



Compostable Product Labeling

What the passage of Senate bill 253 means for consumers, composters, and product makers



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A Brief History of Compostable Product Labeling Laws

- **Requirements to certify products with independent third-parties**
 - Why? False compostability claims, additional benefits provided by certifiers (PFAS testing, food association, logos & labeling requirements)
 - Where? A few states including Colorado
- **Prohibition of misleading terminology** ("degradable", "biodegradable", "decomposable")
 - Why? Unqualified claims confuse consumers, lead to contamination
 - Where? California, Colorado, Maryland, Minnesota, Washington
- **Requirements for color and symbols** (green/beige/brown tinting, striping, etc.)
 - Why? To visually distinguish compostable from non-compostable
 - Where? Colorado, Washington, California (film bags only)

Colorado Senate Bill 253: What does it do?

- **Rewards good actors**
 - Compostable products must be third-party certified, food-associated, clearly labeled with the word "compostable," certification logo, green color/stripe/symbol
- **Punishes bad actors**
 - Prohibits misleading terms like "degradable, biodegradable, decomposable natural," etc.
 - Prohibits green tinting/striping/symbols that indicates compostability. Example:
 - Allowed – Starbucks green mermaid symbol (brand-specific, does not indicate compostability)
 - Not allowed – green-tinted non-compostable straw (reserved for compostable products)
- **Conflicts with other states laws**
 - Prohibits beige/brown-only compostable plastic & plastic-coated products, allows beige/brown paper products, present major manufacturing & branding challenges

Questions?



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