

GIP's super sourcing

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Bamboo is a popular eco-friendly material, just as strong as steel but compostable

The commercial aviation industry as a whole is working toward reducing global waste, and serviceware is one of the more visible places airlines can show this commitment to passengers.

Global Inflight Products ([GIP](#)) is well-known for its Green Is Possible brand and eco-conscious options, offering organic, biodegradable, compostable and recyclable meal service products for First and Business Class meal service. The products are made of bamboo, palm leaf, rice husk, Polylactic acid (PLA), PLA corn starch, hay, birch and paper.

In this Q&A, *PAX International* speaks with Joshua Tallent, Chief Executive Officer at GIP, about these materials and how they are sourced.

***PAX International:* Where does GIP source the bamboo fibers for its products such as cutlery and stir sticks? How is bamboo more environmentally friendly than other materials, such as wood?**

Tallent: The bamboo fibers are sourced mostly within China. Unlike wood, bamboo is not a tree, but a grass. It is [comparably as strong as steel](#) (in regards to tensile strength – the resistance to breaking or splitting under tension) and has been used to reinforce concrete.

Bamboo is biodegradable, compostable and harvesting it has less environmental impact than wood. Some species of bamboo can grow as much as 35 inches per day, while trees only grow three to four inches a year. Since it is naturally anti-bacterial and anti-fungal, it is grown without the use of toxins, pesticides and fertilizers which are harmful to the environment.

PAX International: **What region do the fallen palm leaves, rice husk, corn starch, PLA and other paper materials come from for GIP’s serviceware products?**

Tallent: Palm leaves are cultivated all over the world, particularly in Asia, Africa, Australia, Central America and South America, as well as the United States. We work really hard to reduce our carbon footprint, so we source our fallen palm leaves from locations nearest our factory. We have manufacturing capabilities, whether it be owning or partnering with, in 19 different countries.

As for the rice husk, corn starch and PLA, they are usually sourced within China, but we source them from as close to our factories as we can. At the factory, the rice husk and cornstarch are crushed, molded, polished and cleaned in the process of becoming tableware.

PAX International: **Do organic products, such as the bamboo and palm, expire? Are they one-time use or rotatable?**

Tallent: Depending on what materials the products you’re using are made from, some can be washed and used multiple times, whereas others are designed to be a single-use item. We always discuss with the customer before choosing which items are best and ensure safety for everyone. In saying that, these products are biodegradable, and if the items are stored in a dry area, a normal shelf life of two years is expected.

PAX International: **What is GIP’s overall impression of the trends in tableware and serveware now?**

Tallent: As a whole, there is massive demand for innovative green options throughout the airline industry. We are always adding new products to our Green Is Possible line and have received excellent feedback from airlines that have made the switch to greener options. Bamboo and palm leaf plates are a great alternative, especially for airlines who are promoting and branding a more environmentally friendly offering. Even as airlines are adjusting and preparing for a post-COVID-19 world, water-based, plastic free packaging and to-go containers have always been among our popular items.