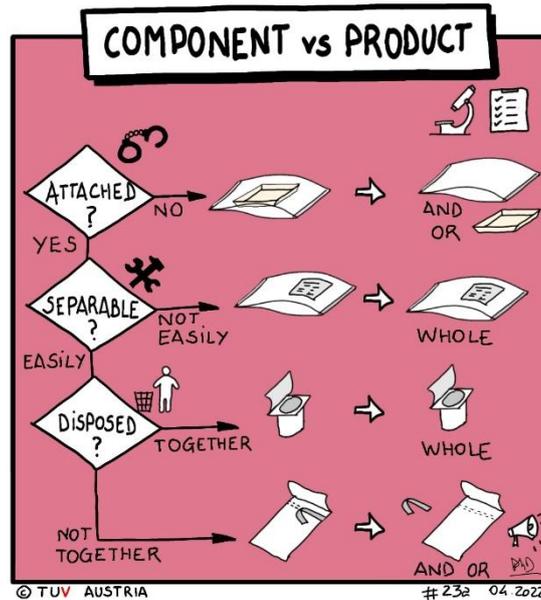


23 – separately or as a whole ?



“In case of a packaging formed by different components, some of which are compostable and some other not, the packaging itself, as a whole is not compostable. However, if the components can be easily separated by hand before disposal, the compostable components can be effectively considered and treated as such, once separated from the non compostable components.”

Standards foresee the case where a package has several components. However, the concept of "easily separable" can be interpreted in different ways.

In order to eliminate any differences in interpretation, TÜV AUSTRIA has developed a decision tree to determine whether a product must be tested as a whole or whether each component must be assessed separately.

ATTACHED ?

If the two parts of a packaging are not physically attached, e.g. a tray wrapped in film, the two components must be assessed separately. If compostable, each component must meet all the criteria separately. And it can be accepted that one is compostable and the other is not, so they will be sorted separately (just like paper, plastic and glass).

EASILY SEPARABLE ?

We've all found ourselves trying to peel off a label at some point. Sometimes it's easy, sometimes it's not at all.

To avoid any discussion, what is not intended to be separated is considered inseparable. A packaging with a label will therefore be tested in its entirety and the package + label, including the adhesive, must together meet the criteria as a whole.

DISPOSED TOGETHER ?

If the two parts are intended to be separated, then the question is whether the two parts will be disposed simultaneously or not, like the lid of a yoghurt pot (which either remains partially attached or not) but is in the vast majority of cases discarded together with the pot itself, after consuming the yoghurt.

OR NOT TOGETHER ?

In some cases, however, the two components, which are intended to be separated, are destined by their function to be disposed of at different times or places. For example, resealable packaging with a removable protective strip or envelopes with a strip.

In this case, the two parts must be evaluated separately.

Here too, it is acceptable that - for example - the packaging is compostable and the strip is not. But in this case, as they were originally attached, the non-compostable element must be clearly announced.