



Oregon Food Serveware Guide

Navigating the world of food serveware can be daunting. The good news is that there are many food serveware options on the market that are more widely available than ever before.

Many restaurants are switching to single-use food serveware without plastic, bioplastic, or harmful chemicals in order to satisfy customer demand and reduce their environmental impact. Other restaurants are switching to reusable food serveware and getting rid of disposables altogether to save money and prevent waste.

This document provides some resources to help restaurant owners navigate options on the market for sustainable food serveware.

Items That Are Prohibited in Oregon

Starting on January 1, 2025, the following types of food serveware are prohibited in the state of Oregon:

- Polystyrene foam (sometimes called expanded polystyrene or styrofoam) cups, bowls, plates, and clamshells
- All food serveware that contains PFAS

Additionally, since 2020, restaurants are prohibited from distributing plastic film bags, and plastic straws must be provided upon request only.

Reusable Food Serveware

In February 2023, the Oregon Department of Agriculture adopted new rules for enabling the use of reusable containers in retail establishments, such as grocery stores and small cooperatives. In June 2024, the Oregon Health Authority underwent similar rulemaking which allows restaurants to provide reusable containers or for consumer owned reusables to be used in restaurants for takeout. In both cases, certain protocols and health standards must be met before a business can provide reusable containers or accept customer owned reusable containers. More information about those protocols is available at the [Oregon Department of Agriculture](#) and [Oregon Health Authority](#) websites.

Reusable food serveware, when adequately reused, is [better than single-use alternatives](#) in almost every environmental measure, including climate, water, waste, and pollution. Recent studies show that a shift to reusable foodware can also save businesses money in the short

and long term. Oregon restaurants should consider incorporating reusables into their practices whenever possible. Some examples include

- Using reusable food serviceware for on-site dining
- Providing a discount to customers that bring their own cup or container
- Joining or create a reuse rental program
- Running a takeout library, allowing people to leave reusables and take them to use at checkout

For more information on specific products and tips about switching to reusable foodware, visit Upstream's [Reusable Foodware Purchasing Guide](#) and [other resources](#) for restaurant owners.

Single-Use Food Serviceware

Starting on July 1, 2025, no single-use food serviceware will be accepted in curbside recycling or at industrial composting facilities in Oregon.

For restaurants that must provide single-use options for takeout, there are a few ways to, minimize the food serviceware needed to deliver your product and reduce waste. Some examples include:

- only providing single-use food serviceware and accessories upon request from the customer
- using containers that are the right size for the food items
- eliminating unnecessary packaging elements

It is also recommended to prioritize food serviceware that is nontoxic, and that can break down more easily in the environment than plastics or bioplastics, including minimally processed naturally occurring materials, such as paper, bamboo, wood, paper, hay, seaweed, and more. Some examples include:

- plates, bowls and takeout containers made from bamboo, palm leaf, and paper
- straws made from paper, wood, hay, bamboo, seaweed
- utensils made from wood, bamboo, reed, paper, hay, and more

For specific product information and tips for finding the right container for your restaurant needs, visit Surfrider's [Ocean Friendly Foodware Guide](#).

These resources are provided by the Oregon Legislative Foodware Workgroup, with special thanks to Environment Oregon and Surfrider Foundation.