France Says "Adieu" (Goodbye) to Plastic

Environment

How can people use less plastic?

It's no secret - plastic harms the environment. Many countries around the world are cutting down on how many disposable plastic bags stores give to customers. But bags are only part of the problem. According to the French Association of Health and Environment (ASEF), 4.73 billion disposable cups are thrown away each year in France. The French government has therefore decided to ban disposable plastic cups, plates, and silverware.

Most plastic doesn't biodegrade. And plastic that doesn't biodegrade harms the environment. According to the new French law, starting in 2020, if companies make disposable plastic cups, plates, or silverware, these products will have to be compostable. The products will also have to contain 50% organic materials.

Manufacturing regular plastic uses a lot of energy. The law should help companies who make plastic use less energy. The French government also hopes that through the law, plastic litter in France will be reduced. Some companies in the

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world already make disposable products from organic materials. One company, World Centric, uses plant starch, wheat, and paper.
Not everyone agrees with France's law. Eamonn Bates is the secretary general of Pack2Go Europe, which represents European companies that manufacture singleuse plastic items (including cups and plates). Bates says that the ban goes against European Union (EU) rules about how products are bought and sold in the EU. Bates is also afraid that other European countries will make similar laws. But while some people debate France's ban, others think it will be an important step toward improving the environment.

QUESTIONS

1. France's plastic ban is supposed to help...

A. Pack2Go Europe.

B. lawmakers

C. The environment.

D. European companies.

2. According to the law, new disposable products...

A. will cost less money to make.

B. must be compostable.

C. have to be manufactured in France.

D. will be made of paper.

3. According to the ban, all plastic in France must be made from 50% organic materials by 2020.

A. True

B. False

C. We don't know.

4. What's one reason France is banning plastic cups, plates, and silverware?

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A. Because the EU asked the country for the ban

B. To reduce the amount of plastic litter

C. Because people don't use them very often

D. To show people that they can live without plastic

5. What is one reason that Bates is against France's plastic ban?

A. Companies will use too much energy making the new plastic items.

B. The ban will be too expensive.

C. Grocery stores need plastic.

D. He says the ban goes against EU rules.

GLOSSARY

KEYWORDS *MEANING*

Harm (v)	have a bad effect on something	
Environment	the natural world, including air, land, water and living things	
Cutting down Cut (v)	do or make less of something	
Disposable *(adj)*	made to be thrown away after one use	
Ban (v)	forbid by law	

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Biodegrade	break down quickly into something not harmful to the environment	
Compostable	when large pieces of plants, such as vegetables, can be changed into a mixture that helps make the soil better	
organic (adj)	connected with living things	
Manufacturing **Manufacture(v)**	produce something with machines	
Litter (n)	no plural) bits of paper and other trash scattered around	
Reduce (v)	make less or smaller; decrease.	
starch	white substance found in some foods, such as rice, that gives the body energy	
secretary general	person in charge of an organization	
Debate (n)	a civilized difference of opinion; a formal discussion	

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