COMPOSTABLE FOOD SERVICEWARE
QUICK GUIDE

Compostable
Look for the logo signifying BPI (which certifies products meet ASTM D6400/D6868 Standards). If applicable, look for facility approvals such as Cedar Grove. Ensure that products labeled generically “compostable”, and not carrying certification, comply with ASTM D6400/D6868 Standards.

Decomposable - Degradable - Biodegradable
These terms (and similar ones) are unqualified and generic. They do not address how a product will biodegrade in a specific environment (compost, soil, marine, etc.). These terms are commonly misused in the market to promote products which are made with traditional (and non-biodegradable) polymers such as PP, PS, PE, PET, etc. which may contain additive(s) claimed to promote biodegradation. See “Other Resources” for further information.

Biobased - Made from Plants - Plant Based
Being made from renewable resources (e.g. plants) does not mean that it is also compostable. USDA, for example, has developed the BioPreferred Program where products must meet specifications to show that renewable resources were used in part, or in whole, to create a product. For compostability, look for the BPI or other applicable facility certification/labels (e.g. Cedar Grove), or ensure the product(s) is compliant with ASTM D6400/D6868 Standards.

Why?
- Using Compostable food serviceware will allow for greater food waste diversion.
- Using Compostable food serviceware can help municipalities in reaching zero waste goals.
- Putting the wrong products in the composting stream can result in increased processing and collection costs and contamination of our soil and water.

Please choose appropriate food serviceware to support food scraps diversion
1. Check with your local composting facility or hauler to ensure which products they accept.
2. Make sure to buy/use properly labeled food serviceware so that customers and employees can distinguish the non-compostable from Compostable food serviceware.
Compostable Certification

BPI certification (and other compost facility approvals) is based on compliance with the ASTM Standard. These standards establish the requirements for plastic and plastic coated products to satisfactorily be composted in industrial aerobic composting facilities. For more information on ASTM Standards:

http://www.astm.org/Standards/D6400.htm
http://www.astm.org/Standards/D6868.htm

Other resources

BPI List of Certified (to ASTM Standards) food serviceware fully catagorized by SKU, size, color, etc.
http://products.bpiworld.org/companies/category/foodservice

List of food serviceware tested and accepted by Cedar Grove
http://cedar-grove.com/commercial/accepted-items

A free directory of composting facilities throughout North America
http://www.findacomposter.com/

USCC compostable task force
http://compostingcouncil.org/compostable-plastics-task-force/

USCC Compostable plastics toolkit
http://www.cptoolkit.org/

Information regarding degradable additives
http://www.bpiworld.org/BPI_Position_On_Degradable_Additives