

# WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE ?

## COMPOSTABLES



VS

## BIODEGRADABLES



Although compostable and biodegradable are often used interchangeably, they do mean different things. **Whilst all compostable products are biodegradable, not all biodegradable products are compostable.**

Both terms refer to the natural process of breaking down organic waste, but what exactly is the difference between them?

# COMPOSTABLES

Compostable packaging is made from plant-based, recycled materials that can transform into nutrient-rich compost when properly processed. This packaging presents an **environmentally friendly alternative to single-use plastic**.

To maximise its environmental benefits, compostable packaging must be collected separately - if disposed of in general waste, its environmental value is lost.



All products labelled as compostable must comply with European Standard EN 13432, ensuring they fully disintegrate **within 90 days** without leaving harmful residues behind.



# BIODEGRADABLES

All materials can be classified as biodegradable since microorganisms naturally break them down over time, but the process can take decades. Whereas compostable materials break down completely within 90 days under the right conditions.

In addition, **the term biodegradable is not regulated** which means there has been no official testing on these materials for harmful residue so, although they will break down, there is a chance toxins are left behind when they decompose.

Because of this, products labelled as biodegradable may not be as eco-friendly as they seem and could contaminate compost streams.



# CLEARING THE CONFUSION

Most materials can be labelled as biodegradable because eventually every material will break down if you give it enough time. However, when products made from non-compostable material degrade it can **leave toxic residue** behind, such as **microplastics**.

Making compostable claims **requires certification** and testing which can be costly, so often companies choose to use the term biodegradable instead, leading to confusion and improper disposal.

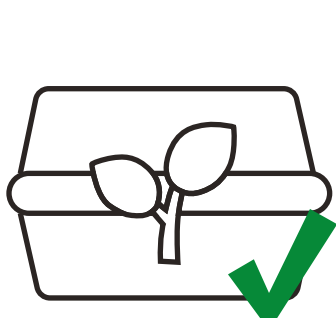


# AT GRUNDON

We believe that all compostable materials should be reclaimed and converted into valuable soil improvers. This process not only contributes to the generation of renewable biomass energy but also facilitates carbon sequestration, a method of capturing atmospheric carbon and storing it in the soil, mitigating greenhouse gas emissions and combating climate change.

Through our RecyclePlus service, we collect your compostable items and send them on to **Envar**, our composting partner, for processing.

## Compostable items we accept:



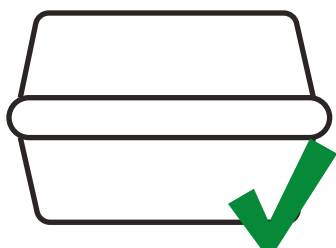
Compostable  
Packaging\*



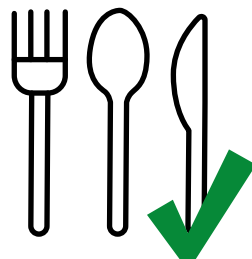
Biodegradable  
Polymers



Coffee  
Grounds



Packaging



Tableware



Bags



Begin recycling your  
compostables and take  
another step towards

# REDUCING YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

Contact our team on



01753 686 777



[sales@grundon.com](mailto:sales@grundon.com)