

## EcoTaster – The revolutionary new low-impact tasting spoon

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### EcoTensil Founder

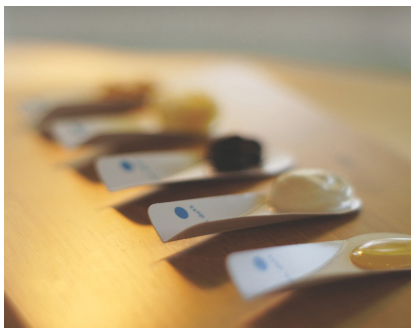
Peggy Cross, CEO of EcoTensil, was a strategic food and beverage packaging designer with more than 20 years experience when she saw the growing demand for to-go ware, and specifically the demand for plastic utensils, as a major pollution problem. She quickly learned about the 40 billion utensils landfilled every year and the lack of real ecological benefits of bio-based plastics, such as PLA. This inspired her first design of a paperboard spoon in 2006 and the creation of the EcoTaster in 2010. She incorporated as EcoTensil in 2010, with the EcoTaster as her signature product.



### The EcoTaster Invented

Peggy Cross's design expertise allowed her to produce a revolutionary, plastic-free, paperboard tasting spoon, the EcoTaster. Only 3.25" in length, and .5 mm thick, the EcoTaster is silky-smooth, with a large "bowl" and uniquely folding handle, creating a sturdy and attractive spoon that is fun and convenient to use. The reduction in environmental impact is so noticeable that even casual observers are awed by the obvious eco-improvement as well as delighted by the sleek aesthetic!

Made from renewable, FSC-certified paperboard, EcoTasters are ASTM D6868 certified compostable, recyclable and highly material efficient.



The EcoTasters are currently sold business to business, direct or through distributors to large and small retail chains and food manufacturers. Large retail chains that do in-store demos everyday easily use between 30-65 billion disposable utensils per year, while food manufacturers that attend numerous tradeshows and other sampling events can use thousands of utensils per event.

## Manufacturing and Fulfillment

The EcoTaster manufacturing process begins with paperboard that is grown, milled and pulped under Forest Stewardship Council certified requirements in a singular location in Idaho. The paperboard rolls are shipped directly to a printing and lithography plant in Alabama. This raw material-to-plant transportation within the U.S.A. is a vast improvement over plastics and bio-plastics that are manufactured in China.

The Alabama plant was specifically chosen because of the efficiencies of its printing machines. The machines use roll-fed technology that can print two sides, and lay dielines and scores with one run. Most other printers in the U.S. use a sheet fed unit that would take 3 runs to accomplish the same amount of work. Paper waste is minimized with the roll-fed machine and energy is saved in this one-step process. The EcoTasters are printed with a non-toxic, FDA approved ink.

The EcoTaster dielines are arranged to use available paper space as efficiently as possible, with any excess space being used for EcoTensil prototypes. The minimal 5-7% of unprintable paper shavings are recycled. At least 103,000 EcoTaster's are created from one press roll. At minimum, a three-month supply is run at one time to reduce inefficiencies—especially those created in the “make ready” process at the printer.

The EcoTasters are bundled into groups of 250 with a rubber band. Twenty of these are then placed into a thin plastic bag for sanitary purposes to make a 5000 unit case fitting in a 13.5" x 9" x 3.75" cardboard box achieving a cube utilization of 80 percent. The remaining cube space is frequently used to pack 1-2 bamboo EcoTaster dispenser boxes. No additional packaging is employed.



Nearly half the product will remain warehoused in the printing plant where it can be shipped directly to the customer in bulk orders of 8 or more cases. The second half is shipped to the Larkspur Headquarters where smaller orders can be individually processed.

## Environmental Excellence

- EcoTasters are made from sustainably forested, silky-smooth paperboard and are ASTM D6868 compostable. With one easy fold, EcoTaster becomes a sturdy utensil ideal for product sampling. EcoTasters were

introduced in 2010 at Natural Products Expo East where they were named “Best New Green Product”.

