

## Uniform labeling for compostable products

Address compost industry concern, inform consumer choices and ultimately reduce the strain on landfills

### Challenge

Minnesota's composting industry is seeing costly problems because non-compostable materials are entering the waste stream that supplies compostable material. A key issue is misleading labeling on some compostable products. Moreover, as consumers demand to know the environmental implications of their purchasing choices, misleading labeling on compostable products can lead consumers to purchase and dispose of products with dubious environmental benefit. This proposal will ensure that labeling claims such as "compostable" conform to standard, industrywide definitions. Such conformance will reduce consumer confusion and prevent the contamination problem seen at some compost facilities today.



### Proposal

This proposal will standardize labeling claims to ensure consistency with industry standards. These standards are maintained by a third party certifier. Consistency with industry standards will reduce consumer confusion. Further, it will allow everyone, including those for whom English is not a first language, to more easily identify and dispose of products that are suitable for composting. The proposal also amends M.S. 325E.046 to provide MPCA with the authority to enforce the new labeling requirements.

### Why it's important

Composting is a vibrant and growing industry in Minnesota. Simple policy changes would help to reduce the amount of contamination in the compost stream, resulting in a higher-quality and more competitive product. Supporting this industry's success is in the interest of all Minnesotans because treating organics as a resource, not as trash, reduces our greenhouse gas emissions and reduces the amount of waste entering our landfills. In addition, cost-effective local sources of compost help communities adapt to the changing climate by improving drought resistance of soil and helping with erosion control.

### For more information

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