

# Vendor/Exhibitor Guidelines for Waste Reduction and Recycling

**Prohibited Materials**

* Styrofoam
* Plastic shopping bags
  + Why? - Styrofoam and plastic shopping bags are not recyclable. Because Styrofoam breaks apart easily and plastic shopping bags are so light, they both tend to escape the waste-management process and end up polluting the environment.

# Discouraged Materials

* “Virgin” plastic (plastic with no recycled content) service-ware
* Plastic straws
* Compostable plastic and plant-based plastic products
* Glass bottles
  + Why? - Plastic pollution can be dangerous to wildlife. Plastic is environmentally costly to produce, and never completely breaks down in the environment. Compostable plastic, sometimes made from plant- derived compounds, is good for venues that have an industrial composting system at their disposal. However, such a system is not necessarily available at all conference locations. Compostable plastics are typically not recyclable and release more greenhouse gases when they decompose in a landfill than traditional plastic. Glass is challenging to deal with in the waste-stream because it is breakable and heavy. Broken glass can also cause a safety concern at the conference.

# Preferred Materials

* Paper-based service-ware, made from recycled paper if available
* Paper shopping bags, made from recycled paper if available
* Plant-based **non-plastic** service-ware (palm fronds / corn husks / bamboo / wood; wheat, sugarcane, hemp or other plant fibers). May be advertised as compostable.
* Aluminum cans
* Recycled-content plastic service-ware when necessary
  + Why? - Paper, wood, and other minimally processed plant products are typically sourced through sustainable silviculture/agriculture. Aluminum cans are highly recyclable. Recycled-content plastic supports the stability of the recycling industry by creating demand for recycled plastic and is the best alternative when a non-plastic substitute is not available/practical.

# Examples of preferred materials:

Plates

<https://becompostable.com/element-collection/> <https://smartpackusa.com/p-171-4-square-palm-leaf-plate.aspx>

Forks and Spoons

<https://www.ecoproductsstore.com/recycled_content_cutlery.html> [https://www.webstaurantstore.com/bambu-062100-3-1-2-disposable-bamboo-](https://www.webstaurantstore.com/bambu-062100-3-1-2-disposable-bamboo-spork-case/175062100.html) [spork-case/175062100.html](https://www.webstaurantstore.com/bambu-062100-3-1-2-disposable-bamboo-spork-case/175062100.html)

Portion Cups

[https://greenpaperproducts.com/compostable-fiber-portion-condiment-cups-](https://greenpaperproducts.com/compostable-fiber-portion-condiment-cups-je20n.aspx) [je20n.aspx](https://greenpaperproducts.com/compostable-fiber-portion-condiment-cups-je20n.aspx)

Drink Cups (5K) - $671.05 <https://www.ecoproductsstore.com/bluestripe_cold_cups.html>

Straws

[http://webstaurantstore.com/ecochoice-5-1-2-black-unwrapped-paper-compostable-sip-straw-](http://webstaurantstore.com/ecochoice-5-1-2-black-unwrapped-paper-compostable-sip-straw-case/485PSIP5BK.html) [case/485PSIP5BK.html](http://webstaurantstore.com/ecochoice-5-1-2-black-unwrapped-paper-compostable-sip-straw-case/485PSIP5BK.html)

Napkins

<https://www.napkins.com/wholesale-earth-wise-kraft-beverage-napkins-1000-ct.html>

# Other important waste-reduction considerations:

**Right-Sizing**

Avoid plates, bowls, or cups that are bigger than needed for the portion you are serving.

**Opt-In**

Don’t automatically serve drinks with straws or pour beer into cups before offering in the can. Either give your customer the choice or make waste-free the standard and reserve straws and cups for “upon request” orders.

**Recycle what you can**

Collect recyclable materials if you are able, and contact the SFEA Operations Manager for help in properly recycling the materials. If the facility does not have recycling bins and you would like a recycling bin, please arrange that with the event organizer or SFEA Operations Manager.

**Please help us make our events eco-friendlier!**