PBPC Plant Based Products Council

Water quality continues to decline in our environment. Plastic litter is increasing in our oceans, causing harm to our marine life and water quality. It's even estimated that plastic in the ocean is set to outweigh fish by 2050.

Plant-based alternatives to plastic are part of the solution to nutrient and plastic pollution in waterways across the globe.

Excessive nutrient run-off from land consumes oxygen coming out of important coastal waters, and with 65% of U.S. estuaries and coastal waters being degraded by excessive nutrient inputs, our waters are suffering. Litter and nutrient runoff are two of the greatest threats facing our oceans and waterways.

Plant-based alternatives to traditional plastics, paired with improved collection infrastructure, can improve water quality by preventing more litter from ending up in bodies of water and averting the runoff of nutrients from getting into our susceptible bodies of water.

Plant-based alternatives can be recycled and add value to recycling operations in an effort to keep plastic waste out of the world's oceans.

Plant-based alternatives, such as bio-based PET, can **go into plastic recycling streams with their traditional counterparts, providing more material options for recycling.**

Using plant-based materials, we can contribute to improved water quality for our oceans and waterways.

Compostable plant-based materials can help keep plastic waste out of our nation's waterways.

- Common uses for compostable plant-based plastic are often in single-use disposable applications, like in food packaging and serviceware.
- If disposed of properly, in municipal composting operations, compostable plant-based plastic, along with food **and other organic waste, can be turned into a value-added product - compost.**
- Compost from plant-based materials **returns to the earth as a soil amendment** to help grow the next generation of renewable plant-based materials.

Compostable plant-based materials can prevent excessive nutrient runoff.

- When compost is added into the soil, it **improves the water holding capacity, the water infiltration rate of soils, and the general enhancement of soil.**
- Compost helps **produce soil that is more resistant** to nutrient leaching and erosion that cause increased nutrient runoff.
- Like a sponge of organic matter, compost can hold 3 to 5 times its own weight in water, and when added to soil the overall retention of potential runoff water, as well as the excess nutrients held by that water, is greatly improved.

PBPC is working to guide the global economy toward more sustainable and responsible consumer products and packaging through greater use of plant-based materials.