

Plastic Alternative Guide

Food & Beverage Foodware Recommendations



The City of Irvine is actively educating the community on how businesses, residents, and City facilities can replace single-use plastics with reusable or non-plastic items.

Recent legislation such as **AB 1276** and **SB 54** is driving a statewide shift to reduce single-use plastic packaging and increase the use of reusable and recyclable materials. In response, the City of Irvine is highlighting reusable and nonplastic alternatives to help businesses transition smoothly. As the market shifts toward reduced waste alternatives, Irvine aims to help businesses adapt, reduce waste, and prepare for future requirements.

GOAL: To reduce single-use plastics to protect our environment and communities.

Use reusables when possible and refer to our list of recommended non-plastic alternatives when needed.



REDUCING YOUR COSTS

Reusables reduce the frequency of purchases and disposal costs. This switch leads to long-term savings.

Long-Term Savings

- Plastics and alternatives are often comparable in costs.

Waste Management Savings

- Using reusables reduces trash hauling fees due to less waste.

Cost-Cutting Strategies

- Use dispensers for straws and napkins to reduce unnecessary waste.
- Offer bulk condiments to further reduce costs.
- Train staff to give out disposable items only upon request.



ATTRACTING NEW CUSTOMERS AND EARNING THEIR LOYALTY

Numerous California cities and counties, covering over 18 million people, have implemented single use plastic reduction efforts.

Environmentally Conscious Businesses

- Create positive public perception and brand recognition.
- Attract new customers and reward them for sustainable behavior changes, securing loyalty.
- Increase revenue.
- Reduce waste and conserve resources.
- Increase sustainable consumption.



ECOLOGICAL HEALTH & SUSTAINABILITY

Reusables lessen the impact of fossil fuel extraction, manufacturing, and waste management.

Reduction of Plastic Pollution

- Reusable and non-plastic items significantly reduce plastic waste in the environment. This change creates healthier ecosystems and cleaner water ways.

Lowering Carbon Footprint

- Single-use plastics contribute to greenhouse gas emissions throughout their lifecycle.
- By switching to reusables and non-plastic items, businesses can reduce their carbon footprint and help combat climate change.



Guide Criteria

The items featured in the Irvine Plastic Alternative Guide were selected based on strict health, safety, and environmental criteria to ensure they truly represent sustainable choices.

Products included contain **no plastic of any kind** (such as polyethylene, polypropylene, or PET), and deliberately exclude so-called “compostable” **bioplastics** like **PLA** or **PHA**, which often fail to break down properly.

To protect human and ecosystem health, they are free from **PFAS** (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances), **bisphenols** (BPA, BPS, etc.), **polystyrene** (including Styrofoam), and **ortho-phthalates**, all of which are known for their toxicity, persistence, or hormone-disrupting effects.

Whenever possible, items also avoid **plastic packaging**, including **shrink wrap**, **plastic caps**, **labels**, and **trays**, in order to reduce hidden sources of waste.

Materials are chosen with an emphasis on **BPI certification** or other **third-party compostable verifications** to guarantee end-of-life responsibility.

In addition, all products are vetted to ensure they do not rely on **toxic glues, inks, or coatings**, nor do they use **plastic linings on aluminum products**, which often compromise recyclability.





Save money and the environment!

Reusable foodware can reduce costs for your business.

Reusable	Lifetime	Disposable
 1 ceramic plate 9 in. \$1.39	1000 uses	1,000 plates Paper with plastic \$12.74 Paper \$21.97 Compostable \$77.90 Styrofoam \$36.86
 1 metal fork \$0.12 1 metal knife \$0.29 1 metal spoon \$0.10	1000 uses	1,000 flatware Plastic fork \$6.29 Plastic knife \$6.29 Plastic spoon \$6.29 Set of 3 \$32.98
 1 ceramic mug 12 oz. \$2.95	500 uses	500 hot cups Paper with plastic \$26.65 Compostable \$38.48
 1 glass cup 12 oz. \$1.54	1000 uses	1,000 cold cups Plastic \$47.70 Compostable \$96.94
 1 plastic basket red \$0.27	100 uses	100 baskets Clay-coated paper \$1.21

IMPORTANT NOTE FOR ALL FOOD SERVICE BUSINESSES:

AB 1276 requires all food service businesses to provide single-use foodware, condiments, and utensils only upon customer **request**, in an effort to reduce plastic consumption.

FOODWARE

The links and prices in this guide were updated in October 2025, and are subject to change as products, pricing, and relevant policies are updated.

The prices listed in this guide reflect standard retail rates. Most suppliers offer significant discounts for bulk orders, wholesale purchases, or subscription plans, which can be found on their website.

Recommended Takeout Containers / Clamshells



Material	Brand/Link	Price
Bagasse	Karat Earth	\$0.11 per container
Corrugated Cardboard	Sabert	\$0.20 per container
Palm Leaves	Verterra	Contact Company for Pricing
Sugarcane Fibers	Tellus	\$0.21 per container
Bamboo, Plant Fibers	World Centric	\$0.20 per container
Recycled Paper	Darling Foodservice	\$0.26 per container
Bagasse & Bamboo	Earth's Natural Alternative	\$0.43 per container
Bagasse	Pulp Safe	\$0.33 per container

Recommended Single-Use Utensils



Material	Brand/Link	Price
Unbleached Plant Fiber	World Centric	\$0.07 per unit
Bamboo	Dixie Compostable Spoon	\$0.12 per unit
Bamboo	Dixie Compostable Fork	\$0.12 per unit
Bamboo	Dixie Compostable Knife	\$0.12 per unit
Bamboo	Bambu	\$0.28 per unit
Wood	Front of the House	\$0.12 per unit
Wood	WoodAble	\$0.06 per unit
Bamboo	World Centric	\$0.32 per cutlery set including napkin
Birch Wood	Vegware	\$0.06 per unit
Food Products (Edible)	Incredible Eats	\$0.39 per unit
Wood	PackNWood	\$0.09 per unit
Wood	VerTerra	\$0.44 per cutlery set including napkin

