating from packaging and processing end up in foodstuffs

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Food contact materials and articles, such as packaging and food processing equipment, are essential for the modern food industry. Food packaging protects foodstuffs and extends shelf life, but it also enables highly profitable globalized business models that market (ultra-)processed foods. Importantly, the chemicals in food packaging and processing equipment, and in table- and kitchenware, are known as food contact chemicals and they can transfer into foodstuffs. Regulations have been in place for over 50 years with the aim of reducing health risks associated with the exposure to food contact chemicals. However, evidence suggests that regulations are not fit for purpose, with the entire human population being exposed to hazardous food contact chemicals, and in some cases above safe thresholds. In this talk, I will present the state of the science on food contact chemicals and their impacts on health, highlight some cases and key knowledge gaps, including the issue of micro- and nanoplastics. I also present a possible way forward towards fully safe food contact materials and articles.

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holds a doctorate degree in environmental toxicology and an MSc in environmental science from the ETH Zurich. Since 2012 she has been the Managing Director and Chief Scientific Officer at the charitable Food Packaging Forum Foundation (FPF) in Zurich, Switzerland. FPF is a research and science communication organization focusing on chemicals in all types of food contact materials and their impacts on human and environmental health. Jane has worked on chemicals in plastic for over 20 years, both in industry and academic research.