Should I compost or recycle... take-out food containers and other food service products (plates, bowls, cups, etc.)?

Many food service products can be composted or recycled. At restaurants, posters and signage show you what to compost and what to recycle. At home, use this flyer to check your items against the requirements.

Put these items in your food and yard waste cart:

- Uncoated paper containers, plates, bowls and pizza boxes
- Many items labeled “Compostable” or “PLA” and all items that display the Cedar Grove logo
  - See “compostable products” at cedar-grove.com/compostable/accepted-items
- Meat and produce foam trays
  - Compostable foam trays are beige-colored and made of “PLA”.
  - All other foam-type trays go in the garbage.

Is it PLA or is it PLASTIC?
It’s easy to tell the difference...

Look for “PLA” on the bottom of “plastic-like” items.
Put these items in your recycling cart:

- Empty or rinsed paper items with a shiny coating
- Empty or rinsed rigid plastic containers NOT marked “compostable” or “PLA”

Why is some “plastic” compostable and other plastic recyclable?

Products marked “PLA” (polylactic acid) are made with plant-based materials such as corn, wheat straw and grasses. Unlike traditional petroleum-based plastics, these materials break down during the composting process.

Petroleum-based plastics can be RECYCLED, but they CANNOT BE COMPOSTED.

PLA coated paper board can be COMPOSTED, or IF CLEAN, can be RECYCLED.

PLA “clear plastics” can be COMPOSTED, but they CANNOT BE RECYCLED.

seattle.gov/util/MyServices/