



BPI CERTIFICATION MARK USAGE REQUIREMENTS
Version 4.1—April 2026

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OVERVIEW

The purpose of this document is to model proper usage of the BPI Certification Mark by license holders and their sublicensees and to generate accurate and compliant messaging about compostability as required by the BPI License Agreement. The use of the BPI Certification Mark is highly restricted, and earning the right to display it is the culmination of the BPI Certification Program. The BPI Certification Mark can only be used in conjunction with an active certificate and license agreement or an active sublicense agreement. This provides assurance to composters (both commercial and home) that compostability claims have been verified by a trusted third party and is the foundation of clear and consistent direction for end-users and consumers who are responsible for making decisions at the point of disposal. For these reasons, BPI requires use of the BPI Certification Mark on all certified products and their packaging. Product and packaging artwork must be reviewed by BPI for compliance with these requirements as part of every certification and sublicensing process. The following pages outline the requirements for use of the BPI Certification Mark on products and packaging. The information contained in this document pertains solely to the use of the BPI Certification Mark and is not intended to be legal advice or to address any requirements for labeling or marketing claims other than those associated with the use of the BPI Certification Mark.

BPI CERTIFICATION MARK

The BPI Certification Mark is a registered trademark of The International Biodegradable Products Institute, Inc. and must always be accompanied by the registered trademark symbol (®) placed to the upper right of the “swirl” design, as illustrated throughout this document.



ARTWORK ELEMENTS: BEST PRACTICES

The BPI License Agreement requires that all certified products (e.g., bags, cups, cutlery wrappers, forks, pouches) and packaging for certified products display the BPI Certification Mark. Including all six of the following artwork elements is the recommended best practice for all BPI-certified products and their packaging. The next page shows the required versus recommended artwork elements.

6 ELEMENTS

BPI CERTIFICATION MARK ELEMENTS

OTHER ELEMENTS



1. The "swirl" and "BPI" elements must always be used adjacent to one another.

2. Strongly recommended but not required for products certified for both commercial and home.

3. Must be a searchable term for BPI's online product catalog (i.e., can't be a proprietary/trademarked design element or brand logo).

4. Strongly recommended but not required for non-printed products (e.g., embossed, etched, watermarked).

ARTWORK ELEMENTS: REQUIRED VERSUS RECOMMENDED

ELEMENT		REQUIRED	RECOMMENDED	EXAMPLES
BPI CERTIFICATION MARK ELEMENTS	1 The BPI Swirl	All Products All Packaging		
	2 The Letters "BPI"	All Products All Packaging		BPI
	3 Compostable Claim	All Products All Packaging		COMPOSTABLE
	4 Designator for Certification Type: • Commercial Only • Commercial & Home	Products and Packaging for Commercial Only Certifications	Products and Packaging for Commercial & Home Certifications	 
OTHER ELEMENTS	5 Searchable Company Identifier, Such As: • Company Name • Brand Name • BPI Company ID Number/CERT #	Printed Products All Packaging	Non-Printed Products (e.g., Embossed, Etched, Watermarked)	  BPI Company ID Number/CERT #  Company Name Brand Name
	6 FTC Qualifier Language, Such As: • Conditions Affect Product Breakdown. Access to Composting May Not Exist in Your Area.	Consumer-Facing Packaging (i.e., Visible at the Point of Sale)	All Products Market-Facing Packaging (i.e., Not Visible at the Point of Sale)	 COMMERCIAL ONLY CONDITIONS AFFECT PRODUCT BREAKDOWN. ACCESS TO COMPOSTING MAY NOT EXIST IN YOUR AREA. CERT #0000000  COMMERCIAL & HOME CONDITIONS AFFECT PRODUCT BREAKDOWN. ACCESS TO COMPOSTING MAY NOT EXIST IN YOUR AREA. CERT #0000000

BPI CERTIFICATION MARK: CERTIFICATION TYPE



BPI CERTIFICATION MARK: LOCK-UP VERSION

The lock-up versions of the BPI Certification Mark include the recommended qualifier language, as well as the BPI Company ID Number/CERT #, and are best for use on certified products and packaging with no space limitations. They include all six recommended artwork elements. The format or text cannot be altered in the lock-up versions of the BPI Certification Mark.

