



The sustainable bioplastics are created from food waste | Photo source University of Alicante

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## SCIENTISTS USE FOOD WASTE TO CREATE AUTO PARTS

 AGRICULTURE & ENERGY

### Pomegranates and other food waste are being used to create bioplastic for sustainable car parts, including germ-killing door handles

**Spotted:** Scientists from four EU countries have developed a method to turn agri-waste into car parts. The process could help reduce waste and make automobile production more environmentally sustainable.

The scientists, who are working under the EU-funded Barbara project, have created sustainable [bioplastics from food waste](#). For instance, oils derived from lemons have antibacterial properties and could be used to make germ-killing door handles.

The process involves using waste from a variety of sources. The scientists first use waste from the corn industry to create chemically-engineered starch. The food waste additives, like lemon oil or crushed almond shells, are then added to create the bioplastic. This can be used as the ink to 3D-print eco-friendly alternatives to traditional automobile parts and building materials.

Some tests have already been successfully completed, and Fiat has signed on to validate the finished products. The Barbara project started in 2017 and is scheduled to end in April 2020.

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### **Takeaway:**

The European Union estimates that **110 million tons of animal and vegetable waste** are produced in the union each year. Bioplastics projects like Barbara have the potential to use the waste effectively and safely, and major manufacturers such as **Ford** are already looking into bioplastic alternatives. The Barbara project could provide a blueprint for other, more ecologically clean auto parts and building materials.