



Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) and Certified Compostable Bioplastics

Fact Sheet

The Australasian Bioplastics Industry is the peak industry Association for the bioplastics industry in Australia and New Zealand. Bioplastics can be compostable (biodegradable) or bio-based (renewable raw materials) or both. Certification means all the requirements of the Australian Standards AS 4736 and/or AS 5810 have been met.

Certified *compostable* bioplastics are destined for the end of life of organics recycling, whether commercial composting, home composting or anaerobic digestion.

Certified compostable means the inherent property of biodegradation in the presence of oxygen and naturally occurring microorganisms is present.

Per and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) and Australian Standards AS 4736/ AS 5810

PFAS are a group of chemicals with more than 4000 types including perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS), perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorohexane sulfonate (PFHxS).

Test methods within the Australian Standards do not test for PFAS specifically but for Fluorine (F).

To be certified compostable to either Standard, Fluorine levels must be 100 ppm or less.

There is no one specific test for the 4000 different varieties of PFAS and derivatives. However, it is internationally accepted that Fluorine levels above 100 ppm is an indication of intentionally added perfluorinated derivatives. These products will not meet the Australian Standard requirement of 100 ppm or less and will not be certified compostable.

In May 2021 as a precautionary principle the ABA introduced a requirement for a declaration of "No Intentionally Added Substances" (NIAS) such as PFAS for an application for verification to the Australia Standards to proceed. Inability to sign the declaration rendered an application closed.

The No Intentionally Added Substances "NIAS" declaration was required to be completed by all new applicants and all renewals by Certificate of Conformance holders.

This declaration is not a threshold, it is an absolute declaration of intentionally added substances, Yes or No.

Importantly this declaration does not form part of the Australian Standards. It is an additional requirement of the ABA process for a new application for verification or a renewal of an existing application to proceed.

Certified Compostable Logos for Commercial and Home Composting

All certified compostable products should carry the ABA logos signifying compliance with the relevant Standard/s. The ABA logos signify conformance to the requirements of the Standard/s, which can only happen if declaration and testing confirms requirements of the Standards have been met.

The ABA provides more information on the Association, its Members, products and activities at info@bioplastics.org.au.

Further information on the Australian Government National PFAS Position Statement and PFAS can be found these links: [National PFAS Position Statement - Publication and Consultation | Australian Government PFAS Taskforce](#) : [Australian Government PFAS Taskforce | PFAS](#)