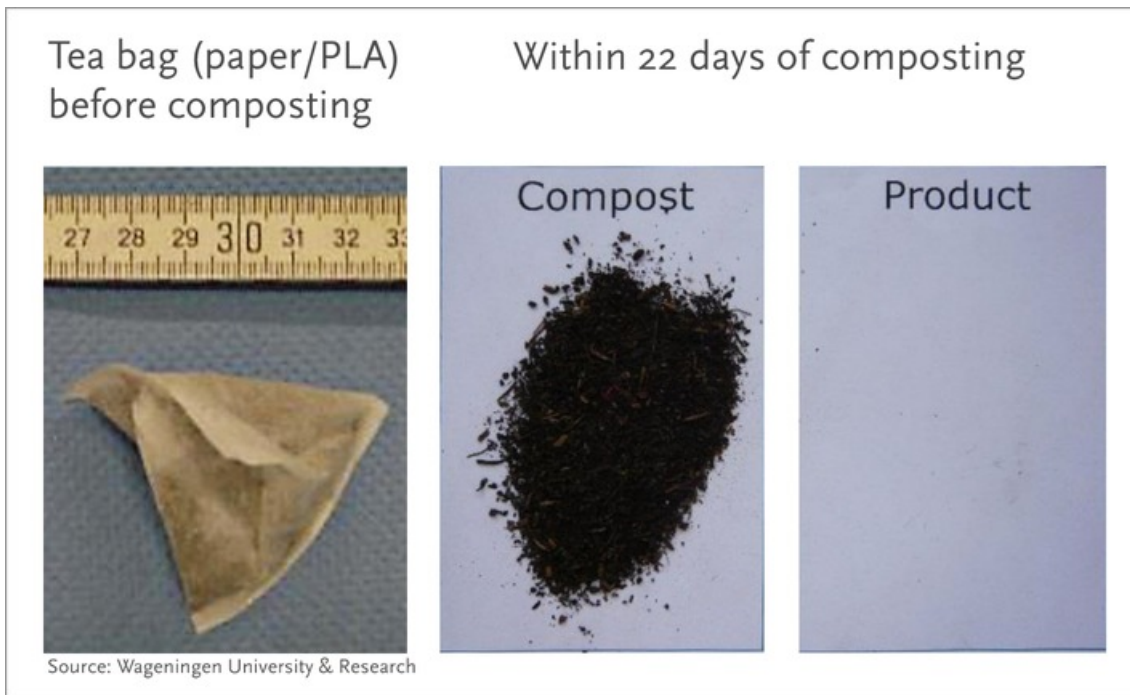


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Field test: compostable plastics break down in less than 22 days in industrial composting



Berlin (ots) -

A recent study by Wageningen University & Research, Netherlands, analysed the fate of compostable packaging in an industrial composting plant. The results show that the tested EN13432 certified products break down within a maximum of 22 days. The project was commissioned by the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy. "The study shows that the tested objects have the same or an even faster disintegration and degradation rate as regular biowaste. We need more independent research of this kind", says EUBP Chairman of European Bioplastics (EUBP), François de Bie.

Central aim of the study was to gather more empiric data on whether the disintegration rate of compostable products is sufficient to be compatible with current organic waste treatment practices. In an industrial organic waste treatment trial, nine different compostable plastic products were tested: organic waste collection bags, plant pots, tea bags, coffee pads, coffee capsules, and fruit labels. "We studied how compostable plastics behave in the current Dutch system for the treatment of GFT (i.e source separated biowaste) and came to the conclusion that compostable products can be processed well with GFT", says Maarten van der Zee, co-author of the study.

After a first waste treatment cycle of only 11 days, the PLA plant pot already completely disintegrated. "This is significantly faster than paper and most organic matter. Even the orange and banana peels did not completely disintegrate and needed more time" de Bie commented on the study. "The PLA tea bag also successfully disintegrated within only 22 days."

The study also analysed the visual contamination of compost with plastics. No compostable plastics were identified. "The importance of this result cannot be overstated", de Bie stresses. "All stakeholders involved in organic recycling, now have the proof that certified compostable plastics actually deliver."

"In view of the upcoming development of the framework for biodegradable plastics included in the European Green Deal, I kindly ask the European Commission to take these research results into account and to support more similar research projects", stated de Bie.

To read complete study: <https://edepot.wur.nl/514397>

About European Bioplastics:

European Bioplastics (EUBP) is the European association representing the interests of the bioplastics industry along the entire value chain. Its members produce, refine and distribute bioplastics i.e. plastics that are bio-based, biodegradable, or both. More information is available at www.european-bioplastics.org.

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Tea bag (paper/PLA)
before composting



Source: Wageningen University & Research

Within 22 days of composting



Compost



Product

Seedling certified EN13432 compostable paper/PLA tea bags - before and after 22 days of composting in industrial composting facility. Editorial use of this picture is free of charge. Please quote the source: "obs/European Bioplastics"

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