



ENVIRONMENTAL
INNOVATIONS

Reduce Plastic Foodware Project

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Sustainability Commission Presentation
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Background

Why is it important?

Disposable plastic foodware causes notable concerns:

- Litter
- Leaches harmful chemicals into food and beverages
- Difficult to recycle
- Short-term usage
- Microplastics are harmful



Project Summary

Food Facility Survey

- Food Facility Stratification
- Survey Design
- Survey Delivery
- Survey Report

Mini-grant Distribution & Assistance

- Reusables Assistance
- Compostables Assistance
- Reusables to-go

Reusables Service Provider Pilot





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Reusables Readiness Survey



Methodology

Survey Design:

- Mainly focused on practices and perceptions around reusables but also included information on single-use disposable items.

Sample Size:

- 461 food/beverage service businesses (excluding schools, corporate cafeterias, pre-packaged food vendors)
- 93 food facilities completed survey (20% sample size)

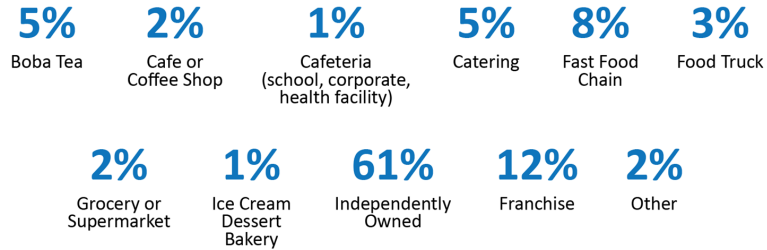
Delivery:

- EI Staff
- Student Interns
- Peninsula Chinese Business Association
- City Email

