

## **“Bye Bye Plastic” Webinar 7/19/21 Questions, Tips, Links, & Contact Info**

### **Questions:**

Re: city/county ordinance questions-who to ask?

- Email [zws-foodware@sonoma-county.org](mailto:zws-foodware@sonoma-county.org) or call 707-565-3375

Compostable options for frozen stuff?

- Not many at this time. Containers made of fibers may not be air tight, so freezer burn may set in more quickly. We recommend silicone bags such as Stasher, or glass if you account for expanding contents and leave some extra space at the top.

How can we get stores (like grocery) to quit using what they call non-single use plastic bags? Is there any legislation following up on the single use plastic law?

- Those thicker plastic bags are considered reusable and are compliant under the local and state bag bans as such. Even though more plastic goes into making those bags, we have seen a decrease in single-use plastic bag litter since the ordinance and law went into effect. If possible, refuse a single-use grocery bag and opt to bring your clean reusable from home. If you forget, just transfer items from the conveyor belt to your car, and when you get home, transfer them into bags to bring inside. If you must opt for a single-use bag, be sure to use those bags as much as possible as bin liners, shoe protectors for luggage, a plunger cover, trash container for the car, or pick out a DIY upcycled project.

Are plastic bags being recycled from those bins in certain stores?

- Yes, but high rates of contamination from different types of soft plastic, food particles, receipts, and other trash have led to some stores opting not to offer this program. Make sure to only deposit clean plastic carryout bags in those bins.

Any suggestions on how to get grocers to stop using clamshells? free the veggies!

- Clamshells are accepted for recycling by Sonoma County haulers. However, you can encourage grocers to purchase local produce in fiber containers.

What is the cost of outhauling compostables to Sonoma County residents?

- The cost for outhauling organics is cents when broken down to each household in Sonoma County. However, we recognize that the greenhouse gas emissions from outhauling negatively impact the community. At this time, no composting facility exists within Sonoma County that is large enough to take all residential organic material, and so we must continue outhauling for now while we explore options to pursue an in-county facility for composting.

The 8.4% figure of plastic that is recycled - is that in the US, or Sonoma County?

- 8.4% is a US figure. In California, about 15% of single-use plastic is recycled.

Wondering what we can do to stop grocery stores and drugstore to STOP providing plastic bags?

- The Sonoma County Carryout Bags Ordinance applies to all commercial establishments that sell perishable or nonperishable goods including, but not limited to clothing, food, and personal items directly to the customer. It does not apply to public eating establishments.

Do you have a list of products (brand-specific) that you can refill?

- <https://refillmadnesssacramento.com/sonoma>
- <https://heritagealchemy.com/>

Should all non-recyclable plastic should go in the gray can?

- Yes, most plastics that cannot go into your blue cart would go into your trash cart. This excludes hazardous waste. Otherwise, ZeroWasteSonoma.gov has amazing resources on places that can take specific item, including hazardous/e-waste. For example: where to take back soft plastic bags. See <https://zerowastesonoma.gov>

#### Tips left in the chat:

- Bring back egg cartons and strawberry baskets and farmers have accepted
- Use the clamshells and strawberry basket to cover seedlings to protect against birds when young
- Re: bagging meat/fish purchases - some stores will let you bring your own container in for meat, fish counters. have container weighed first, use pyrex or reusable!
- When you buy meat or fish at Sonoma market or whole food you can ask them not to put the items in a plastic bag but just in the brown paper.
- Avoid "wish-cycling" - be sure that it is recyclable and stop the habits that generated stuff that is dubious.
- Whole Foods in Petaluma recycles plastic bags in back by the bathrooms.
- Speak up and speak out. before using the ZWS non-compliance form, inform restaurant/food vendor that "this item is actually not permitted in this city/county, can you use them up and replace them with permissible wares?" no compostable plastic spoons at yogurt shop, replace with bamboo, e.g.
- Great podcast— How to Save a Planet—several episodes talk about plastics
- Enlightening online course about Plastic Pollution taught by Judith Enck, former EPA administrator. This is the link for the fall class: <https://www.bennington.edu/events/beyond-plastic-pollution-course>

#### Links:

[www.zerowastesonoma.gov/pfj](http://www.zerowastesonoma.gov/pfj)  
<https://heritagealchemy.com/>  
<https://consciouscontainer.com/>

Polystyrene Foam & Disposable Food Ware Ordinance: [www.zerowastesonoma.gov/disposable](http://www.zerowastesonoma.gov/disposable)

**Presenter Contact Info:**

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