- Considering that an estimated 40-billion utensils are used for just one or two bites and live on in our landfills and oceans for centuries, the impact of EcoTasters and other EcoTensil products could be quite significant (Facts about plastic, 2011).

- EcoTasters are a quintessential “**cradle to cradle**” product. EcoTasters use Forest Stewardship Council certified paper. Sourcing FSC-certified wood supports the demand for sustainable forestry practices that are essential to biodiversity, healthy waterways, clean air and carbon sequestration. At the end of life, EcoTasters decompose toxin free within 12 weeks.



EcoTaster is recyclable and composts in 3-5 weeks

- Measuring in at one-half the weight of conventional plastic tasting spoons, EcoTasters use substantially less material than their counterparts. They pack extremely efficiently, using 1/5 the cube space and are made in America. These three components result in a significantly smaller carbon footprint in transportation than their competitors, most of which are made overseas.



EcoTaster vs. Bio Plastic Spoon after 2 weeks in home compost bin

- EcoTaster's closest “eco-friendly” competitors—bio-plastics are frequently no more sustainable than traditional plastics. Using large quantities of fertilizers, pesticides, petroleum, GMO seeds and energy, they are manufactured in China and thus highly resource inefficient in almost every regard. Furthermore, most are not accepted by industrial compost facilities because they do not break

down in the requisite 180 days. Even when an occasional bio-plastic utensil is certified compostable, it looks and feels just like plastic, necessitating waste management material sorters to direct them into the same waste stream as plastics--the landfill.

- If nearly 40 billion plastic utensils are disposed every year, they are very likely contributing to the well-know plastic pollution problems, such as the

Pacific Garbage Patch, that are a major threat to marine animals and coastal habitats. Even if EcoTasters end up in *the wrong place* they will biodegrade within weeks in soil, and within hours in water.

- Food manufacturers, retailers, chefs and caterers love EcoTaster's slick appearance and smooth feel. EcoTasters are currently used in numerous mainstream and health foods stores, including Whole Foods Market, for in-store demos and delis. Many food manufacturers use thousands of EcoTasters at tradeshow and events around the nation. They are targeted for stores like Trader Joes, Costco and Sam's Club that use anywhere between 30 to 65 million spoons each every year.
- EcoTasters are available for purchase directly from EcoTensil, Inc. or through distributors nationally.

**Facts about the plastic.** (2011). Reuseit website. Facts about the plastic bag pandemic. Reuseit.com. Retrieved Oct. 10, 2011 from <http://www.reuseit.com/learn-more/top-facts/plastic-bag-facts>.

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## FOR AN ENHANCED TASTING EXPERIENCE **ECOTASTER®!**



**EcoTaster is our revolutionary new tasting spoon**, made from silky smooth renewable paperboard – one easy fold creates a sturdy and fun spoon. EcoTaster provides an enhanced sampling experience for demos, delis, trade shows, events, etc.

#### **IMPROVED TASTING EXPERIENCE:**

- **Larger scoop** area for a more satisfying bite.
- Food can be **served directly on EcoTasters** instead of a cracker for a pure taste of product.
- Great **silky-smooth** mouth-feel.
- **Consumers feel better** about a product served on these fun, guilt-free tasters.

#### **SAVINGS AND EFFICIENCIES:**

- Can **eliminate need for sampling cups**.
- **Cost less** than other biodegradable utensils.

- Ship and store very **compactly** – 5000 EcoTasters fit in the same sized box as 1000 plastic or biodegradable spoons!
- Packed in **efficient** bundles for easy placement into dispensers, **freeing up servers**.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS:**

- **FSC** certified **renewable** paperboard.
- **Recyclable, biodegradable.**
- **Use much less material** than other plastic or biodegradable utensils.
- Small carbon footprint in transit.
- 100% made in the **U.S.A.**
- **Visibly and meaningfully demonstrate to consumers one's commitment to sustainability.**

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