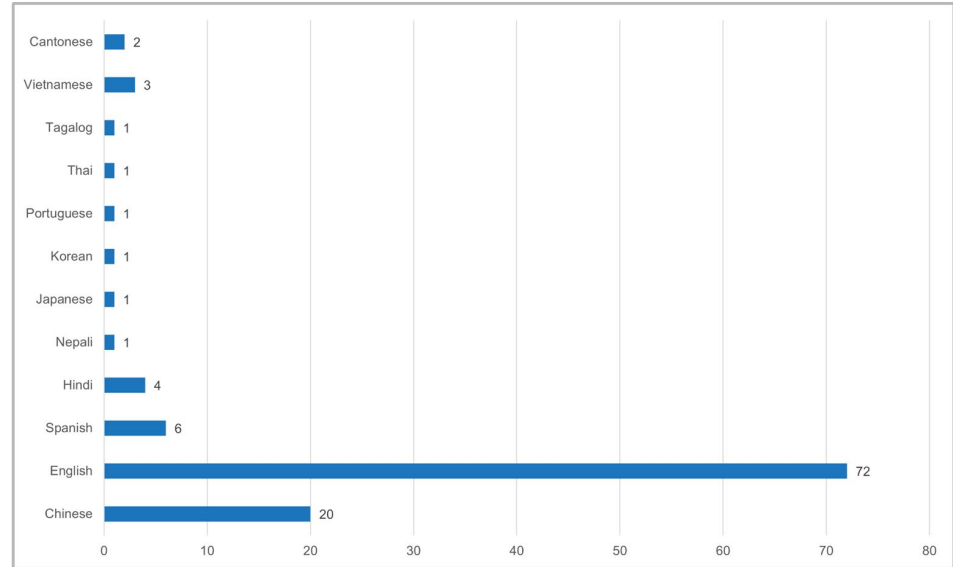


Demographics

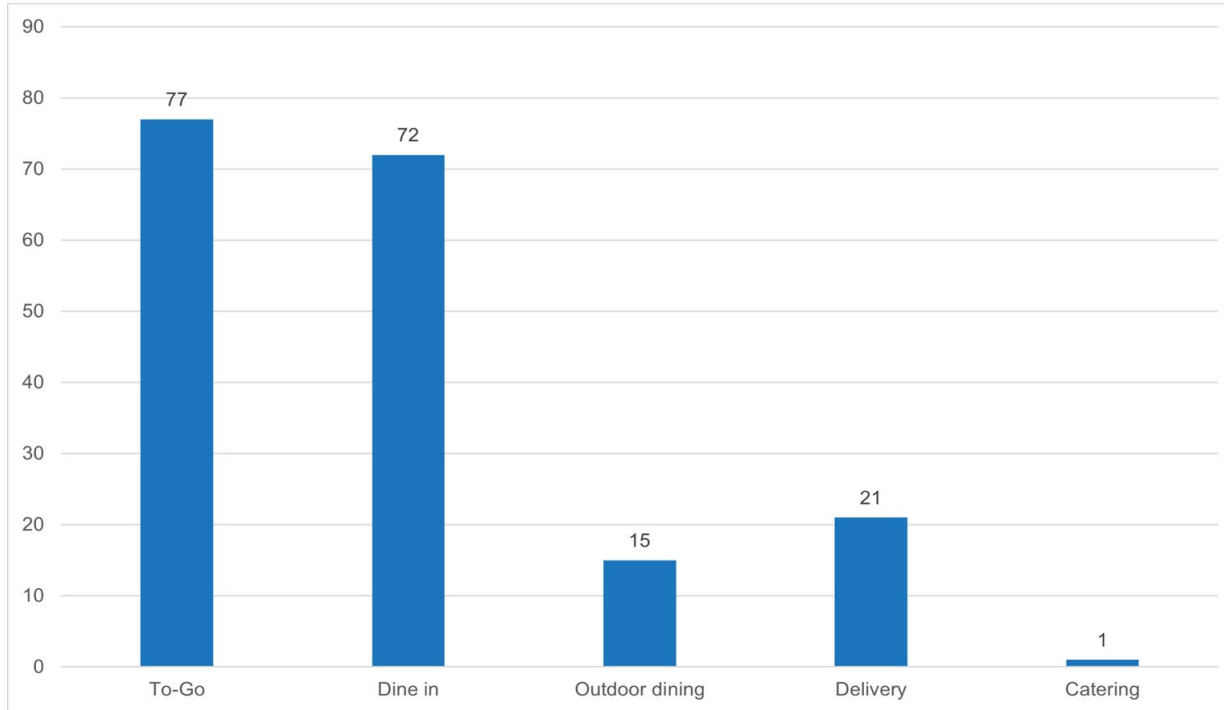
Type of food facility surveyed



Languages spoken by Owner

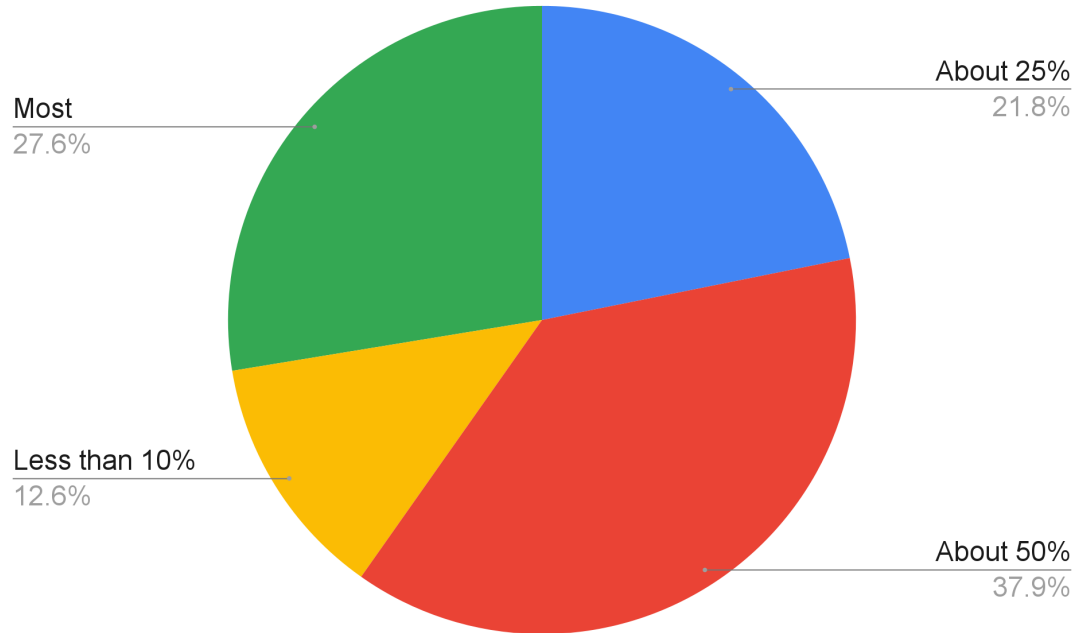


Primary Dining Experience



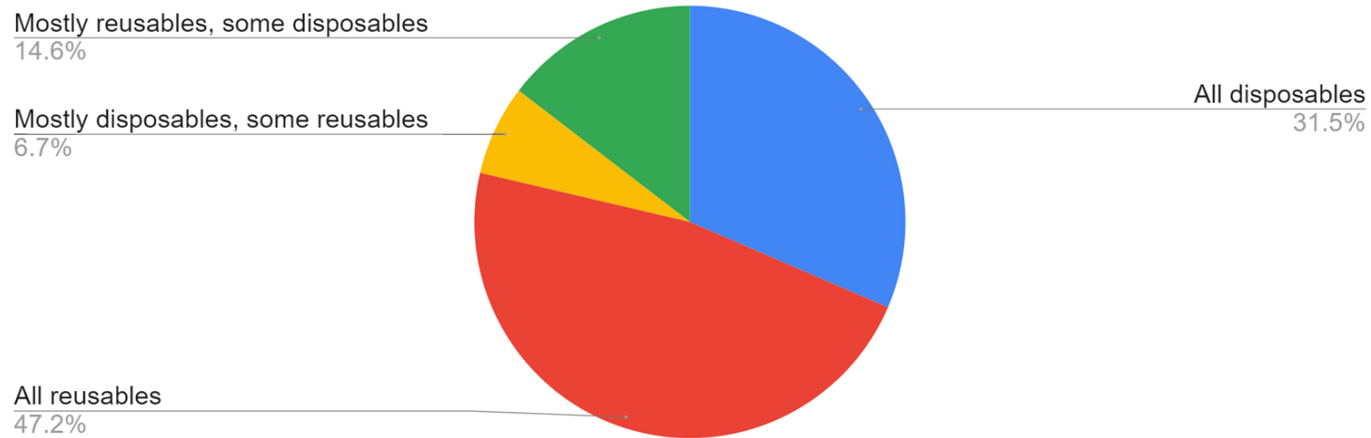
Dine-in Service

What percent of your customers “dine-in/sit-down” (eat here at your facility)?



Current Level of Reusables Use

What type of foodware do you offer to customers who dine at your establishment?



Barriers to Reusables