Commercial Only Lock-Up



COMMERCIAL ONLY

CONDITIONS AFFECT
PRODUCT BREAKDOWN.
ACCESS TO COMPOSTING MAY
NOT EXIST IN YOUR AREA.
CERT #0000000

Commercial Only Lock-Up (Canada)



COMMERCIAL ONLY

CONDITIONS AFFECT PRODUCT BREAKDOWN. ACCESS
TO COMPOSTING MAY NOT EXIST IN YOUR AREA.
LES CONDITIONS AFFECTENT LA DÉCOMPOSITION DU
PRODUIT. LE COMPOSTAGE N'EST PEUT-ÊTRE PAS
ACCESSIBLE DANS VOTRE RÉGION. CERT #0000000

Commercial & Home Lock-Up



COMMERCIAL & HOME

CONDITIONS AFFECT
PRODUCT BREAKDOWN.
ACCESS TO COMPOSTING MAY
NOT EXIST IN YOUR AREA.
CERT #0000000

Commercial & Home Lock-Up (Canada)

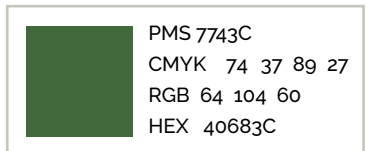


COMMERCIAL & HOME/MAISON

CONDITIONS AFFECT PRODUCT BREAKDOWN. ACCESS
TO COMPOSTING MAY NOT EXIST IN YOUR AREA.
LES CONDITIONS AFFECTENT LA DÉCOMPOSITION DU
PRODUIT. LE COMPOSTAGE N'EST PEUT-ÊTRE PAS
ACCESSIBLE DANS VOTRE RÉGION. CERT #0000000

COLOR AND SIZE REQUIREMENTS

Digital files of the BPI Certification Mark are provided by BPI in order to facilitate the artwork review that takes place during the certification and sublicensing processes.



While there's no specific size requirement for the BPI Certification Mark due to a variety of product and packaging applications, BPI staff will make an evaluation of readability during the artwork review process.

The standard and preferred style for display of the BPI Certification Mark on printed items is either a one-color option (green, black, or white) or two-color option (green and white). The standard BPI green color can be reproduced for different environments/printing methods using the information in the box that appears in the top right-hand corner of this page. Information regarding non-standard color eligibility can be found on the next page.

ONE-COLOR OPTIONS



TWO-COLOR OPTIONS



NON-STANDARD COLOR ELIGIBILITY

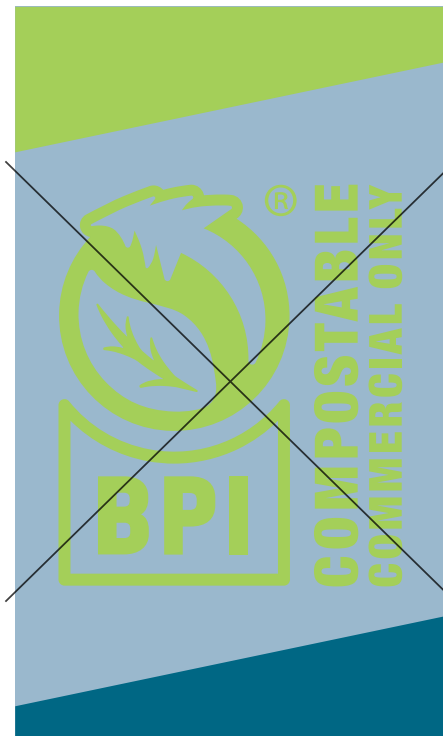
In cases where use of a standard BPI color isn't possible, use of a non-standard color might be eligible, provided that the BPI Certification Mark remains legible and provides sufficient contrast with its background. BPI staff will make an evaluation of readability during the artwork review process.

