

Practice to be assessed and included in the Guidelines

Number/code: OM/PR3

Title: COMPOSTABLE AND ECO-FRIENDLY TABLEWARE PURCHASING FOR PREVENTING UNSORTED WASTE

Guidelines section:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Governance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Operational management
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Context of the event</i>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Event</i>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Stadium management</i>
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>Procurement</i>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Mobility and logistics</i>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	

Description:

Food packaging is another substantial source of waste during an event: it is difficult to use reusable cutlery and plates so disposable tableware is usually preferred. However, dirty plastic tableware has to be disposed of with unsorted waste whereas dirty paper tableware can go in the organic fraction (only for certain types of paper). In order to prevent high production of unsorted waste during events, some criteria on the usable tableware can be inserted in the tenders and contracts prepared with the catering service providers.

In particular, taking also into consideration the local segregate waste collection rules, the usage of biodegradable and compostable tableware could be imposed, or a more general ban on the usage of plastic tableware and packaging can be applied.

The usage of compostable tableware presents the advantage of making all the used tableware disposable in the organic fraction all together with food waste. This also makes the separation operations easier and faster even for caterers.

Examples:

- 1) Women Football World Cup Germany 2011: Catering companies were required to use as little packaging as possible at the World Cup and no plastic materials were allowed. In cases of doubt, paper boxes provided an environmentally friendly and cheaper alternative to plastic plates. With the exception of chip forks, almost no non-disposable plastic packaging was used. In the VIP areas, non-disposable packaging was almost completely absent.
- 2) EXPO Milano 2015: In order to prevent waste production from catering services, suggestions were put forward to use plates, cups, cutlery etc. made of such materials as to be washable on site and reusable, as well as to provide water and beverages on tap. A fundamental criterion adopted to maximise recovery, instead, consisted in the request, whenever washable and reusable

tableware had not been provided for, to employ compostable and biodegradable (EN 13432 certified) disposable items, thereby simplifying the set of recommendations for visitors/clients regarding the correct sorting of waste produced by consumption activities within catering areas. At the end of July 2015 a thorough verification was carried out at all 168 food outlets on the Site in order to check the actual compliance with the provision and identify corrective actions whenever necessary. It turned out that only 57% of the used tableware was compostable, 4% was reusable and 37% was mixed. Therefore, even though the prevalent use of compostable disposable items was certainly a positive achievement, which definitely supported the effectiveness of actions carried out, the share of non-compostable disposable items was still relevant, especially in specific cases such as cutlery and ice-cream cups.

All considered, there was a certain amount of confusion concerning compostable and non-compostable materials. Furthermore, both visitors and staff encountered several difficulties in visually making out the difference between compostable and non-compostable polymers. Such issues could be solved if, for example, there were a unique, international colour coding for the different types of packaging materials, and in particular to make a distinction between compostable and non-compostable ones: colours are more readily understandable than the various certifying labels.

- 3) The Portland Trail Blazers divert nearly 90% of their operations waste from landfill (about 1,000 tons annually) through initiatives such as extensive, well-marked recycling stations for visitors and a food waste composting program with vendors. According to the Blazers, 100% of food waste at the arena is collected for composting, and all food and beverage service ware is compostable.
- 4) The San Francisco Giants found that while compostable food containers worked for their system, compostable plastic cups were not the right solution for them. When the Giants offered compostable cups in their ballpark, fans were confused and did not consistently compost them, so the cups ended up contaminating the recycling stream. The Giants changed their service ware options so all of their drinkware was recyclable, while the food packaging remained compostable. This simplified procedures and messaging and helped the team to achieve a diversion rate of nearly 90 percent.
- 5) Philadelphia Eagles: After changing cutlery, plates, napkins, and cups to compostable products, the Philadelphia Eagles struggled to find a compostable wrapper for their hot sandwiches. In partnership with their concessionaire, ArAmArK, they continued to ask for the product they needed and at the end of 2011 were finally able to find a compostable sandwich wrapper that met their quality standards.
- 6) Folsom Stadium, Colorado: In 2008, the University of Colorado Boulder Athletics Department partnered with the school's Environmental Center and Facilities Management Department to implement a "zero waste" system at Folsom Stadium. Athletics branded the effort "Ralphie's Green Stampede" (named for the school's mascot, Ralphie the buffalo) to market the program to potential corporate sponsors, and it worked: White Wave foods, Boulder Toyota, Eco-Products Inc., and the stadium concessionaire, Centerplate, all signed on with sponsorships that helped fund the up-front infrastructure and outreach costs. Dave Newport, Director of the Environmental Center, noted that the "zero waste" program had relatively low implementation costs, and he hopes that ongoing costs will go down over time as the price of compostable service ware becomes

closer to that of traditional fossil fuel–derived plastic disposables. “The program is also saving money thanks to reduced trash disposal costs,” said Newport.

- 7) FIFA Men World Cup Germany 2006: Stadium kiosks served such items of food as sausages and schnitzels without additional packing. In addition, notice boards at stadium entrances and kiosks provided information on returnable beakers and separate collection of waste.
- 8) IOC replaces oil-based plastic material with plant-based plastic materials in catering and disposable tableware.
- 9) Resource Efficient Scotland: It suggests as best practices to use re-usable crockery, glassware, cutlery and tablecloths, but where disposable options are unavoidable use only compostable or recyclable alternatives like paper, wooden or biodegradable plastics (corn-starch). Ban non-recyclable packaging like polystyrene.

Environmental benefits:

Reduction of unsorted waste production and supporters’ awareness raising towards environmental issues. Furthermore, if the venue is near a composting plant or a biogas plant all the organic waste can be turned in compost or biogas.

Economic benefits:

Compostable tableware is actually more expensive than plastic and/or paper tableware.

Applicability and replicability potential

The measure could be replicated in every stadium: the choice of the preferred material for tableware should be taken considering the local waste segregation rules and the waste facilities around the venue.

Source

[Women Football World Cup Germany 2011](#) (pp. 36-37)

[EXPO Milano 2015](#)

[Portland Trail Blazers, S.Francisco Giants, Colorado Boulders and Philadelphia Eagles](#) (pp. 9, 13-14, 21)

[France Guidelines for Sustainable Evets Communication](#) (p. 33)

[FIFA World Cup Germany 2006](#) (pp.12, 53)

[ICO](#) (p.47)

[Resource Efficient Scotland](#) (p.11)