

TOGO COMPOSTING GUIDE

April 2012



COMPOSTABLE CLAIMS & ADVICE

At this time, products are really only certified compostable in relation to larger scale composting operations. The items we sell are certified compostable to product specific ASTM standards (astm.org) and/or BPI approved (bpiworld.org).

The basis behind advice to qualify a product as compostable is...

Products will breakdown into, or otherwise become part of, usable compost (eg. soil-conditioning material, mulch) in a safe and timely manner in an appropriate composting program or facility, or in a home compost pile or device.

Manufactured products ability to compost is judged alongside other organic matter like food scraps and other plant waste like leaves.

Due to the restricted access to suitable facilities within areas of the US we are

required to advise you that suitable facilities may not be available in your area. However, if you are in Austin, we are blessed with several options on the commercial composting front.

Many products will eventually breakdown in larger/better home composting systems overtime if the right conditions are created, but many will take a longer time than is required to meet the standards currently expected in composting. If your pile is not up to the job more tenacious products will be there a while.



HOME COMPOSTING

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Adding these products to a compost pile at home will offer challenges. All home compost systems perform differently. Our products are considered brown dry waste, high in carbon, which will help balance your nitrogen-rich green waste. How large and well managed your pile is will effect the time it will take for them to break down.

The BPI approved bagasse products will do well. They are better torn up and mixed in. If they are piled together they take longer.

The hot cups are lined with a bio coating and the cold cups are completely PLA. Both products will benefit from being broken up and need large, hot and well managed piles to break down effectively and in a timely manner. We put them in our composter at home but not a lot at a time because we only have family food waste to balance it out.



Our cups, lids and Natur-Ware cutlery will hang around longer than most materials. They will break down over time. Persistent pieces need to be pulled from finished compost. They can be returned to the pile for another go if you wish. The hot summers here help.

Check out these City of Austin website addresses for more information:

www.austintexas.gov/department/composting

www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Trash_and_Recycling/CompostingFactSheet.pdf



Above: Bagasse is at home in your compost pile. Left: Composting at home is a rewarding process.

MOST COMMON QUESTION...

"What if people don't actually compost the products, then it hasn't done any good?"

I hear this quite a lot. Not true. In an ideal world every piece of product will find its way to a compost pile. We are not there yet, although we are making strides. The benefit from using these products starts in production and material extraction. These products are petroleum free having a calmer effect on the environment for much of their existence. They are made from renewable

resources. Waiting for the convenience of compost collection programs to improve will not help motivate the waste haulers. They need to have compostable waste to haul. This requires both waste haulers and distributors to offer competitive rates on compostable products and services; providing the local business community the opportunity to

embrace composting and compostable products. We also need the general community to support businesses making better choices and to care about which trash can they throw their items into. And yes, we will have to sort our trash a little more. But its only three cans: compost, recycle and trash. If we can put a man on the moon, we can figure out how to separate waste into three cans!

COMPOSTERS AND COLLECTORS

Commercial composting has been in Austin for decades but only in the last couple of years have we seen growth in collection services hauling waste from restaurants and other related food businesses. We love all the composters in town but here are our favorites:

Break It Down - www.breakitdownaustin.org

Organics 'By Gosh' - www.organicsbygosh.com

Texas Disposable Systems - www.texasdisposal.com/index.php/services-environmental-waste-services

Need help finding a composter?

www.findacomposter.com

RECYCLING SERVICES:

Wandering River Recycling: www.wanderingriverrecycling.com
An Austin green trail blazing business and kind supporter of ours. Austin's best single stream recycling waste diverter.

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www.TOGOCO.net