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Paper from straw and grains- Pilot plant at DS Smith

DS Smith has launched a new trial in partnership with environmental research start-up Nafici Environmental Research (NER) to create packaging from 'second harvest' materials. According to the company's research team, second harvest materials like straw and brewers' spent grain have the potential to save up to 10% of the virgin fibres used in the papermaking process. They therefore present an important and viable means to supplement traditional sources. NER, a West Sussex-based company, has created a process to transform agricultural waste into paper-making pulp with strengthening properties. DS Smith is using its Kemsley research and innovation site in Kent to explore how the pulp, pioneered by NER from previously unwanted products, can be used to make sustainable packaging products. Businesses are keen to understand how they can adopt more circularity into their supply chains and finding secondary uses for what are currently seen as waste materials are key to that.

The Company's Now & Next Sustainability strategy drives it to be leaders in helping the transition to a circular economy, so working with customers and partners across the supply chain to keep materials in use for as long as possible is an important part of that drive. It is expected that through the pilot programme at Kemsley, alternative fibres, and particularly second harvest materials, can and will play an important role in the future of sustainable packaging.