

Sustainable Packaging Coalition Report Details the Fate of Packaging in Composting Facilities

Compostable Packaging: The Reality on the Ground Based on a Survey of Industrial Composting Facilities throughout the U.S.

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA, June 3, 2010 – The Sustainable Packaging Coalition (SPC) has released a report on how packaging is handled in industrial composting facilities based on a national survey conducted this spring.

Compostable Packaging: The Reality on the Ground reveals survey results from 40 facilities that accept food waste, which were identified to provide a range of size, composting method and geographic location of facilities. Survey questions covered topics such as types of food waste accepted, composting methods utilized, how packaging is handled and what problems facilities have encountered in accepting packaging.

The survey was motivated by the packaging industry’s confusion as to how composting facilities treat foodservice packaging as some facilities reject packaging, citing it as a contaminant to their composting process and finished product. Due to the growing number of individual facility, regional and state compostability standards, packaging designers and engineers have been unsure of how to approach compostable packaging.

“There is a disconnect between compostable packaging design and the composting facilities who deal with those materials,” said SPC Project Manager Liz Shoch, who has led the project. “We hope this report sheds light on how compostable packaging is actually treated and provides recommendations for how we can improve the fate of compostable packaging in this country, as composting is an effective end-of-life option for food- and beverage-soiled paper packaging, as well as compostable plastics.”

The report was authored by Rhodes Yepsen, an Organics Recycling Consultant, with SPC staff. Key findings include:

- 90% of facilities surveyed actively accept compostable packaging.
- 67.5% require compostable packaging to have some type of standard or certification before allowing it in the front gate.
- 82.5% want a more universally recognizable label of compostability.

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[Compostable Packaging: The Reality on the Ground](#)

The report is available free to SPC members and to non-SPC members for \$50.00. Members of the media may request a free copy by contacting Erin Malec.

About the Sustainable Packaging Coalition and GreenBlue

The Sustainable Packaging Coalition, a project of the nonprofit sustainability institute GreenBlue, is an industry working group of nearly 200 companies from across the packaging supply chain. www.sustainablepackaging.org

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