



The material is made a natural biopolymer derived from fermenting shellfish | Photo source [Unsplash](#) by Elle Hughes

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PLASTIC WRAP ALTERNATIVE MADE FROM SHELLFISH WASTE



FOOD & DRINK

The material has the potential to biodegrade within 90 days and could be composted at home

Spotted: Scottish biotech firm CuanTec is planning to replace plastic food wrappers with a biodegradable material extracted from shellfish waste. The material is made out of a natural biopolymer derived from fermenting shellfish remains.

The fermentation process, which resembles that of alcohol or yogurt, gives rise to a natural biopolymer called Chitin. Chitin is then transformed into a more malleable material known as Chitosan, which is used to make the clear food wrapper.

While the product is still in the research stage, it has the potential to biodegrade within 90 days and could be composted at home. Waitrose supermarkets have already shown interest and may use the new packaging to be used for wrapping fish.

Springwise has spotted other innovations aimed at reducing plastic wrapping, including an [invisible, edible film](#).

2nd August 2019

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Takeaway:

This isn't the first time that a by-product of the food industry is used for food packaging. However, CuanTec's biodegradable wrapping is may be among the first to become a competitive alternative to plastic wrapping. With 12.7 million tonnes of plastic entering the ocean every year, innovations such as these are valuable.