Top Five Concerns of Switching to **Reusable Foodware**:

If NOT currently using reusables for Dine-in.

1

Staff capacity for
Dishwashing

2

Limited space to
accommodate for
dishwashing
and/or storage

3

Changing
operations is too
difficult

4

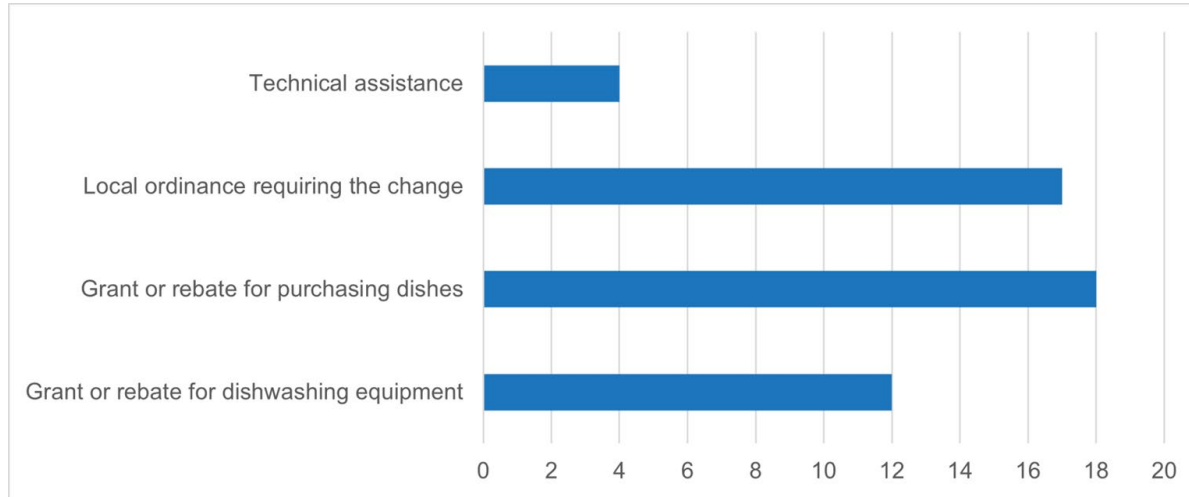
Cost to buy
reusables

5

Cost to buy/lease
dishwasher

Making the Switch to Reusables

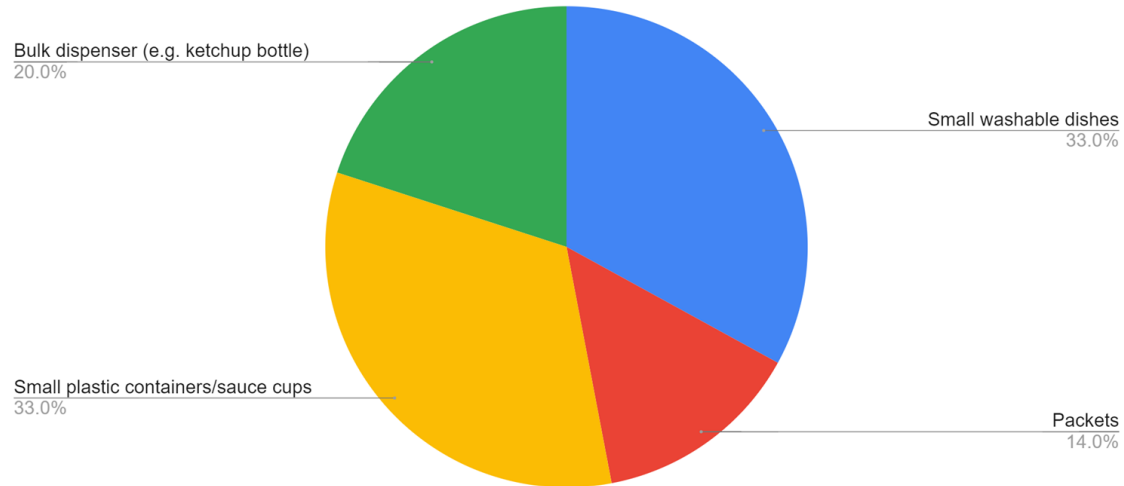
**If you are NOT currently using reusables,
what would help you make the switch to using all reusables?**



