

## Biodegradable Plastic – does it even exist?

When a company claims that its packaging is biodegradable or compostable, what does that actually mean?

According to ASTM standards council, biodegradable plastic degrades as a result of naturally occurring microorganisms such as bacteria, fungi and algae, that yield carbon dioxide naturally (CO<sub>2</sub>), water, inorganic compounds, and biomass at a rate consistent with other known compostable materials – leaving no visible, distinguishable or toxic residue.

So is there any biodegradable plastic that actually does this?

The quick answer is – yes – but not all biodegradable or compostable plastic decomposes or degrades at the same rate, under the same conditions.

We have spent more than 10 years developing our Omnidegradable® , flexible packaging, which means that all of our high barrier plastic bags, coffee bags, pouches, foils, zipper, and off gassing valves will decompose when, and only when, they come into contact with microbes – microbes that are present in landfills, fresh and salt water (the ocean) and regular Anaerobic Landfill.

We named our plastic OMINIDEGRADABLE® so it wouldn't be confused with other eco plastics that require specific conditions – such as sunlight and high temperatures to biodegrade. In other words, if those plastics were left in the ocean or Anaerobic Landfill, there is no evidence to suggest they will biodegrade any more than regular plastic.

Our plastic's only requirement for decomposition is the presence of microbes and time. They won't break down on shelves as they are cost effective.

This is a big deal because traditional plastic is clogging our landfills and oceans and potentially leaking toxins into our soil and water. This is not just a developing world problem, it's a major issue in North America as well.

For information, check out *"The Truth About Plastic"* in our frequently asked questions.