SIMPLE SWAPS



Queenstown lakes Food & Beverage (F&B) businesses are leading the way when it comes to reducing waste.

More and more businesses are looking at ways to not only strengthen their sustainable business practices but to find operational efficiencies and cost savings.

A challenge is knowing where to start.

For businesses, waste is more than an environmental issue; it's a growing cost. Disposal fees continue to rise, and so much of our food is delivered or served in packaging only able to be used once and disposed in landfill.

In this guide you'll find ideas on how other businesses have worked towards stopping waste at the source and transition to a circular economy.

Wānaka | Queenstown
NEW ZEALAND

PACKAGING

Every dollar spent is a signal to the market about your values behind products and services. There's never been a more fruitful time to align purchasing with business values instead of wasteful convenience.

- Start by removing single serve sauces and condiments. Have refillable dispensers instead. Apply this to everything you see as single serve e.g. sugar sachets, wrapped butter cubes, small jam or honey tubs, yogurt pots, cheese slices, mints, coffee stirrers, tea and coffee packets etc
- Are there bulk formats available instead of individual units? e.g. large tubs, sacks, or refill packs.
- Milk in kegs is a great tasting, cost effective way to serve milk beverages while reducing a significant amount of single use plastic.
- If you do not go through the volume of a milk for a keg, swap to a glass bottle return system. The same can be done for cream and yoghurt tubs.
- Set up a swappable container system. Give your supplier large containers to refill and return the empty ones. They slot straight into the fridge and reduce handling too.
- Suppliers like Kaans and Bidfood work on a swappable crate model, eliminating the need for plastic liners or plastic bags to separate produce. Businesses can request all deliveries to not have this plastic liner.
- Request loose leafy greens in a paper bag or container.
- Use syrup or concentrate that you add water to. There is huge transport inefficiencies and carbon spent when the product is mostly water.
- If there is no waste free way of serving every product, switch to a local/NZ product instead i.e. Swap Baileys with Canterbury cream. Corona beer with local beer.

CHANGE IS HARD BUT EVERYTHING YOU DO HAS STARTED FROM AN IDEA

That became a chore.

Overtime it was a habit.

Now it is just business as usual.

- Take a look at what you are ordering, could you go direct to the supplier? Or is there an alternative local supplier who can provide products with no or less packaging? Don't be afraid to ask or check out ideas for supplier questions here.
- Audit your supplier delivery, are they using clingfilm or aluminum foil? Is it necessary, or could it have a flexible reuseable lid or just not wrapped at all?
- Can your supplier take back packaging, or will they supply the same product in reusable packaging?

REALISE CO-BENEFITS

There is a huge opportunity to support local businesses that align with your values and back them to continue to invest in their circular solutions.

VISITOR EXPERIENCE

- Incentivise customers to use reusable containers and keep cups – you could offer a discount to customers who bring their own. Be sure to promote these incentives by pinning posts or including information in bios on social media platforms so customers can easily find it.
- Implement a loan scheme, such as Chunky Loan cup system or Again Again reuseable cups. Actively recommend that customers take a picture of the drop off locations or bring it back to you.
- Ditch the single use paper straws and wooden cutlery alternatives.
- Seasonal menu: help guide visitor choices by celebrating what is in season. Expectations naturally shift away from needing ingredients like strawberries all year round.

REMEMBER THIS IS NOT ONE SIZE FITS ALL

Your business is unique. Be creative on what will work for you. Try one thing and when you are ready, try another and another.

FIVE MINUTE ACTIONS FOR YOUR BUSINESS

- Reduce the need for visitors to buy plastic bottles of water - offer to refill their water bottles in your workplace. Sign up as a water refill station via Refill NZ to have a sticker in your window and be located on their map.
- Take a look in your bin, how much food, organic waste, coffee grounds etc is going in there? What could be reduced from the plate in the first instance or diverted from landfill and taken home to compost? Or be kept onsite with a bokashi bin. For large amounts and a suitable area consider setting up an onsite compost.
- Can't manage organic waste onsite? No problem, for Queenstowners give the team at Waste to Wilderness a call for their commercial collection. This circular solution turns your food scraps into compost used to grow more food!
- Wānaka locals connect with Grow Wānaka to donate food waste that is converted into compost to grow food shared in the community.
- If you have edible food waste reach out to Kiwiharvest, to keep it out of the bin and donated to a good cause.
- Get creative and increase efficiencies by using your food scraps and leftovers in recipe with this cookbook.
- Condense the number of time you place supplier order to reduce the number for trucks out for delivery.
- Excited by so many options in this space? Contact Wastebusters for a full waste audit and they will provide a detailed plan on what your business could do next.
- Got a great idea to rethink, reduce or reuse? Apply for QLDC's Waste Minimisation Community Fund.

TELL YOUR STORY! VISITORS ARE DEMANDING MORE AND WANT TO FEEL GOOD ABOUT THEIR PURCHASING DECISIONS, ENRICHING THEIR EXPERIENCE.



TRIALS

If your business is ready to start giving waste reduction ideas a go, get started with some tips below.

WHERE TO START:

- Think about the one thing that interests you? What is easy or an initiative suitable to the scale or premises of your business.
- What food/beverage does your business go through a lot of? Start with your biggest problem area, what could you do differently.
- Are there any inefficiencies in your supply chain or F&B processes that could be improved?

IDEAS:

- Portion control: Look at a guest's plate, if there is 200g of potato chips on there you are scraping $$ into the bin – if this is a common occurrence then adjust. Empower staff to communicate the waste, if the dishwasher is seeing the tomato sauce half full every time, reduce the sauce amount.
- Circular initiative: offer reusable cups, start using milk in kegs - if you don't go through a lot of milk but do wine, swap wine bottles for wine in kegs.
- Start saving your coffee grounds and take home them home for pot plants or a home compost. If you go through a lot of coffee try a scaled-up system like an onsite compost or worm farm.
- Try growing some of your food (if possible for your business size). You could develop your business to be more self-sufficient in growing herbs, edible flowers, garlic etc.
- Contact a different supplier and ask what they can do for you.
- Big change: If trailing a big system change like swapable containers then build some structure into your trial. Measure your baseline and put a timeframe to it e.g. 30 or 90 days.
- Your business might host events, try making one event waste free and see what worked well and what could be improved.

NOW TRY SOMETHING ELSE AND STACK IT!

