



Renewable resources are either naturally reproduced at a sustainable rate or they can be produced in agriculture at a rate equivalent to the demand or need. **Nonrenewable resources** are made naturally by the Earth but do not renew themselves fast enough for people to count on having the resource for an indefinite period of time. Although plastic is typically considered to be a nonrenewable resource because it is made from petroleum, there is a method of making plastic that can be renewable. **Bioplastics** are made from biological materials—plant starches,

Materials:

- 1 tablespoon (24g) cornstarch
- 2 drops corn oil
- 1 tablespoon (15 mL) water
- 2 drops food coloring
- Sandwich-sized resealable plastic bag
- Tablespoon measuring spoon
- Microwave

Procedure: Part 1

1. Measure 14 g (1 tablespoon) of cornstarch into your plastic bag.
2. Add 15 ml (1 tablespoon) of water to the cornstarch.
3. Add 2 small drops of corn oil to the mixture in your bag.
4. Add 2 drops of food coloring to the mixture in your bag.
5. Seal the bag, and squish it gently to mix everything together.

Describe the mixture in your plastic bag: _____

How does it feel when you slowly squish the bag? _____

Does it feel the same when you squeeze the bag quicker/harder? ____

Is your mixture a solid or a liquid? _____

Procedure: Part 2

6. Microwave your mixture on high power for 20 seconds. Be sure to leave the bag open a tiny bit so that steam can escape. Be careful, the plastic will be hot!
7. Let it cool for several minutes. While it is cooling answer the questions below.

What does your new substance look like? How is it different from the mixture you started with? _____

If your plastic is cool, knead it with your hands. What does it feel like? Describe its other properties. _____

What could you make with your bioplastic? Why couldn't you make? Why? _____

What is used to make bioplastic? _____
