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The Corona crisis has caught the global community largely unawares. That is hardly surprising, since we are in a completely unprecedented situation. But it makes it difficult to assess yet what effect the crisis will have on the plastics industry. Besides the development of the global economy, there are two other key issues that might be relevant.

The Corona crisis is focusing attention on the shelf life of foods again. Instead of every day, many customers now only shop once a week. Stockpiling of goods is also becoming more common again. Foods are being stored for longer and therefore have to stay edible for longer. The importance of a long shelf

Local Recycling instead of a Global Supply Chain

life for foods will stick in consumers' minds even after the crisis. For manufacturers of plastics packaging, who have been in the firing line in recent times, that is good news, since it is precisely what their products accomplish.

The crisis has also shown how vulnerable global supply chains are. Shutdown of factories in one part of the world no longer only affects the local region, but leads to bottlenecks in other countries, too. There is nothing new about this recognition, but in the past it usually only affected individual materials and sectors; now it hits entire industries. In the future, therefore, regional supply relationships and production could become more important. This opens up opportunities for plastics recyclers, especially in regions where there is little local material production. After all, plastic wastes are already available locally and can be recycled back into raw materials. Sustainable management of plastics will therefore also improve supply security.

How these two issues can be combined is shown by various manufacturers of plastics packaging. They have developed products that ensure foods have a long shelf life, while also being easier to recycle. Our extensive Packaging Extra from page 8 presents some particularly interesting examples.

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