EXAMPLE

Eligible



Ineligible

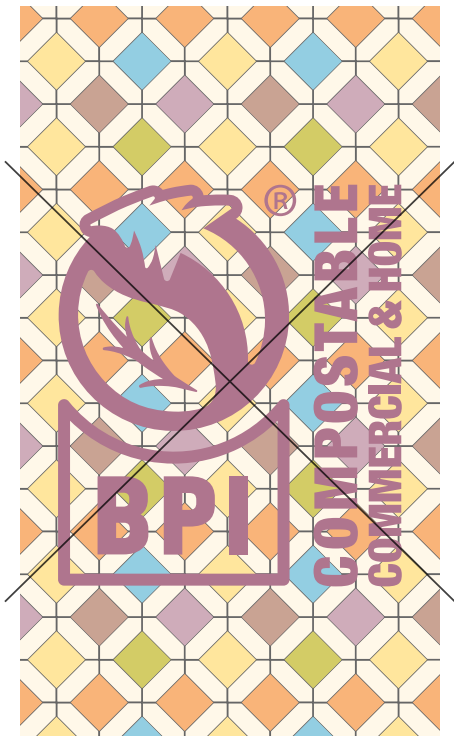


EXAMPLE

Eligible



Ineligible



BPI CERTIFICATION MARK: ALTERNATE VERSIONS

These alternate versions of the BPI Certification Mark are best for certified products and packaging with limited marking areas, such as cutlery, coffee pods, small containers, and straw wrappers. The required artwork elements that are detailed on page six must be utilized when using an alternate version of the BPI Certification Mark. The artwork files supplied by BPI should be used for all individual elements of the BPI Certification Mark but may be arranged in the layout best suited for the product/packaging, as long as the "swirl" and "BPI" elements remain adjacent to one another.

TOP



BOTTOM



 **BPI COMPOSTABLE** COMMERCIAL & HOME



 **BPI COMPOSTABLE**
COMMERCIAL ONLY

OTHER ELEMENTS: COMPANY IDENTIFIER

As outlined on page five, a searchable company identifier must be displayed on all printed products and is strongly recommended for non-printed products. (BPI reserves the right to update this policy as market dynamics dictate.) This requirement can be met by using the company name, the brand name, or the BPI Company ID Number/CERT #, as shown in the examples below. A proprietary/trademarked design element or brand logo doesn't qualify as a company identifier.



Identifier



Identifier



Identifier



Identifier

OTHER ELEMENTS: QUALIFIER LANGUAGE

The FTC (USA) and Competition Bureau (Canada) Legally Required Qualifier Language

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) in the United States and the Competition Bureau (CB) in Canada require that all claims of "Compostable" be qualified to indicate whether the product is Commercially Compostable, Home Compostable, or both. Products that are "Commercially Compostable Only" must explicitly state this limitation wherever a compostable claim is being made and also make clear that consumers might not have access to commercial compost facilities. BPI strongly recommends that the following qualifier language be used on all products and packaging featuring the BPI Certification Mark: "Conditions Affect Product Breakdown. Access to Composting May Not Exist in Your Area." In cases where there isn't enough space to fit all of the required qualifier language, BPI will work with companies to come up with solutions that make maximum use of the available marking area for the required language.

The BPI License Agreement releases BPI of liability should legal action be taken against a licensee that chooses not to follow FTC and/or CB guidelines.

[FTC "Guides for the Use of Environmental Marketing Claims" \(Pages 15 - 17\)](#)

[Competition Bureau "Environmental claims: A guide for industry and advertisers" \(Pages 32 - 35\)](#)

MESSAGING REQUIREMENTS

In addition to proper use of the BPI Certification Mark, there are a number of legal parameters to keep in mind when generating messaging for product and packaging artwork. The most common issues of concern are detailed below.



