

their pizza, customers should also be able to opt in to exactly which utensils, napkins, condiments, or straws they want.

We are sure you are aware of the single-use plastic pollution problem in our country. From streets and beaches burdened by single-use litter, to fenceline communities near oil refineries and ethane crackers, to the communities living near landfills and incinerators, to the potential health effects of finding microplastics in our food and our bodies - these are all perpetuated by the use of single-use plastic foodware.

It is now estimated that 8.75 million metric tons of plastic enter our ocean each year from land-based sources, with a great majority of that waste generated in the consumption of food and beverages.¹ According to the UN Environment Report, only 9% of all plastics ever created have been recycled—with most still existing in their original form—whether buried in a landfill where they will take centuries to break down, or littered in our communities, parks, waterways, and oceans.² Recycling can be helpful for some materials if done right, but it is not the panacea to our plastic pollution problem.

Some companies have introduced plant-based or bio-plastic products, often labeled as biodegradable or compostable, as an alternative to traditional plastics.³ However, claims that these products are compostable are misleading, as these plastics require a commercial composting facility for processing, which are rarely available. Regardless of compostability claims, bioplastics will generally be sent to the landfill or incinerated.⁴

We call on you to show leadership by making your business's default food delivery process such that customers must "opt in" to receive specific utensils, napkins, condiments, or straws. Such a process would allow restaurants to save money by expending less of these extras that are often unwanted by the customer.

Thank you for considering our request and please contact Matt Gove at mgove@surfrider.org with any questions. We look forward to hearing your response in the weeks ahead.

¹ Science. Jenna R. Jambeck et al. Plastic waste inputs from land into the ocean. February 2015.

Available at: jambeck.engr.uga.edu/landplasticinput

² UN Environment. The State of Plastics. 2018. *Available at:*

wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/25513/state_plastics_WED.pdf?isAllowed=y&sequence=1

³ Beachapedia. Bioplastics Glossary. *Available at:* beachapedia.org/Bioplastic_Glossary

⁴ Surfrider Foundation Plastic is Plastic – Don't be Fooled by Compostability Claims. December 2019.

Available at:

www.surfrider.org/coastal-blog/entry/plastic-is-plastic-dont-be-fooled-by-compostability-claims

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