



The Flexible Packaging Association Position on Degradable Additives June 2010

The use of oxo-biodegradable and other degradable additives in flexible packaging materials is a complex issue that has resulted in confusion and misleading or unsubstantiated product claims in the marketplace.

It is the position of FPA that:

- Any claim of degradability, especially claims such as “biodegrades in landfills” or “oxo-biodegradable,” needs to be supported by scientific data certified by well established third party authorities.
- Existing claims of oxo-biodegradable and other degradable additives without reference to industry standards, outlining how data must be collected under specific analytical protocols, and accredited third party certifications, are inappropriate and may lead to misunderstanding and misuse.

FPA supports the Society of Plastics Industry definition:

Biodegradable Plastic: a plastic that undergoes biodegradation (a process in which the degradation results from the action of naturally-occurring micro-organisms such as bacteria, fungi, and algae) as per accepted industry standards. As of 2008, accepted industry standard specifications are: ASTM D6400, ASTM D6868, ASTM D 7081 or EN 13432.

Additionally, the FPA supports the position statements of the European Bioplastics Association and the Society of the Plastics Industry that in the absence of complete biodegradation, such as is the case with existing oxo-biodegradable and degradable additive technology, fragmentation of plastics into smaller pieces may not result in the intended outcome and may have unintended consequences on litter prevention, composting and recycling such as:

- Giving users of plastic items the impression that those items might vanish harmlessly
- Increasing risk of accumulation of persistent substances in the environment
- Not meeting requirements for organic recovery
- Hampering recycling efforts of post-consumer plastics

The FPA will continue to support its member companies and their efforts to substantiate their product claims while at the same time working with them to advance environmentally responsible alternatives.