Biodegradable: Should Not be Used as a Claim on BPI-Certified Products and Packaging

While everything that is compostable is, technically, biodegradable, the word “biodegradable” is not an appropriate marketing term or claim for describing end-of-life behavior because it lacks specificity on timeframe, even when an environment such as marine or soil is specified. Additionally, biodegradable is commonly used by marketers of “lookalike products” (i.e., non-compostable, non-certified items that are intentionally designed to look like certified compostable products). These lookalikes are a leading cause of contamination at compost facilities. For these reasons, it's illegal in California, Colorado, Maryland, Minnesota, and Washington to use the word “biodegradable” and similar terms (e.g., decomposable, degradable) in marketing claims for single-use compostable products. Since BPI Certification doesn't assess any items for biodegradability outside of a compost environment, such as in a marine or soil setting, BPI strongly recommends against making claims of biodegradability in association with certified products.

**Links to
State Laws**
[California](#)
[Colorado](#)
[Maryland](#)
[Minnesota](#)
[Washington](#)



100% Compostable: Requires Release of Liability

BPI strongly advises against the use of the phrase “100% Compostable” or similar phrasing in claims for certified compostable products. For products only certified for commercial compostability, such phrases can lead consumers to believe that the certified product is compostable in any environment and are in direct conflict with the FTC qualifier language for commercial compostability. Additionally, compostability certification is determined by whether an item meets the appropriate standards (e.g., ASTM), and those standards are based on pass/fail criteria and don't provide for degrees of compostability.

The BPI License Agreement releases BPI of liability should legal action be taken against a licensee that chooses to use this language.

BPI CERTIFICATION MARK: REQUIRED DISPLAY ON PRODUCTS AND PACKAGING

The BPI License Agreement requires that all BPI-certified products (e.g., bags, cups, cutlery wrappers, forks, pouches) and their packaging display the BPI Certification Mark. Certified items classified as Resins and Components in BPI's online product catalog are exempt from these requirements. Certain product categories are also exempt from these requirements due to concerns regarding contamination risk, spatial constraints, and/or technical considerations. Learn more about exemptions on the [Certification Mark Use Exemptions page](#) on the BPI website.

