



1195 Third Street Suite 101, Napa, CA 94559
707-253-4351 | napacounty.gov/UVWMA

June 22, 2026

The Honorable Catherine S. Blakespear
California State Senate
1021 O Street, Suite 7720
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1812 (Aguiar-Curry) Solid waste: compostable products
As amended on March 23, 2026 – SUPPORT

CC: The Honorable Cecilia Aguiar-Curry

Dear Senator Blakespear,

The Upper Valley Waste Management Agency is pleased to **support** Assembly Bill 1812 related to compostable products.

Local governments have been working in good faith to implement the sweeping requirements of SB 1383 (Chapter 395, Statutes of 2016) which mandates the collection and processing of organic waste at an unprecedented scale. Cities and counties have invested substantial public resources to establish new or expand existing collection programs, amend contracts, secure responsible end markets, educate residents and businesses, and conduct enforcement.

California's organics recycling system processes approximately 12 million tons of yard trimmings and food scraps (organic waste) annually, but this system depends on uncontaminated organic waste streams. These efforts are undermined when non-compostable materials enter the system. Plastic and "compostable plastic" contamination in the compost stream increases processing costs, degrades compost quality, leads to rejected loads and landfilling, and jeopardizes the ability to meet procurement requirements, threatening the viability of organic waste recycling programs and the markets that depend on high-quality finished compost. Removing contamination from composting streams already accounts for over 20% of compost production costs. Therefore, addressing problematic plastics and misleading "compostable" claims is essential to ensure that SB 1383 implementation remains feasible, cost-effective, and capable of delivering the environmental benefits the Legislature intended.

Previously, the State and local jurisdictions had little control over the design and labeling of “compostable plastics” products entering the stream of commerce that ultimately contaminate the organic waste systems they have invested heavily to develop. AB 1201 (Chapter 504, Statutes of 2021) sought to remedy this issue by setting standards for products to be able to be considered compostable. Under AB 1201, products labeled as “compostable” must meet multiple criteria: they must comply with USDA National Organic Program (NOP) standards for allowable compost feedstocks, pass recognized ASTM compostability tests, and be free of persistent contaminants such as PFAS, ensuring that certified compostable products are truly compatible with organic recycling systems and safe for end markets.

In August 2023, the Biodegradable Products Institute (BPI), a North American trade organization representing manufacturers of compostable products, petitioned NOP to allow certified “compostable plastics” in organic production. While this petition was under consideration, CalRecycle extended the implementation deadline for AB 1201 requirements from January 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027. In January 2026, the USDA National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) unanimously voted against adding broad classes of synthetic compostable materials to the National List of allowed compost feedstocks under the NOP. While the NOSB concluded that those products do not currently meet the criteria for organic labeling, it kept open the possibility for future review of individual substances on a case-by-case basis. As a result, compost that contains plastics of any kind, including “compostable” bioplastics, are not eligible to be labeled organic. Farmers purchase two-thirds of the compost produced in California and rely on NOP certification to guarantee quality and purity. Organic farmers rely on NOP certification to protect their status as Certified Organic growers.

Beyond the NOP requirements, compostable plastics generally do not fully decompose in California’s composting facilities. While some bioplastics may meet ASTM standards, those ASTM standards do not reflect real world composting conditions and timeframes in California’s facilities. Even if compostable plastics were able to fully decompose in California’s compost facilities, the federal bar on labeling the end product as organic would eliminate much of the market for finished compost, thereby leaving public and private facilities awash in unwanted compost.

AB 1812 would preserve California’s robust and renowned composting system from plastic pollution by keeping plastic contamination out of the organics recycling system and aligning consumer expectations with the realities of California’s composting systems. The bill makes clear that manufacturers should make all plastic items recyclable and focus on the use of plant fiber for compostable products.



1195 Third Street Suite 101, Napa, CA 94559
707-253-4351 | napacounty.gov/UVWMA

AB 1812 is needed to align upstream product standards with downstream composting realities. By reducing problematic materials at the source and clarifying what can truly be composted in real-world facilities, the bill will help protect existing infrastructure investments, preserve agricultural and landscaping end markets, and ensure that compost produced from California's organic waste programs remains safe, usable, and marketable. Without these safeguards, contamination will continue to erode program effectiveness and place additional financial burdens on local ratepayers while jeopardizing the State's circular economy goals.

For these reasons, we are pleased to **support** AB 1812.

Respectfully,

Anne Cottrell, Chair

Upper Valley Waste Management Agency