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What's the Difference Between Biodegradable & Compostable Packaging?

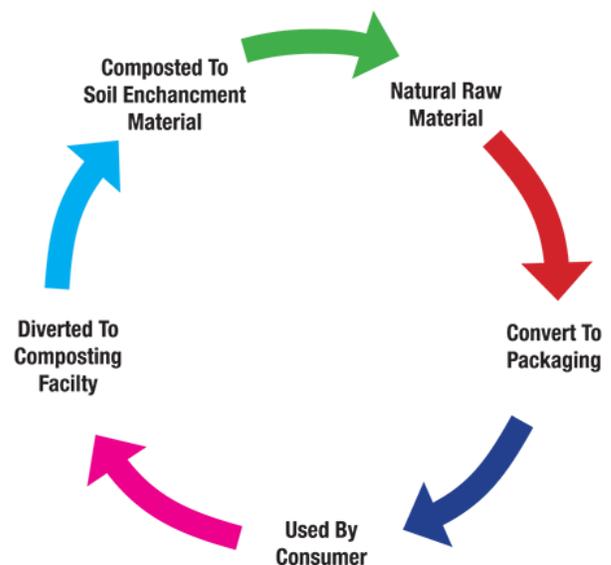
Biodegradable and compostable food packaging refer to materials that can break down and decompose in the environment. This is one of the most reliable ways to conserve the Earth's vitality while offering customers environmentally sustainable products. While these terms are used interchangeably, they do not share the same meaning. This post will help you know the difference between a biodegradable and compostable product and what to check for whenever a company claims that their product is made from organic materials. So, let's get started!

What Does Biodegradable Mean?

Biodegradation is a process where natural raw materials can be broken down biologically in the environment within a certain amount of time. If a product is made of organic material, it can be broken down without oxygen and then can be turned into carbon dioxide, water, and biomass with the help of microorganisms. While organic materials in fact do biodegrade in landfills, it's not within an expected timeframe and may take a long time to decompose.

What Does Compostable Mean?

Compostable refers to a natural process where organic waste materials decompose into a substance called compost. This substance is full of rich nutrients that can be used as soil conditioner. The process involves closely controlled heat, moisture levels, and carbon dioxide which accelerates the composting process. Genpak's compostable material is known as bagasse. It is a renewable, fast-growing resource that breaks down the best in professionally managed compost facilities.



How can you tell if a food packaging item is biodegradable or compostable?

Just because an item is made or claimed to be made from organic or natural raw materials, does not mean it will biodegrade or compost. Therefore, it is up to the consumer to do their homework. The best way to make sure that a packaging item is biodegradable or compostable is to ask the manufacturer for a **third-party certification document**. This certification should be generated from an accredited third party such as the [Biodegradable Products Institute \(BPI\)](#). All of our [Harvest Fiber](#) items are third party [BPI certified](#) compostable and only apply to professionally managed composting facilities and not your backyard compost pile. To find a composter near you, just visit www.findacomposter.com.

As a leading manufacturer in environmentally sustainable products, we strive to meet your eco-friendly goals. To learn more about our BPI certified compostable Harvest Fiber products, go to www.genpak.com

