

Plastics Industry Association Position on Certified Commercially Compostable Bioplastics

PLASTICS' member companies strongly support the EPA waste hierarchy stated as reduce, reuse, recycle which seeks to maintain materials at their highest and best use to improve environmental outcomes, conserve resources and reduce costs.^{1, 2}

Certified commercially compostable bioplastics can play an important role in composting the 116,200,000 tons of organic waste generated each year.³

PLASTICS defines "biodegradable bioplastics" as a plastic that will completely degrade through biological action into biomass, carbon dioxide (CO₂), and water in a defined environment and timeframe.

PLASTICS defines "certified commercially compostable bioplastics" as plastic products that meet ASTM D6400 or an equivalent standard and is recognized by an independent 3rd party certification. Commercial composting is a managed process that controls disintegration and biodegradation of organic materials. PLASTICS supports the use of industry consensus standard specifications for demonstrating commercial compostability.

PLASTICS does not support the use of additives that promote degradation to be allowed in plastic resins that would not degrade through a biological action in a commercial composting environment and therefore supports policies that restrict the ability of these products to be labeled for sale as "certified commercially compostable".

To provide consumer understanding and confidence, and to promote consistency throughout the industry, PLASTICS supports the use of industry best practices for the labelling and marketing of commercially compostable bioplastic products.⁴

PLASTICS recognizes the importance of preventing contamination of both the commercial composting stream and recycling stream. In order to address consumer confusion and minimize contamination, PLASTICS supports labeling policies for commercially compostable products that are technically feasible for manufacturers to meet and that certify to ASTM D6400 or equivalent standard.

Legislative policies should improve commercial composting infrastructure by expanding access and developing programs that include education, feedback loops for composters and value chain stakeholders, implementing industry best practices, and sister policies on food waste diversion.

Position Approved on 1.30.2024

¹ PLASTICS "Sustainable Materials Management Policy" April 2018

² "Plastics Industry Association Advanced Recycling Position Statement" October 2021

³ [EPA National Overview: Facts and Figures on Materials, Wastes and Recycling](#)

⁴ [PLASTICS Voluntary Guidelines on Bioplastics Marketing Claims](#)