

Oxo-Biodegradable Plastics Association

A not-for-profit organisation Limited by Guarantee.
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In a recent article in British Plastics and Rubber (18th September 2017) John Carlon reported that Plastics Recyclers Europe had warned of increasing contamination of recyclate with degradable plastic from waste streams in Southern Europe.

<https://www.britishplastics.co.uk/materials/plastic-recyclers-europe-finds-degradable-plastics-from-sout/>

The Oxo-biodegradable Plastics Association commented as follows:

Not surprising that Bio-plastics cause problems for recycling

"It is not surprising that recyclers are finding that recyclate from Southern European countries is causing defects and ruptures of the film. Their analyses demonstrated that most of the degradation is coming from substances used in production of degradable plastics: starch, polylactide (PLA) and polybutylene adipate terephthalate (PBAT).

This is because the governments of France, Spain, Italy, and now Greece have been persuaded by the manufacturers of starch and PLA plastics to prefer their product. Not only is it incompatible with recycling, and 400% more expensive than ordinary plastic, but it does not achieve their objective to deal with plastic waste in the environment. This is because it is tested to biodegrade in municipal composting, not in the open environment. It does not even convert into compost, as EN13432 requires it to convert rapidly into CO₂ gas.

Governments and recyclers should instead be preferring oxo-biodegradable plastic, which is designed to convert rapidly into biodegradable materials if it gets into the open environment. Even better, it has been proved to be recyclable without causing harm to the recycling process or the finished product. See <http://www.biodeg.org/recycling.html> "