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Recycling of Poly (Lactic Acid)/Silk based Bionanocomposites Films and its Influence on

Thermal Stability, Crystallization Kinetics, Solution and Melt Rheology

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Abstract:

In this study, the effect of silk nanocrystals (SNCs) on the thermal and rheological properties of poly (lactic acid) (PLA) under repetitive extrusion process is investigated. The presence of SNCs facilitates the crystallization process and delaying the thermal degradation of PLA matrix. This leads to the reduction in cold crystallization peak temperature with lower crystallization half-time and higher growth rate. The substantial improvement in nucleation density observed through Polarized Optical Microscope (POM) proves the nucleating effect of SNC in all processing cycles. Moreover, the rheological investigation (complex viscosity, storage and loss modules values) revealed the stabilizing effect of SNC and the drastic degradation of neat PLA (NPLA) in third and fourth cycle is observed to be fortified by the presence of SNC. Cole-Cole plot and cross over frequencies have been correlated with the molar mass distribution of PLA and PLA-Silk composite during processing, which is further supported by the intrinsic viscosity measurement and acid value analysis. This investigation suggests that the melt viscosity and thermal properties of PLA can be stabilized by addition of silk nanocrystals.

Keywords: Reprocessing; Poly (lactic acid); Bionanocomposites

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