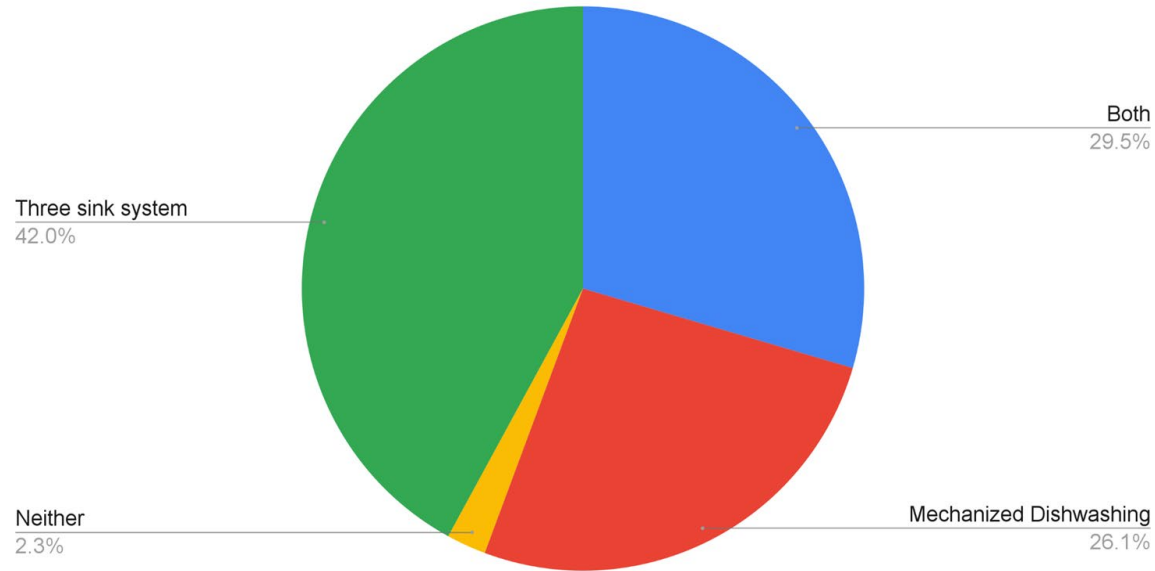
34% answered this question

Condiments for Dine-In

How do you serve condiments and sauces for DINE-IN?



Dishwashing Capacity





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Take-Out Operations

Results – Food Facility Outreach



Type of Disposable Foodware

What type of disposable foodware do you use (for either dine-in or take-out)?

