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## Plastics Recycling Market – UK 2011 – 2015 Analysis

New AMA report provides a major review of the UK Plastics Recycling Market

“According to the British Plastics Federation (BPF), UK industry consumes around 4.8 million tonnes of polymers a year and produces around 2.5 million tonnes of end product, the largest area of demand being packaging. It is estimated that around 2 million tonnes of plastic packaging is used in the UK, but this figure is higher when including the packaging used with imported goods.”

A brief summary of the report is included on the following page.

Priced at £665, the report is currently available from AMA Research Ltd, Telephone 01242 235724 or e-mail at [sales@amaresearch.co.uk](mailto:sales@amaresearch.co.uk)

### **Editors Note:**

Attached is a summary of the report. Please use brief extracts if you wish, **but we would request that references to company market shares are not published without our prior permission.**

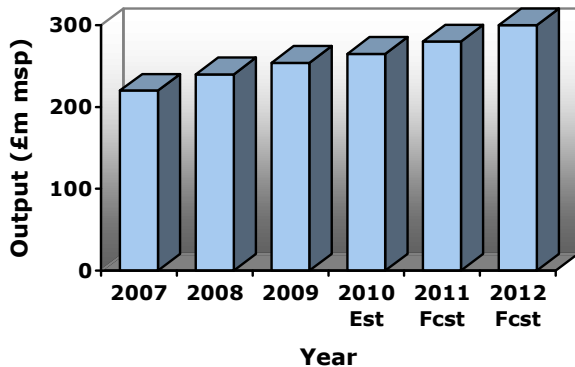
If you would like to receive an editorial review copy or would like to speak to an author of this report, please contact Chris Moore or Keith Taylor on (01242) 235724.

Please include our web address and telephone number on any review printed, it would also be appreciated if a copy of the review could be forwarded to AMA Research. Thank you.

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### UK Plastic Reprocessing Output (£m MSP) 2007-2012



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After packaging, the second largest area of demand for polymers is that of construction products, accounting for around 22% of UK polymer supply. Electrical equipment, housewares, agricultural products and

vehicle manufacture account for around 30% of demand between them. The remaining 12% of demand is split between medical equipment, toys and sporting goods, clothing and other.

In the UK, it has been estimated that plastic waste arisings have been growing by around 2% a year, reaching around 4.5 million tonnes in 2010.

There are some 50 groups of plastics, with hundreds of different varieties, all of which are potentially recyclable. However, problems with recycling mixed materials means that the recycling market is dominated by six of the most common polymer types, many of which are used in packaging. While it is unlikely that there will be a dramatic upturn in the variety of plastics recycled, with investment in recycling plant only financially viable for the more commonly occurring products, legislative influences are likely to produce significant changes in the product mix over the next few years.

The market structure is complex, with recycling of post-use plastic involving collection, sorting, reprocessing and incorporation of recycled polymer into new products. Some companies focus on only one area of activity, while other, often larger, players are active in several. The benefits of reusing industrial process waste in-house, combined with the requirement for producers in some sectors to meet recycling targets, have encouraged some plastics manufacturers to run a recycling operation, commonly incorporating recycled plastic into a proportion of their own products.

The domestic sector represents the largest source of post-use plastic waste. While the number of local authorities operating collection schemes has increased in recent years, kerbside collection is the method most likely to encourage participation by the general public. Meanwhile, recovery of plastic from the commercial and industrial sectors is likely to be encouraged by increasingly comprehensive legislation.

Use of recycled polymer by manufacturers has traditionally depended upon it offering a significant price advantage over virgin polymer, with usage historically constrained by the low prices of virgin material. In addition, the market for recycled polymer has been limited by the perception amongst some end-use sectors (e.g.: the construction industry) that it is of inferior quality.

Within the food packaging industry, the largest single market for plastic, usage is limited by safety concerns, although recycled plastic can be used, sandwiched between layers of virgin polymer. Further growth of the recycled plastics market is dependent upon finding applications for the reprocessed polymer, with potential areas of development analysed in the report.

AMA Research's report "**Plastics Recycling Market Report - UK 2011-2015 Analysis**" is available in hard copy or electronic format for £665 and can be ordered online at [www.amaresearch.co.uk](http://www.amaresearch.co.uk) or by calling 01242 235724.