

Corn-Based Polyester: Is It a Truly Sustainable Fabric?

Know What You're Dealing With

- Understand PLA fabric process: from corn starch → lactic acid → polymer → fiber.
- Learn about the exact biodegradability conditions (industrial compost vs backyard).

Evaluate Environmental Trade-Offs

- Consider water, land, and chemical inputs in corn farming.
- Check whether farming is sustainable, organic, or uses regenerative practices.
- Assess if the supply chain uses renewable energy and clean processing.

Utility & Use Cases

- Use in apparel where biodegradability helps (e.g. activewear, casual wear) if facilities exist.
- Blend with other fibers to improve durability/performance.
- Avoid for items likely to go to landfill if composting infrastructure is lacking.

Disposal & Lifecycle

- Confirm location-appropriate composting options. Without industrial compost, decomposition is much slower.
- Look for clear labeling on how to dispose.
- Be aware of potential microplastic shedding even in PLA fabrics.

Marketing Claims: Scrutinize Them

- Watch out for broad “plant-based” labels that omit key details.
- Check for third-party certification.
- Compare with alternatives (recycled synthetics, natural fibers) to pick the lesser harm.