

Fact bite #63



Bamboo

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Bamboo powder is sometimes used as an additive in plastic foodware like bowls and cups (usually melamine-based articles) with the claim that they are more green and sustainable.

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“This allegedly sustainable alternative to the plastic materials, however, is in fact precisely made of plastic, where the bamboo or other plant-based additive is added only as a filler (to give it volume and shape). This practice is making the plastic non-recyclable and even less eco-friendly,” the European Commission states.

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Bamboo is not authorized to be used as an additive in FCMs in the EU and has not been safety assessed. The use of bamboo in plastic FCMs is also noted to potentially accelerate the degradation of certain plastics, which can lead to (more) chemicals migrating from the plastic into food.

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This is especially concerning for melamine-based products where melamine and the hazardous chemical formaldehyde can migrate into food in amounts exceeding the safe limits set in Regulation (EU) 10/2011.

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