



recycling systems

communication

waste prevention

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Waste minimisation for event vendors and stall holders (food and beverage) – Christchurch/Canterbury Region

Recycling is only the ‘face’ of waste reduction – true reduction occurs before the item even gets on site and Our Daily Waste works with event management and stall-holders to significantly reduce waste by adopting the ethos of rethink, refuse, reuse, reduce, and recycle. We provide pre-event guidelines, workshops, and consultancy services.

Important Information: Use of Bio-ware

(Includes: ‘compostable’, potato starch, corn starch, wooden cutlery, PLA, bio-PET, bioplastics, ‘future friendly’, oxo-degradable)

Although they are marketed as being ‘environmentally friendly’ or ‘future friendly’, the waste industry in Canterbury is not currently set up to process them, so **biodegradable bags, cups, plates, and cutlery should not be used as packaging at events**, unless there is on-site composting that can process them or you are prepared to collect them all and compost them yourselves.

These items should not be disposed of in any of the three standard waste streams for the following reasons:

Recycling:

- they are ‘read’ by the sorting machines as being plastic or cardboard so are treated as contaminants
- they are not easily identifiable as being different from plastic counterparts which makes it difficult for hand-sorting
- they melt and shred, so can potentially jam up machines used for sorting recycling
- one bioplastic cup can ruin whole batches of plastic recycling

Organics:

- they break down too slowly for the hot composting systems that process organics
- they are ‘read’ by the sorting machines as being plastic or cardboard so are treated as contaminants

Landfill:

- during the breakdown process they contribute to the release of methane, a key component of greenhouse gases
- as heavy and absorbent items they add to transport and disposal costs

One day we hope that the infrastructure will be in place so that these items really are a sustainable option, but in the meantime these items are best used by small groups with the means to compost them. For more about these issues see: <http://www.smartpackaging.org.nz/home/bioplastics/>

Health and Safety Advice: I have contacted NZFSA about some of the options suggested here and they advise: “Businesses have a range of options available when serving customers - particularly lower risk foods - providing a supply of clean utensils and allowing customers to help themselves from a display, or using tongs to serve a customer 'into their hand' from a display if the customer requested it that way.”

Best practice waste prevention:

- Think about every piece of packaging to be brought on site from the perspective of where it will end up and how long it will take to break down. Consider alternatives
- Have reusable cups branded with your own logo for sale at events and offer discounts for refills (see <http://www.globelet.com/> and <http://www.idealcup.co.nz/>)
- Encourage customers to bring their own cups, plates/cutlery etc. and offer discounts
- Consider selling food that requires minimal packaging (pies, burritos, muffins, cakes, sandwiches etc.) and invite customers to use tongs to lift it straight into their hands.
- Try to avoid unnecessary packaging such as ice cream sleeves, extra bags, glad-wrap, muffin cases, sugar sachets etc.
- Do not offer straws with drinks unless necessary (straws are not recyclable)
- Buy ingredients in bulk and transfer to reusable containers before travelling to events to further reduce on-site waste
- Consider what sort of cleaning cloths and products are used and how these are packaged/disposed of
- Offer condiments such as sauces and mustards on the counter in squeeze bottles rather than individual sachets (which must be landfilled).
- Add sugar to drinks with order or offer it in a pourer at the counter rather than sachets (which often become litter)
- If your business creates a lot of organic waste (coffee, juice etc.) consider organising to have it taken by a local composter/pig farmer etc. so as to reduce the amount of energy used to transport and process it commercially
- For more ideas about reducing packaging go to <http://www.nudefoodday.com.au/>

A – Z of packaging for events in Canterbury region

ITEM	ECO OPTIONS (encouraged)	RECYCLABLE (preferred)	LANDFILL (avoid where poss.)	AVOID (do not bring on site)
Bags	None – use tongs	Paper	Plastic	PLA (bioplastics)
Bottles (glass)	None – use kegs and reusable cups	Unbroken	Broken	Follow event policy
Bottles (plastic)	Reusable, no straws	Plastic (no cap)	Caps	PLA (bioplastics)
Cans	Separate can ‘cage’ to collect cans for charity	Aluminium	Straws	
Chips	Reusable containers Lined paper bags	NONE – chip packaging is usually too greasy for recycling	Pottles (add to volume and weight) Sauce containers	Compostable
Chopsticks	Encourage customers to bring their own	NONE	Wooden	
Clamshells	Reusable	Cardboard, Plastic		Compostable, Polystyrene foam
Cling-wrap	Replace with Sealable containers	NONE	Use sparingly	
Coffee stirrers	Add sugar while coffee is being made	NONE	Wooden, Plastic	
Cups (coffee)	Reusable (Ideal, Keep etc.)	NONE	Cardboard	PLA, Biocups, Polystyrene foam
Cup Lids (coffee)	Don’t offer them	NONE	Plastic	PLA, Bioware, Polystyrene foam
Cups (general)	Reusable, no straws	Cardboard, Polycarbonate	Straws	PLA, Bioware, Polystyrene foam, Brittle plastic (breaks into sharp shards)
Cutlery	Don’t serve food that needs it, or encourage customers to bring their own	NONE	Plastic, Wooden	

ITEM	ECO OPTIONS (encouraged)	RECYCLABLE (preferred)	LANDFILL (avoid where poss.)	AVOID (do not bring on site)
Drink cartons (tetrapak)	Serve drinks from bulk containers in reusable cups	Replace with plastic bottles	All cartons, and straw	
Foil (tin)	Replace with Sealable containers	NONE	All foil food wrap	
Foil – Packaging (eg: chips, chocolate etc.)	Serve baked goods instead	NONE	All foil food packaging	
Food containers	Reusable	Plastic, Cardboard	Brittle plastic (muffin trays etc.)	PLA, Bioware, Polystyrene foam
Ice cream – cones	Cones only (no sleeves or serviettes)		Sleeves, Serviettes (usually soiled)	
Ice cream – wrapped	Serve cones	NONE	Foil wrap, plastic, stick, cardboard pottles, spoon	PLA, Bioware, Polystyrene foam
Milk	Buy in bulk	Plastic	Carton (Tetrapak)	
Muffin cases	No case (serve nude)	NONE	Paper case	
Pizza	Use a liner and request boxes be returned	Cardboard (unsoiled)	Paper bag	PLA, Bioware, Polystyrene foam
Plastic wrap	No wrap (nude food) Reusable	NONE	All soft plastic food wraps: muesli bars, biscuits, lollies etc.	
Plates	Reusable, Encourage customers to bring their own	Plastic, Cardboard		PLA, Bioware, Polystyrene foam
Sauce (including soy)	Sauce bottles on counter	Rip-top tins (rinsed)	Soy (containers/fish) Tomato (sachets) Riptop Tins (unrinsed)	
Straws	Don't use	NONE	All straws and plastic wrapping	
Sugar	Add sugar and stir for customer Sugar pourer on counter	NONE – they usually contain granules which contaminate	All sugar sachets	Paper sachets (creates litter)
Sushi containers	reusable	plastic	soy sauce, chopsticks,	PLA, bioware, polystyrene foam
Tea bags	No tags		Tag/string to landfill Tea bag to Organics or Landfill	
Tins	The larger the better	Rinse first	Unrinsed	
Yoghurt pottles		Rinse first	Lid, un-rinsed pottles	