

Join **BYO - [Town Name] Reduces Team!**

with [Organization name if you are an existing organization]

FAQ from Businesses

How can our business be part of the [town name] Reduces team? Contact us to get our “**Bring Your Own**” sticker to display and encourage customers to bring their own reusable vessels and containers for beverages and food shopping. You can also get a “**By Requests Only**” sticker by offering utensils, condiments, stirrers, napkins etc. by customer’s request only and a “**Return Containers for Deposit**” sticker for businesses that offer a deposit return system.



What happens when our business joins?

We’ll [list your business on a map on our website](#), promote your Zero Waste efforts on our social media ([Instagram](#), [facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)), and will also recognize your business during future events. *You will save money by encouraging BYO and switching to reusables!*

What if our business does not sell food?

No fear! You can probably help our cause for waste reduction in different ways. For example, [business name] helps us by [letting us use their kayaks every summer for trash pick up. We recognized them with a **Circular Economy** sticker. We have also honored [Finger Lakes Reuse, Finger Lakes Toy Library, SewGreen and Evergreen Ithaca] with the same sticker for their work in reuse and waste diversion.

What else can our business do to minimize waste?

- Offer discounts for people to bring their own bags/reusable containers
- Eliminate single-use disposables such as plastic straws, cutlery and chopsticks
- Reduce food waste and compost or donate unsold products / leftover food
- Offer more plant-based options on your menu
- Purchase from suppliers who use minimal packaging
- Reduce your display packaging and unnecessary wrapping
- Offer local products
- Sell reusable products and promote environmentally friendly products
- Promote the [town name] Reduces campaign: tell your customers, and promote the program on your social media
- Keep track of the increase in waste-free purchases, **let us know, and we’ll share them** on our social media channels!



Visit our website, [\[zerowasteithaca.org\]](http://zerowasteithaca.org) for more details. Follow us also on [facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) all at [\[@zerowasteithaca\]](#). Contact us through email: [\[info@zerowasteithaca.org\]](mailto:info@zerowasteithaca.org)

[Town name] Reduces: A Community Initiative

by [Your organization name if it's an already established group]



Our goal is to **reduce single-use plastics and packaging** in our neighborhood by encouraging both consumers and businesses to practice waste reduction together.

The plastic we use and throw away everyday is poisoning us and our planet. **Plastic can be found everywhere, including as microscopic pieces in our foods, bodies, air, water and soil.** Plastic does not decompose, but it only breaks down into smaller, invisible pieces. Most single-use plastic packaging is made of virgin plastic from fossil fuel. And we produce more of it than we can ever recycle.

Plastics are also an issue of equity. Plastics pollute at every step of its lifecycle - from extraction, production to end of life. Plastic production and waste facilities are usually located in poor communities, and often in communities of color. For us in Tompkins County, becoming more responsible about our waste means learning to become a better neighbor to the residents living near Ontario County Landfill, where the majority of our waste is taken to. It also means that we stay in solidarity with the people around the world who suffer from our waste export because of our disposable lifestyle.

The good news is, we can reduce the amount of single-use plastics in our daily lives. One easy way for us to do our part is by practicing BYO (Bring Your Own) - by bringing reusable coffee mugs and water bottles for beverages; string bags when shopping for produce; cloth bags for bread and bulk food; reusable containers for food, etc.

Reusables are a safe and cost-effective way to reduce waste. It is [a scientific consensus](#) that reusables are safe even during the pandemic, under proper hygiene protocols. Reusables save both businesses and customers money by cutting back on new packaging costs and waste removal fees.

We are inviting neighborhood businesses to participate in this initiative by displaying our **[town name] Reduces** sticker at the storefront and accepting customers' reusable containers whenever possible. In return, we will promote all participating businesses on our social media platforms and at our future events.

This project is made possible by a neighborhood mini-grant from Sustainable Finger Lakes and support from Park Foundation.



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