52%

Plastic

28%

Natural
fiber-based

9%

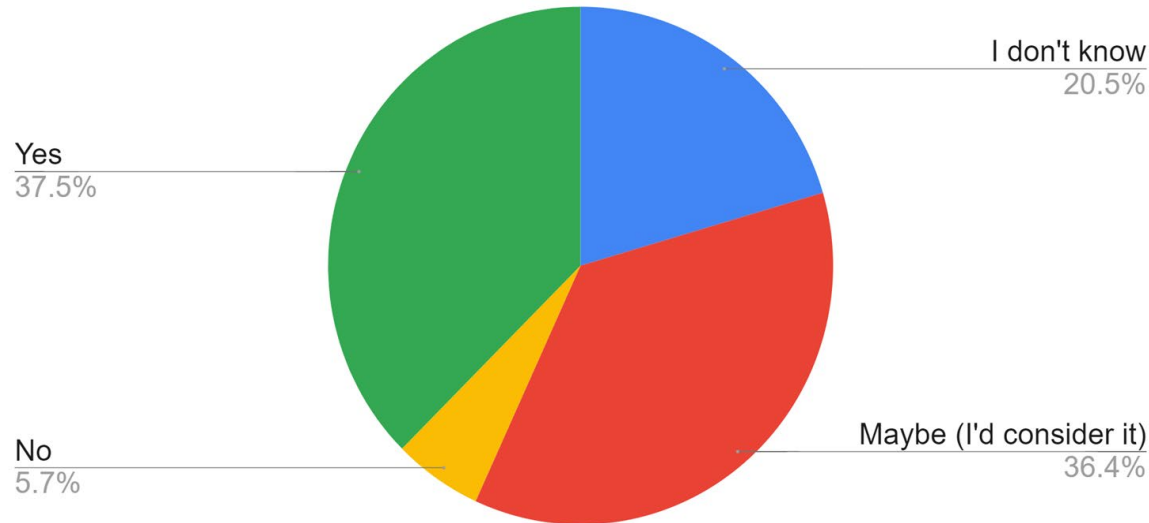
Compostable
plastic

11%

Aluminum

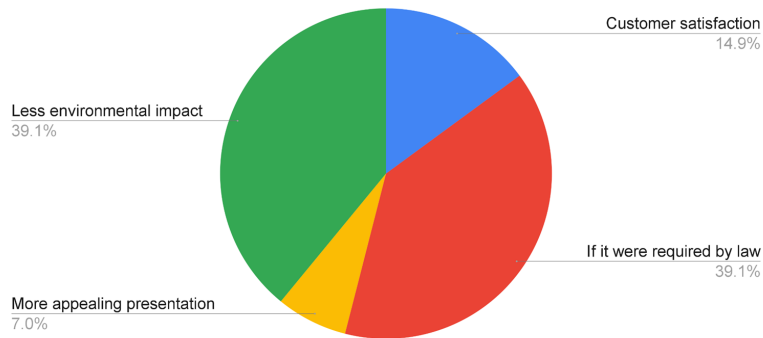
Willingness to Switch From Plastic Foodware

If you are using traditional plastic or compostable plastic foodware, would you be willing to switch to natural fiber-based compostable foodware?

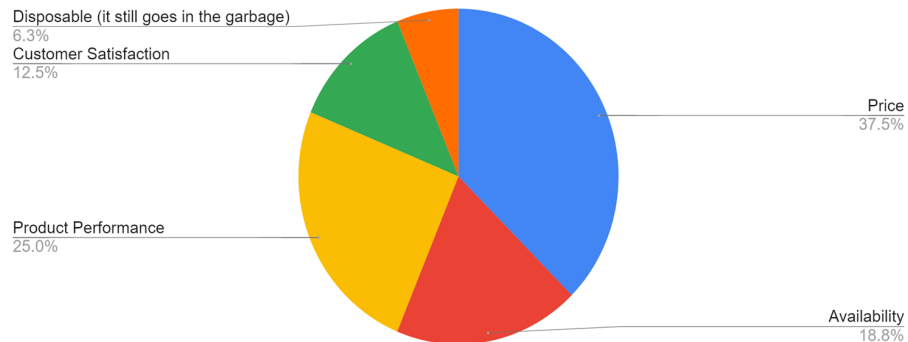


Reasons/Barriers to Switching

If you answered yes: what are the reasons you'd be interested or willing to switch to fiber-based compostable foodware?



If you answered no: what are the reasons you don't want to use fiber-based compostable foodware?



