

# Choosing single-use service ware

**There are many considerations when choosing single-use and disposable service ware to purchase for your restaurant or other food business, including cost and environmental impact of the products themselves.**

There is no “best” disposable service ware product from an environmental standpoint. Each product’s environmental impact varies, depending on its material, how it was manufactured, packaged and transported and what happens after it is used.

## WHAT IS SINGLE-USE SERVICE WARE?

Cups, plates, clamshells, cutlery and portion cups and bags intended to be used once and then disposed.

## Recycled content: balancing cost and environmental impact

Food Waste Stops With Me partners recommend using products made from recycled content materials--the higher the percentage of post-consumer recycled content, the better.

## Compostable: an expensive trip to the landfill

Even though the packaging and marketing say compostable, biodegradable or made-from-plants, **no brands of compostable service ware are allowed in Oregon’s composting or recycling system.** Oregon composters will not accept this material as it contaminates their final compost product. In Oregon, compostable service ware ends up in the landfill with plastic service ware.

**Learn more about how you can reduce food waste.**

**[FoodWasteStopsWithMe.org](http://FoodWasteStopsWithMe.org)**

That means businesses may be paying more for compostable service ware because of a perception that it is better for the environment. Compostable service ware does not break down in a landfill, even when the marketing says it is compostable.

## Reduce waste throughout your business

Ultimately, there are many things a business can do to reduce its overall environmental impact, including reducing food waste and using reusable dishware instead of disposable. To get connected to your local waste prevention resources, visit [foodwastestopswithme.org](http://foodwastestopswithme.org) or call 503-234-3000.

## USE REUSABLES FOR DINE-IN SERVICE DURING COVID-19 EPIDEMIC

Restaurants face many new regulations and best practices for maintaining safe food service during and after the COVID-19 epidemic. State guidelines for reopening restaurants *do not require use of disposable service ware* for dine-in service.

## For more information

To learn more about compostable packaging, durable dishware, and a life cycle analysis of food service packaging, visit:

[www.oregonmetro.gov/serviceware](http://www.oregonmetro.gov/serviceware)