

Plastics found in organic fertilizer from food waste

By Christopher Joyce, NPR

Tiny particles of plastic are showing up all over the world, floating in the ocean, buried in soil, in food and even in beer. Now there's new research that's found microplastics in fertilizer – organic fertilizer from food waste, in fact.

Collecting food waste to make fertilizer is a big deal in parts of Europe and is catching on in the U.S. But Ruth Freitag, a chemist at the University of Bayreuth in Germany, says there's a problem.

“What happens most of the time is that people don't like to put garbage into the bin as it is. They like to wrap it up,” she says – usually in a plastic bag. Freitag says some of the contamination also comes from plastic food wrappers as well; she can tell by the type of plastic they find.

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