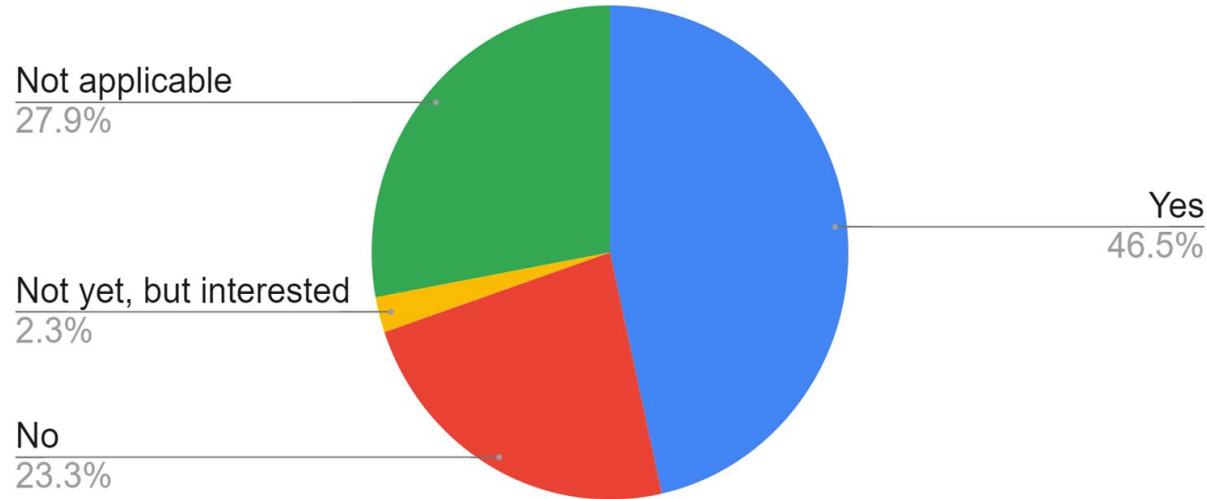
Bring Your Own (BYO) and Fees/Discounts

Results – Food Facility Outreach



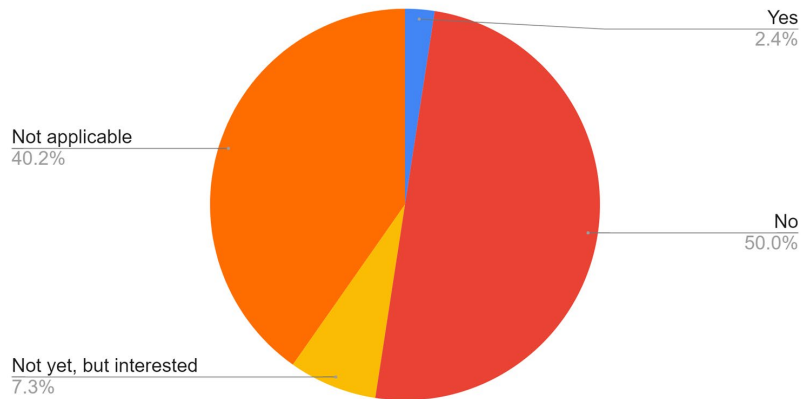
Allowing BYO

Do you or would you allow customers to bring their own clean, refillable cups and mugs for beverages?

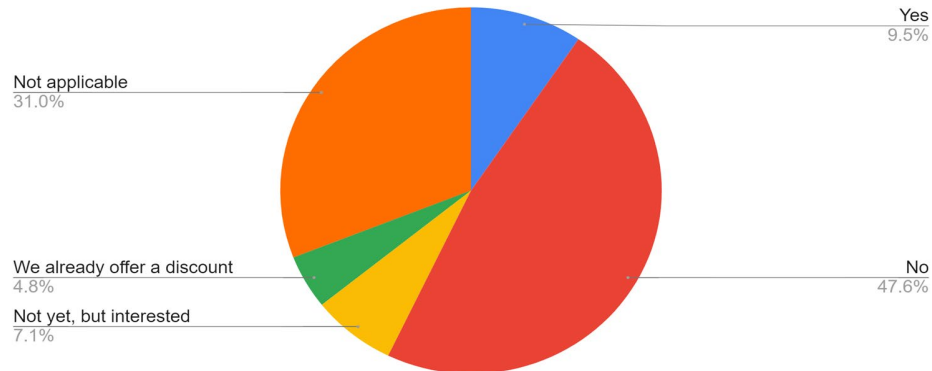


Fee / Discounts for BYO

Would you consider charging a FEE for the disposable cups when selling beverages to customers if your business keeps the revenue?

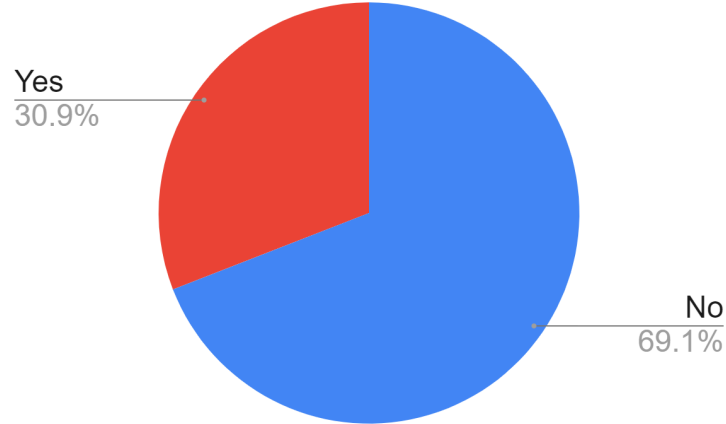


Would you consider offering a DISCOUNT for customers who bring their own refillable cups and mugs for beverages?



