

Environmental Terms & Symbols



The world of environmental symbols and statements can be complex and puzzling, but please use this sheet as a guide to the most relevant symbols, words and terms in the industry.

If, after having read this document, you have any further questions or queries, please email environment@soloeurope.co.uk and we will endeavour to provide assistance.

Words/Terms and Their Meanings








Word/Term	What does it mean?
Biodegradable	When a product can degrade 'naturally'. E.g. if it degrades when left as litter on a grass verge, then it's biodegradable. Not to be confused with 'compostable'
Compostable	When a product requires a controlled environment in order to degrade (which typically takes 8 to 12 weeks), such as an industrial composting facility where temperature, light and humidity can be regulated. Please note: 'Biodegradable' products can be composted, but 'compostable' products will not necessarily biodegrade!
Reusable	A product that can be used again, without any alteration to its form. E.g a carrier bag
Recyclable	A product that can be re-processed in order to produce a raw material, which can be used in the manufacture of completely new products
Recycled Content	The type, or amount, of recycle material that has been used in the manufacture of a product
Post-Consumer Fibre (PCF)	Paper fibre that can be used for the manufacture of new products, which has been collected, processed and turned into a raw material after a consumer has already used it. E.g. newspapers, office paper and paper cups
Polylactic Acid (PLA)	A plant-based resin commonly derived from corn starch, but can also be derived from maize, sugar or wheat. PLA can be used to make clear tumblers, as well as being used as a coating on paper cups. PLA is a compostable material, requiring an industrial composting facility in which to degrade.
Crystalline Polylactic Acid (CPLA)	A crystalline form of PLA, described above, which has a high heat resistance and so is ideal for hot cup lids and cutlery.

Do these Words and Terms Apply to the Solo Cup Europe Range?

When you need to know what category a particular product falls into, think of the material...

Material	Sub-Type	Biodegradable	Compostable	Recycled Content	Recyclable
Paper	Single-Sided Poly (SSP)	No	No	No	✓Yes
	Double-Sided Poly (DSP)	No	No	No	✓Yes
	Post-Consumer Fibre (PCF) - Poly Coated	No	No	✓Yes	✓Yes
	Post-Consumer Fibre (PCF) - PLA Coated	No	✓Yes	✓Yes	No
	PLA Coated	No	✓Yes	No	No
	Wax Treated	No	✓Yes	No	No
Plastic	Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET)	No	No	No	✓Yes
	Recycled PET (rPET)	No	No	✓Yes	✓Yes
	Polypropylene (PP)	No	No	No	No
	Polystyrene (PS)	No	No	No	✓Yes
Foam	Expanded Polystyrene (EPS)	No	No	No	✓Yes
	Thin-Wall Foam	No	No	No	✓Yes
Other	Polylactic Acid (PLA)	No	✓Yes	No	No
	Crystalline PLA (CPLA)	No	✓Yes	No	No
	Bagasse (sugar cane waste)	No	✓Yes	No	No

Symbols and Their Meanings

Symbol	What does it mean?	Which products does it apply to?
<p>'Please Recycle'</p> 	<p>This logo indicates that a pack can be recycled after it has been used, and is one of the most commonly used symbols</p>	<p>Products of all materials; as long as the product is recyclable, this logo can be used</p>
<p>'Mobius Loop'</p> 	<p>Used to show that a pack is recyclable. If a percentage is shown in the middle, that indicates the pack contains that percentage of recycled content</p>	<p>Products of all materials; as long as the product is recyclable, this logo can be used</p>
<p>British Retail Consortium common recycling logo</p> 	<p>Splits each material in a product's packaging, into one of three categories, to improve recycling rates for mixed-material products</p>	<p>This logo illustrates what elements of the product can be recycled, and to what extent</p>
<p>'Compostable'</p> 	<p>The compostable 'seedling' logo denotes the packaging materials are suitable for composting</p>	<p>Products made of materials that can be composted in industrial composting facilities, such as PLA plastic</p>
<p>'Green Dot'</p> <p>AKA 'Der Grüne Punkt'</p> 	<p>Originally launched in Germany, by paying a licence fee companies can display this logo on their packaging, which then exempts them from the German legal requirement to collect and recycle household packaging waste. Worldwide, the Green Dot logo is managed by PRO Europe on behalf of the various national Green dot organisations across Europe</p>	<p>Products of all materials; as long as the product is recyclable, this logo can be used</p>
<p>EU Eco-label</p> 	<p>This logo means that the product has met all the environment and performance criteria set by the European Eco-label Board</p>	<p>Products of all materials; as long as the product is recyclable, this logo can be used. However, a licence must be granted by the European Eco-label Board</p>
<p>Carbon Trust label</p> <p>reducing with the Carbon Trust</p> 	<p>The number of grams on the logo denotes the carbon footprint of the product, from source through to disposal. If the manufacturer fails to reduce the carbon footprint over a two year period, the label will be withdrawn</p>	<p>Products of all materials; recyclable or not, this logo can be used. However, a licence must be granted by the Carbon Trust</p>

Where Can More Information Be Found?

There are several websites you can visit to find out more about materials, recycling and the environment. Here are a few that we recommend:

www.closedlooprecycling.co.uk

The Closed Loop Recycling website gives information about how and why the organisation collects and processes PET in order to produce rPET (20% of Closed Loop Recycling's output will be used by Solo Cup Europe to produce new foodservice items).

www.recyclenow.com

Gives advice regarding how and where a wide variety of materials and products can be recycled in the UK. A post code search facility is available to find what services exist in your region.

www.saveacup.co.uk

The Save A Cup website gives an insight to the organisation's activities, regarding the collection and recycling of cups, as well as how to contact them for further information (Solo Cup Europe is a participant of this scheme in order for paper hot cups to be collected and recycled).

www.wrap.org.uk

WRAP (Waste & Resources Action Programme) is an organisation that helps businesses, individuals and local authorities to reduce waste and recycle more. They cover all materials and can offer impartial advice.

www.solocupeurope.co.uk