

## **Canada's Reality:**

### **The Case AGAINST a Home Compostable Certification Program in Canada**

The Compost Council of Canada has long championed backyard (home) composting, believing that it is a meaningful, hands-on way for people to participate in the full cycle of organics recycling. Through this simple, empowering practice, unavoidable organic residuals are transformed into compost — essential organic matter that builds healthy soil, strengthens soil structure and supports long-term soil vitality.

While our Council, for well over 25 years, has been actively involved in spearheading certified compostable claims for industrial composting, we have never advocated nor supported compostable certification focused on backyard composting, believing that a home-compostable certification is misaligned with Canada's reality, be it our climate, infrastructure and/or stated regulatory direction.

Because of this reality, our Council strongly opposes any intent by brand owners and packaging suppliers to use a home-compostable claim in the Canadian marketplace.

### **Why Home-Compostable Certification Is Inappropriate for Canada**

- 1. Absence of a Canadian standard for backyard compostable claims.** Current internationally-available certification standards are laboratory-based, using ambient temperature parameters ( $25^\circ \pm 5^\circ$  C) for up to 180 consecutive days. These laboratory standards do not match real-life weather conditions anywhere in Canada.
- 2. Risk to finished compost quality and system confidence:** The introduction of materials that fail to disintegrate appropriately results in contamination, increased screening burdens, and reduced confidence among compost users. There is a significant credibility risk when real-world conditions do not align with laboratory testing parameters, with the potential for consumers to lose confidence not only in these internationally-certified materials but in composting systems as a whole. Misaligned expectations hinder participation and damage the reputation of both municipal-industrial and home composting programs.
- 3. With the advent of curbside organics recycling programs and the fact that more and more Canadians are now living in multi-unit residences, **there is ever-declining, ongoing participation in backyard composting across Canada<sup>1</sup>, severely limiting the applicability of this claim in real-world conditions.****

The Compost Council of Canada has been strongly supportive of the intent of the Government of Canada's 2023 regulatory initiative, designed to fix the weak/non-existent regulatory oversight on false labelling claims ([Developing labelling rules for plastic packaging and single-use plastics - Canada.ca](#)). Their intended direction clearly stated that compostable labelling claims for "home" or "backyard" would be prohibited. It is our expectation that this regulation will continue to move forward once current legal dynamics between the Government of Canada and the Plastics Industry are resolved.

In the interest of aligning with Canadian climatic conditions as well as the other above-stated reasons, we urge members of the packaging industry and associated certification bodies to avoid undermining consumer confidence and the hard work of organics recycling advocates and programs by introducing home compostable claims in Canada.

1. According to Statistics Canada, there is a serious decline in backyard composting across Canada (down -25 points (-51%) for kitchen waste and -13 points (-38%) for yard waste to a 24% and 21% participation rate respectively in 2023 versus 2009) due to the abundance of mandatory SSO and L&Y waste programs operated by Canadian Municipalities. Source: Statistics Canada [Composting practices of Canadian households](#)