Concerns About Reusables

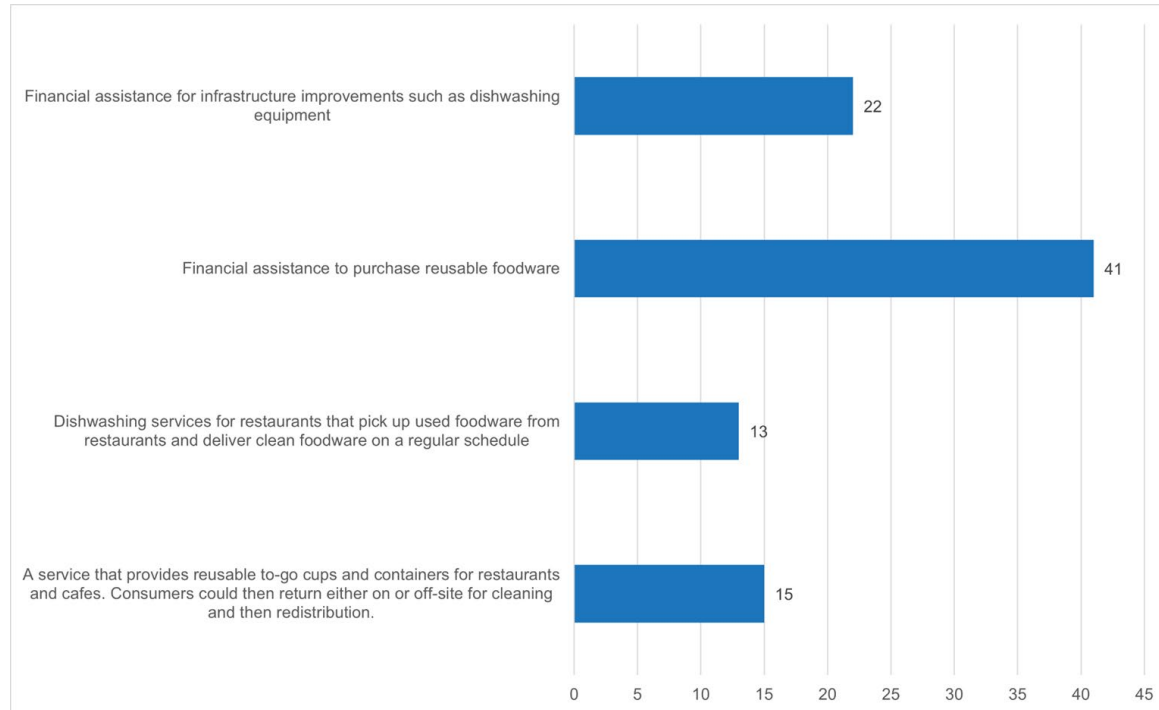
Do you have concerns about allowing customers to bring their own refillable cups and mugs for beverages?



Top answers: COVID, cleanliness/sanitation

Interest in Assistance

Would you be interested in learning more about and/or participating in a pilot/test project for any of the following services?





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Foodware Pilot Projects



Foodware Assistance Mini-Grants

Methodology:

Follow-up with survey participants and door-to-door outreach to 60+ restaurants

Results:

19 Total Participants

- Reusable Assistance = 14 restaurants
- Single-Use Compostable Assistance = 5 restaurants



Single-Use Compostable Assistance

Participants

- DL Brazuca
- Falafel Bite
- Pad Thai Cuisine
- Tacos Azteca
- K's Cafe

Items

- Bamboo Utensils
- Fiber-based Clamshell containers
- Fiber-based Soup bowls/deli containers

Verified usage with 4 out of the 5 restaurants



Reusable Assistance

Participants

- Bagel Place Cafe
- Pupusa Time
- Cup n' Cone
- Wok's On Express
- Taqueria Azteca
- bb.q Chicken
- Tasty Subs and Pizza
- Saigon Seafood Harbor
- Chick & Tea
- Lopez Taqueria
- The Bay Fish and Chips
- Sonesta ES Suites Sunnyvale
- Cocohodo Sunnyvale
- Bambu

Items

- Ceramic Plates/Bowls
- Silver Utensils
- Metal Wire or Durable Plastic Baskets
- Durable Plastic Beverage Cups
- Ceramic Coffee Mugs
- Metal or Durable Plastic Sauce Cups/Ramekins

Verified usage with 13 out of the 14 restaurants




Promotions

[Listing on Sunnyvale Website](#)

Social Media Promotions

Article in Homestead High School's newspaper

Feature in upcoming Horizon newsletter

 Sunnyvale

Enter Search Keywords

[Your Government](#)[Recreation and Community](#)[Homes, Streets and Property](#)[News Center and Events Calendar](#)

Reusable Foodware Pilot

Post Date: 12/06/2023 2:51 PM

Disposable plastic foodware like utensils, plates and cups are often not recyclable. They get dumped in landfills. They often end up as litter in our streets and waterways. To reduce the use of plastic foodware we are piloting a new program. The purpose is to replace plastic with reusable or compostable options.

Restaurants listed below are participating in the pilot. For dine-in customers, they're testing reusable foodware. For to-go orders, they're testing compostable utensils and containers.

The pilot program ends early March 2024. We will then report the results to City Council.

Besides visiting these restaurants, go to [SiliconValleyReduces.org](https://www.siliconvalleyreduces.org). There you'll find a list of restaurants that let you bring your own reusable containers.

