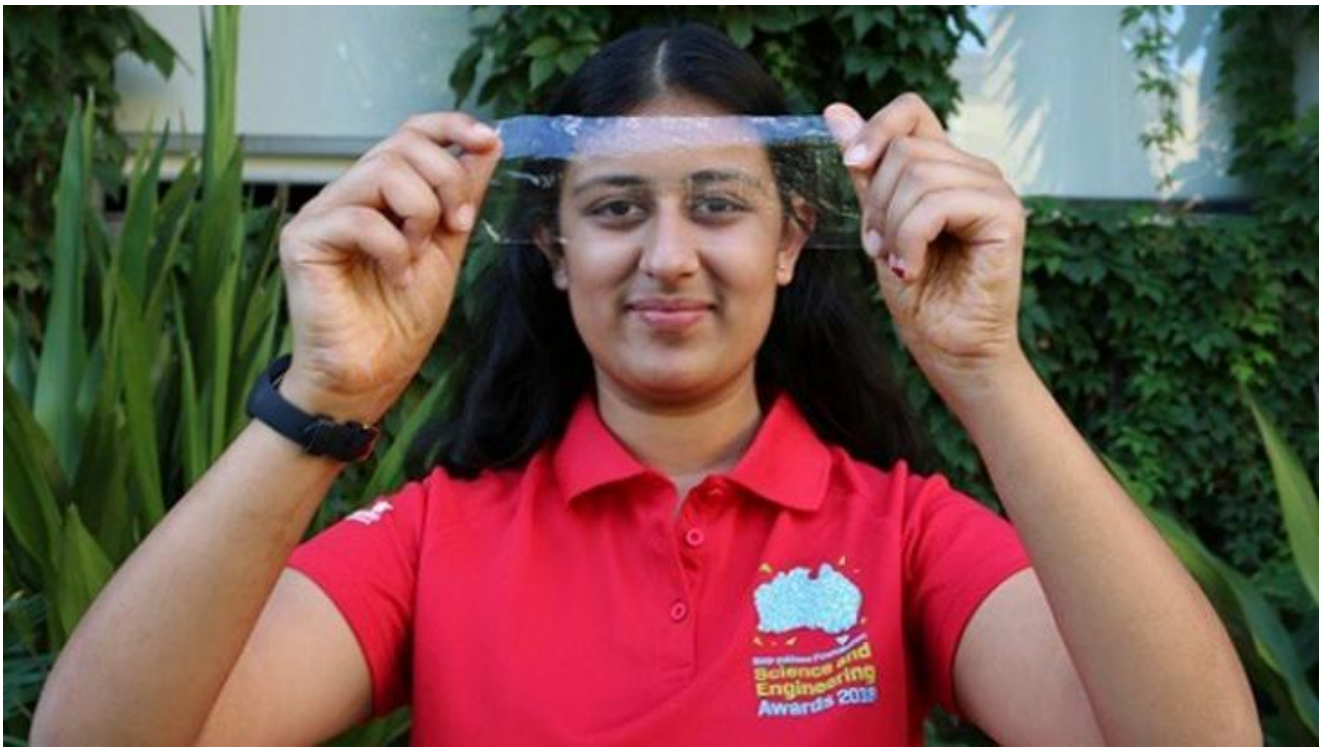
HEALTHY NEWS

Teen Invents Biodegradable “Plastic” That Decomposes In 33 Days Using Prawn Shells And Silk Cocoon Protein

By bestfolkmedicine · 15/05/2020 · 2 min read



With the climate change crisis being one of the most talked about topics in today’s world, we see many amazing teens leading the path towards a better future.

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One such teen is Greta Thunberg- the voice of a new generation of eco fighters who’re asking for their right to live on a planet that’s hospitable.

But, there are dozens of other activists for climate change worldwide doing their part-one such person is this teen from Australia who invented a biodegradable plastic from shrimp that may hold the answers to the plastic waste problem.

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17-Year-Old Teen Makes Biodegradable Plastic

Angelina Arora is 17 and a student of medicine. She's created a plastic that can decompose in landfills within 33 days. She made it from prawn shells.

> *"I looked at prawns and thought what makes their shells look like plastic?" says 16-year-old Angelina Arora https://t.co/t9KvhxXpdx*
>
> *— National Geographic (@NatGeo) October 9, 2018*

One night after a long and hard day in the lab, she noticed that prawn shells look like plastic and she thought what is it that makes them look like plastic.

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As every scientist would do, she went into the lab the next day and began researching. This was her Eureka moment.

She was decisive to develop the plastic product as she wanted to make a difference since forever- whether keeping the environment safe for the generations to come or to improve the health of the society.

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When Did Arora Learn the Harsh Truth about Plastic

When she spoke to National Geographic, Arora said she learned about the negative impact of plastic on our planet while shopping with her mother.

She noticed that her mother had to pay for the plastic bags and when they asked the cashier, they told them that this was a method to deter us from using plastic bags and thus, help the planet.

Her initial plastics alternative was made from corn starch; however, she was taking away a potential source of food so she decided to turn elsewhere- waste alternatives.

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She looked at a banana peel; however, the solubility wasn't right.

It Wasn't Easy, but It Was Worth It

Developing the product wasn't without challenges, but she explains that this process helped her realize that age isn't a barrier.

The material she made isn't just great because it can decompose in 33 days, but also because it's 1.5 million times faster than conventional plastics we're using in immense amounts today.

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Arora has been recognized and awarded for her discovery and also spoke on TED.

The Road Is Long, but She's Firm

Arora is still in the phase of patenting and a final prototype and then the plan is commercial manufacture.

She's currently talking with companies and she's satisfied until now- the response has been positive. The cost of making this plastic isn't expensive and has multiple uses.

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Sources:

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

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