On Certified Product

EXAMPLE



COMPOSTABLE
CONDITIONS AFFECT
PRODUCT
BREAKDOWN
COMMERCIAL ONLY

On Consumer-Facing Packaging

EXAMPLE



**CERTIFIED
COMPOSTABLE CUPS**
CONDITIONS AFFECT
PRODUCT
BREAKDOWN
COMMERCIAL ONLY

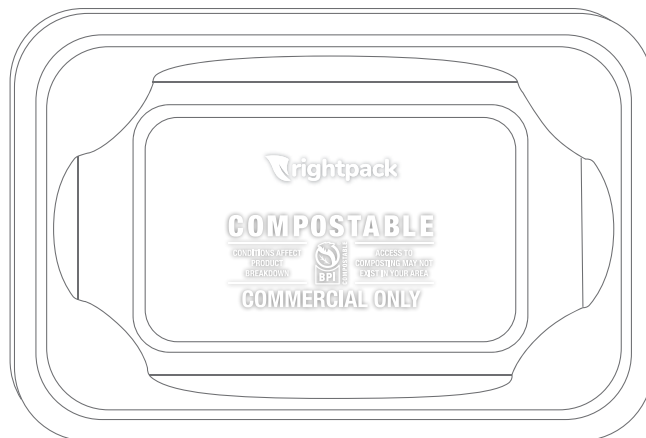
On Market-Facing Packaging

EXAMPLE

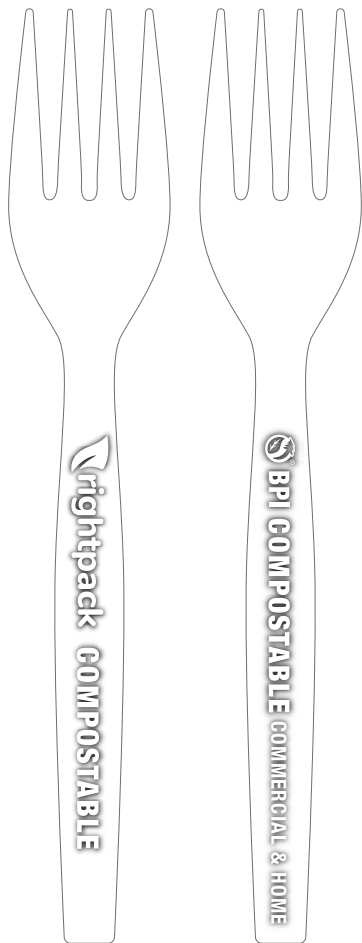


COMPOSTABLE
CONDITIONS AFFECT
PRODUCT BREAKDOWN.
ACCESS TO COMPOSTING MAY
NOT EXIST IN YOUR AREA.
CERT #0000000

EXAMPLES: CERTIFIED PRODUCTS



EXAMPLES: CERTIFIED PRODUCTS WITH LIMITED MARKING AREAS



EXAMPLES: INDIVIDUALLY-WRAPPED CERTIFIED PRODUCTS



EXAMPLES: CONSUMER-FACING PACKAGING RETAIL PACKAGING, VISIBLE AT THE POINT OF PURCHASE



EXAMPLES: MARKET-FACING PACKAGING VISIBLE ON THE SHIPPING CARTON/CONTAINER



ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the core requirements that products must meet during the application process in order to be eligible for BPI Certification, there are additional artwork requirements that can make a product ineligible if they aren't met. (Learn more on the [Eligibility Page](#) on the BPI website.)

EXAMPLE

Use of the terms "Trash", "Refuse", or "Garbage" is prohibited in product descriptions, product artwork, and packaging artwork.*

Eligible



Ineligible

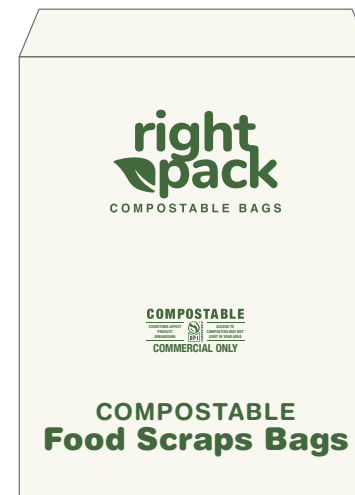


*BPI recommends not using the term "Tall Kitchen" on product or packaging artwork. Any use of this term must be qualified (e.g., "Food Scraps" or a similar designation) in order to associate these products with organic waste that would be suitable for composting.

EXAMPLE

Referencing non-food service applications is prohibited in product descriptions, product artwork, and packaging artwork.

Eligible



Ineligible



ELIGIBILITY: WIPES

BPI has specific labeling requirements for wipes that prohibit ineligible (non-food) uses from being included in packaging artwork and mandate that an eligible (food) use be called out alongside “compostable” claims and the BPI Certification Mark. Learn more about BPI’s [Wipes Policy](#) on the [Eligibility](#) page on the BPI website.

FRONT EXAMPLE



BACK EXAMPLE



ELIGIBILITY: PET WASTE PRODUCTS

BPI has specific eligibility requirements for Pet Waste Products and their packaging. In addition to only being eligible for commercial certification, they must display the Canadian lock-up version of the BPI Certification Mark, accompanied by "Certified for Use in Canada Only" near the BPI Certification Mark. Additionally, marketing text must say "Certified for Use in Canada Only". The US lock-up version of the BPI Certification Mark can't appear on any BPI-certified pet waste products or packaging. Learn more about BPI's [Pet Waste Policy](#) on the [Eligibility page](#) on the BPI website.

EXAMPLES

Eligible



Ineligible



Eligible



Ineligible





WWW.BPIWORLD.ORG
CERTIFICATION@BPIWORLD.ORG