Dine-in Reusables

- Bagel Place Café
- Bambu Desserts & Drinks
- The Bay Fish and Chips
- bb.q Chicken Sunnyvale
- Cocohodo Sunnyvale
- Cup n' Cone
- ES Suites Sunnyvale
- Lopez Taqueria
- Pupusa Time
- Sunnyvale Saigon Seafood Restaurant
- Taqueria Azteca
- Tasty Subs and Pizza
- Wok's On Express

To-go Compostables

- DL Brazuca
- Falafel Bite
- K's Café
- Pad Thai Cuisine
- Tacos Azteca

 sunnyvale_environment
Sunnyvale, California





15 likes



Impact in Sunnyvale

Lopez Taqueria

Lopez Taqueria opened last year and was using a combination of single-use plastic and reusable items. Now, because of their pilot program grant, they've made the following product changes:

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| Single-use paper containers for chips | ➡ | Reusable, durable bowls |
| Single-use plastic portion cups for salsa and guacamole | ➡ | Reusable, durable ramekins for salsa and guacamole |
| Single-use plastic 24 oz. and 32 oz. cups | ➡ | Reusable, durable 24 oz. and 32 oz. cups |
| Single-use paper plates | ➡ | Durable, reusable plates |

Total cost: \$247.84

Results (estimated)

- 49,000 single-use disposable items reduced annually
- \$1,623 annual cost savings
- 591 pounds of annual waste reduction

Before:



After:



Impact in Sunnyvale



bb.q Chicken exclusively used single-use plastic foodware, but has now made the following product changes:

Plastic baskets	➡	Stainless steel baskets
Plastic serving cups	➡	Glass carafes
Plastic forks	➡	Reusable metal forks
Plastic knives	➡	Reusable metal knives
Plastic soup spoons	➡	Reusable metal soup spoons

Total investment: \$469.66

Projected Results

78,900 single-use disposable items reduced annually

\$2,285 annual cost savings

695 pounds annual waste reduction



Sonesta ES Suites was using disposable paper plates, bowls and cups at their breakfast and lunch buffets and has made the following changes:

Paper plates	➡	Reusable ceramic plates
Paper bowls	➡	Reusable ceramic bowls
Single-use cups	➡	Durable, reusable cups

Total investment: \$294.05

Projected Results

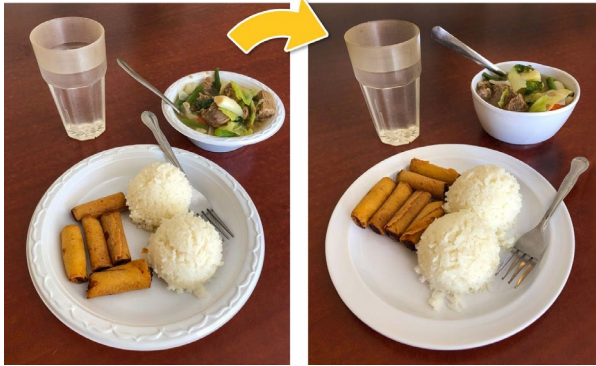
32,850 single-use disposable items reduced annually

\$2,800 annual cost savings

1,350 pounds annual waste reduction

Impact In Nearby Cities

Manila Eatery, Colma



Before

After

Two simple changes (plates and bowls) resulted in:

- \$4,693 of annual savings
- 54,507 items reduced per year
- 2,240 lbs. annual waste reduction
- 1.3 month payback period

Del Oro Taqueria Mexican Grill, San Mateo



Before

After

Switching beverage cups, sauce cups, and utensils resulted in:

- \$2,227 total annual net cost savings
- 68,133 disposable items reduced per year
- 811 lbs. annual waste reduction
- 3.6 month payback period

Third Party Reusable Services

App-based reusable dishware rental services available at restaurants and cafes



OKAPI Reusables: mugs & beverage containers

- Bambu Desserts & Drinks

Results: 23 users, 65 cup borrows



Urvi Reusables: to-go food containers

- The Gurkha Kitchen
- Bikaner Sweets
- Thai Basil

No data available



OKAPI
reusables

More joy
Less waste

RETURNALE TO ALL CUPS
Please return to the original location

Ready to borrow a reusable cup?

Make to use a cup?

OKAPI

@okapi_reusables
okapi-reusables.com
info@okapi-reusables.com

borrow > return > repeat

The graphic is a promotional poster for OKAPI reusables. It features a teal background with a sunburst graphic in the top right corner. The top left corner has the OKAPI reusables logo. The top right corner has the text "More joy Less waste". The center of the poster is divided into four square images: top-left shows a person holding a stainless steel cup; top-right shows two people holding colorful reusable cups; bottom-left shows two stainless steel cups on a wooden table; bottom-right shows a hand holding a smartphone displaying the OKAPI app interface. Below the images, there is a QR code and some text. At the bottom, there is contact information and the slogan "borrow > return > repeat".

Next Steps:

- Complete the pilot (late March)
- Recommendations from Environmental Innovations
- Present to City Council in April

