

GUIDE TO ELIMINATING SINGLE-USE PLASTIC FOR FOOD VENDORS

This guide is to assist vendors selling food and drink items who are looking to transition away from single-use plastic.

We are targeting six single-use plastic items; water bottles, foodware (cutlery, cups, plates etc.), straws, coffee cups/lids, takeaway containers and plastic bags. We also encourage you to take it further and look at any other plastic you're using.

It is always better to choose **REUSABLE** alternatives wherever possible. Of course this is not always feasible, so we recommend using 100% certified compostable products for takeaway where needed.

When sourcing these, be wary of products labelled only as 'biodegradable' or 'degradable'. This does **NOT** mean the same thing as compostable, and may be a plastic product. Always ensure you purchase 100% certified compostable. Where possible, try to choose natural products such as paper, bagasse, cardboard, wood, palm or bamboo.

water bottles



Reusable Options

Provide a water station and sell reusable bottles.

Disposable Options

Stock water in aluminium cans or glass water bottles (if allowed under event/market policy). Ensure these do not have plastic parts or plastic wraps around them.

coffee cups & lids



Reusable Options

Accept customers with BYO cups and consider offering a discount for this.



Disposable Options

Preference waxed paper or card without lining. These are difficult to source, so alternatively, use paper cups with 100% compostable lining (check lining is not traditional plastic). Similarly, lids should be made with 100% compostable material such as bagasse. Ensure lid is not PS (polystyrene) - these lids will have 'PS' and the number '6' on them - avoid!

plastic bags



Reusable Options

- Don't provide plastic bags, instead sell reusable cloth bags (these can be branded).
- Offer a borrow / return cloth bag service for regulars who forget their bags (for markets).

Disposable Options

Ask if customers really need a bag, many will have their own bag they can use. If a takeaway option is needed, provide sustainably sourced paper bags (can be branded) or recycled cardboard boxes.

straws



Remove straws from sight and only provide upon request. If requested, provide paper or wheat straws. Put up signage saying that you are reducing straws to encourage customer participation (find these at www.plasticfreenoosa.org/signage). Note that disposable straws vary in quality - if you find one brand unsuitable, it is worth trying another. Avoid oxo-degradable/ biodegradable straws, these are plastic.

foodware (plates, cups & cutlery)



Reusable Options

If possible, use washable reusable items such as stainless steel cutlery and ceramic plates. The market/ event may provide a wash up station.

Disposable Options

Preference wooden/ paper/ cane or other 100% compostable items that meet home compost standard. Products made from bagasse are a good option as they are strong and leak-proof. For cold cups, paper is preferred. If lined ensure, all lining is 100% compostable. For cutlery, bamboo/ wood is the best option. Be wary of the label 'biodegradable', ensure they are also labelled as compostable. Try to source sustainable products if possible.



takeaway containers



Reusable Options

Have a collection of containers and allow customers to borrow and bring back (for markets).

Disposable Options

Re-think how much packaging you need to use - can you use a paper bag or napkin instead? Provide wooden/paper/cane or other 100% compostable containers that meet home compost standard. Be wary of the label 'biodegradable', ensure they are also labelled as compostable. Try to source sustainable products if possible.



soft plastic wrapping



This is any kind of plastic that you can scrunch, commonly used as a clear wrapping for goods and consumables.

If you pack your own goods, consider the packaging ideas given above. If you need a transparent solution, consider a compostable semi-transparent paper bag, these are paper bags that have had tannins removed. They are strong and grease resistant.

Many vendors sell pre-packed goods and do not have control over the packaging. If this is you, we recommend talking to your supplier and see if they can provide you with returnable or compostable packaging. If you think your soft plastic is unavoidable, please talk to your event/ market organiser about your situation. They may ask you to instead provide signage informing customers on how to recycle soft plastic.