



Just Bones/Bioplastic Skin | Photo source [Valdís Steinarsdóttir](#)

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SLAUGHTERHOUSE WASTE PRODUCTS TURNED INTO BIOPLASTIC PACKAGING

 FOOD & DRINK

The biodegradable plastic could indicate produce freshness, eliminating the need for best before dates

Spotted: Independent Icelandic designer Valdís Steinarsdóttir focuses on creating new objects and forms by recycling organic matter. Her latest project turns slaughterhouse waste into two different items. Bioplastic Skin food packaging is made from discarded animal hides, and Just Bones bowls and vases are made from ground animal bones.

For both sets of products, Steinarsdóttir boils the waste to release gelatine. For the Bioplastic Skin wraps, she adds sugar alcohol to the liquid to enhance elasticity. Since the packaging is biodegradable, the design would mean that wrapped meats may no longer require best before dates. The freshness of the meat would be determined by the freshness of the packaging, both of which would have the same expiration date.

For the Just Bones vessels, the designer grinds the bones and combines the powder with heated gelatine. After moulding and drying, the resulting mixture is strong enough to be drilled and sawed. As they too are biodegradable, neither the bowls nor the vases can hold water, and Steinarsdóttir uses different temperatures to achieve the range of colours in the finished bones products.

Other types of bioplastic that Springwise has spotted being used to replace traditional materials include [sugarcane-based shoe soles](#) and [biodegradable plastic wrap, made from fish waste](#).

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Takeaway:

Recycled plastic is already being used in products that range from road paving and clothing to furniture and toys. As processes for recycling plastics improve by becoming less intensive and easier to access, and demand for post-consumer waste products continues to grow, there is hope that we as a global society can begin to make a dent in the volume of pollution that is currently choking the planet. Even better are the systems like Steinarsdóttir's that completely bypass the need for traditional plastics, by using materials that are already available and would otherwise lie unused.