

## GREEN PACKAGING PRIMER



**Applications :** Biodegradable / compostable plastics made from renewable resources are now being used in virtually every packaging application. Among them, windowed bakery bags, confectionery wraps, disposable cutlery, plates and bowls, grocery and produce bags, deli containers and trays, col drink cups, beverages bottles, pallet wrap, shrink film labels, pressure sensitive materials, film lidding, and others.

**Biomaterials cornucopia :** ingredients for today's green packaging include corn, potatoes, sugar, tapioca, palm oil byproduct and wood pulp, among others.

### TERMINOLOGY

**Biodegradable :** capable of decomposing rapidly by microorganisms under natural conditions (aerobic and or anaerobic).

**Compostable :** recycled through the composting of organic solid waste. Composting is the means by which organic matter is recycled in its environment.

**Sustainable :** among the characteristics cited by the sustainable packaging coalition are that it is beneficial, safe and healthy for individuals and communities throughout its life cycle; is sourced, manufactured, transported, and recycled using renewable or recycled using renewable energy ; and maximizes the use of renewable or recycled source materials.

**Drivers :** the growing popularity of biopolymers for packaging is being driven by several factors, including the skyrocketing cost of petroleum-based packaging materials. In 2005, prices for conventional plastics hit a record high, with price hikes for conventional plastics between 30 and 80 percent; the marketing potential for natural foods in natural packages for increasingly health-conscious consumers ; recent initiatives by major retailers, such as Wal-Mart, to increase their use of sustainable packaging, and the increased production capacities of bioplastics suppliers.

### INTERNATIONAL STANDARD

- ASTM D6400 Standard Specification for Compostable Plastics, in the US.
- ASTM D6868 Standard Specification for Biodegradable Plastics Used as Coatings on Paper and Other Compostable Substrates, in the US

- EN 13432 : 2000 Requirements for packaging recoverable through composting and biodegradation, in Europe.

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