

Frequently Asked Questions

Ecodesign Guidelines

1. What services are offered in packaging ecodesign?

As a producer, Éco Entreprises Québec provides you with consulting services to guide you in your packaging and printed paper selection and design process.

Our services can also be adapted to manufacturers, suppliers, packaging distributors or agencies and other players in the producers' value chain.

In concrete terms, we can **evaluate** the performance of your packaging and printed paper from the **ecodesign** and **recyclability** points of view to ensure that your choices are the most compatible with Quebec curbside recycling.

To find out more, see our [Service Offer](#).

2. What are the conditions or eligibility criteria to benefit from our services?

Our services are available to producers who meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Be subject to the [compensation scheme](#) (before 2024) or the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) regulations and registered with ÉEQ;
- Be compliant: have signed the membership contract, submitted their last report of materials and paid their contribution as well as their *Producers' Financial Participation (PFP)* within the prescribed deadlines, when applicable;
- Not be in a dispute or other precarious situation.

For more information, see the [Start-up kit](#).

3. How do I choose the best packaging for my product?

The best packaging is the one that fulfills its function and meets the needs of the product, while having the lowest environmental impact.

To achieve this, the right amount of material must be used to ensure the proper protection of the product

while avoiding overpackaging. It's a matter of compromise.

Reduction, procurement and recyclability are the three ecodesign strategies on which you should base your choice of the best packaging.

For more information, see our Packaging [Ecodesign Guidelines](#).

4. How do I know if my packaging is recyclable?

Use the Packaging Recyclability Guidelines (PRG) which provide specific guidance for multiple packaging materials.

They highlight design statements that are classified as **preferable** when they do not raise any issues during sorting, processing and recycling, **detrimental** if they complicate recyclability or render the packaging **non-recyclable**.

To learn more, see our [Packaging Recyclability Guidelines](#).

5. Is compostable packaging a good idea?

Quebec's composting infrastructure is designed to process organic materials and not to manage compostable packaging. Since compostable plastic packaging does not necessarily degrade at the same rate as organic materials and does not add value to compost (nutrients), it is removed and sent to landfill.

In addition, the resemblance between recyclable plastics and those identified as compostable confuses people, which leads to sorting errors and contamination problems in the recycling channel

To learn more, see our [Report on Biodegradable and Compostable Plastic Packaging](#).

6. Does Éco Entreprises Québec offer financial ecodesign incentives?

Yes, Éco Entreprises Québec set up the **Ecodesign Incentive Bonus pilot project** in 2021 to support companies engaged in packaging ecodesign.

The ecodesign incentive bonus is based on 10 ecodesign actions divided into four themes (reduction, procurement, recyclability and communication), each associated with a **bonus of 20% of the contribution payable** for the container or packaging in question.

An **additional bonus of 10%** may be granted for the completion of a case study.

For more information, see the [Bonus Guide](#).

7. Are there any materials to avoid or not to use?

Éco Entreprises Québec has instituted a **penalty** (or malus) – a financial measure aimed at discouraging the choice of materials that do not have a recycling channel, or that disrupt the collection, sorting, processing or recycling of other materials – by imposing a penalty on the payable contribution.

Penalties have therefore been introduced in the 2024 Schedule of contribution for the following materials: **polyvinyl chloride (PVC), polylactic acid (PLA) and other degradable plastics**.

For more information, see the [Malus Guide](#).

8. Is cardboard still the best solution for packaging a product and should I avoid plastic?

No. Cardboard can be a good choice in some cases, but not in others. This is also true for plastics, whose uses must be thought out according to the protection and conservation needs of the product and the use scenario.

That's why you first need to know your product well when choosing a packaging material. Next, it is important to assess the life cycle of the packaging-product pairing by including the procurement, manufacturing, distribution, use and end-of-life stages.

To find out more, consult the [Ecodesign](#) guide for agency packaging

9. Can ÉEQ help me communicate well on my packaging?

Éco Entreprises Québec can advise you on the development of appropriate communications regarding the ecodesign of your packaging, for example, its recyclability using sorting instructions.

The important thing is to choose the relevant information to communicate to consumers, to base this information

on facts, to avoid ambiguities and to comply with the laws and standards in force!

For more information, see the [Reference Guide for Packaging Ecodesign Communication](#).