FOODWARE

Recommended Single-Use Plates



Material	Brand/Link	Price
Compostable Paper	Perk	\$0.14 per plate
Compostable Paper	Perk	\$0.17 per plate
Palm Leaves	VerTerra	\$0.52 per plate
Bamboo and Plant Fiber	World Centric	\$0.06 per plate
Sugarcane Fiber	Responsible Products	\$0.09 per plate
Palm Leaf	PackNWood	\$0.42 per plate
Paper	Bunzl	\$0.05 per plate
Paper	AJM Packaging Corporation	\$0.03 per plate

Recommended Single-Use Bowls



Material	Brand/Link	Price
Bagasse	Tellus	\$0.03 per bowl
Bagasse	Greener Earth	\$0.16 per bowl
Bagasse	Perk	\$0.15 per bowl
Bagasse	Karat Earth	\$0.18 per bowl
Palm Leaves	PackNWood	\$0.53 per bowl
Bamboo, Plant Fibers	World Centric	\$0.10 per bowl
Plant Fibers	Responsible Products	\$0.08 per bowl
Uncoated Paper	PackNWood	\$0.22 per bowl

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DRINKWARE

Recommended Sustainable Single-Use Straws



Material	Brand/Link	Price
Wheat Plant Stem	Hay Straws	\$0.03 per straw
Wheat Plant Stem	Hay Straws (Jumbo XL Straws)	\$0.10 per straw
Bamboo	Bambu	\$0.26 per straw
Wheat	Holy City Straw Company	\$0.09 per straw
Reed Plant Stems	Holy City Straw Company	\$0.16 per straw
Paper	Napkins.com	\$0.06 per straw
Paper	Napkins.com (Jumbo)	\$0.06 per straw
Seaweed	Loliware	Contact Company for Pricing
Pasta	Pasta Life	\$0.04 per straw
Pasta	Pasta Life (Jumbo)	\$0.08 per straw
Cornstarch	Corn Next	\$0.03 per straw
Water Grass	Green Straws	Contact Company for Pricing
Wheat Stems (Gluten-free)	Green Straws	Contact Company for Pricing
Sugarcane	Green Straws	Contact Company for Pricing
Rice Flour & Tapioca Starch	Green Straws	Contact Company for Pricing

Recommended Single-Use Cups



Material	Brand/Link	Price
Plant Fiber	Responsible Products	\$0.14 per cup
Paper	Sofi	\$0.15 per cup
Uncoated Paper	Bunzl	\$0.03 per cup
Uncoated Paper	SOLO	\$0.14 per cup
Plant Fiber	Responsible Products	\$0.24 per cup
Bagasse	ECO SOUL	\$0.40 per cup
Bagasse	Sincere EcoTech	Contact Company for Pricing

COFFEE MACHINES (K-CUPS & ALTERNATIVES)

K-cups are made from plastic, and the puncturing process during brewing can contribute to microplastic exposure. To reduce plastic waste and support healthier, more sustainable coffee options in City facilities, consider transitioning away from single-use coffee pods.

Recommended Alternatives:

- Switch from Keurig machines to a drip coffee maker or other pod-free coffee system.
- If a pod-based system is preferred, ensure proper recycling by using a K-cup recycling bin and following the Keurig K-Cycle recycling process.
- Use a refillable, reusable K-cup pod with existing Keurig machines to eliminate single-use plastics.

For more information on K-Cup recycling options, visit Keurig's K-Cycle Program: <https://keurigkcycle.com/>

DRINKWARE

Recommended Stirrers, Lids, and Lid Plugs



Stirrer Material	Brand/Link	Price
Wheat Stem	Hay! Straws	\$0.023 per stirrer
Bamboo	Cycle of Life	\$0.0009 per stirrer
Bamboo	Cibo Wares	\$0.008 per stirrer
Bamboo	World Centric	\$0.01 per stirrer
Wood	amerCare Royal	\$0.01 per stirrer
Wood	Choice	\$0.01 per stirrer
Wood	Darling Foodservice	\$0.01 per stirrer
Wood	Royal	\$0.007 per stirrer



Lid Material	Brand/Link	Price
Bagasse	Karat Earth	\$0.06 per lid
Unbleached plant fiber	World Centric	\$0.08 per lid
Unbleached plant fiber	World Centric	\$0.08 per lid
Bamboo	World Centric	\$0.10 per lid
Sugarcane fiber	Eco-Products (sauce)	\$0.06 per lid
Bagasse	Pulp Safe (soup)	\$0.34 per lid
Bagasse	Karat Earth	\$0.07 per lid



Lid Plug Material	Brand/Link	Price
Bagasse	Pak 360	\$0.01 per lid plug
Wood	Food Packaging Online	\$0.04 per lid plug
Poplar wood	Pick On Us	\$0.06 per lid plug
Wood	Pick On Us	\$0.07 per lid plug

Recommended Water Bottles



Material	Brand/Link	Price
Aluminum	RAIN	\$1.25 per bottle
Aluminum	Open Water	\$1.79 per bottle
Aluminum	Open Water	\$1.17 per can
Aluminum	CannedWater4Kids	\$0.99 per can
Aluminum	CannedWater4Kids	\$1.95 per bottle
Aluminum	Blue Can	\$1.25 per can
Aluminum	Liquid Death	\$1.05 per can

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