



## Withrow Park Farmers' Market

# Zero Waste Guide for Vendors 2022

The implementation of the Zero Waste Program in 2022 will be subject to Toronto Public Health rules and restrictions related to COVID-19 throughout the season.

People are increasingly shopping at farmers' markets to support local farmers and purchase food without packaging. Yet not all farmers' markets are waste-free. With your cooperation, we'd like to change that!

## Waste Management

The Withrow Park Farmers' Market (WPFM) has agreed with City authorities to keep waste at a minimum, and all vendors must leave the park area as clean as possible, and are required to take any refuse back with them. The garbage and recycling bins on site are reserved for customers and other park users only.

## WPFM Zero Waste Program

Thank you for supporting our Zero Waste Program. This program was initiated in 2019, with the long-term goal of eliminating waste generated at the Market rather than simply diverting it. Although reuse, compost, and recycle will play large parts in our Zero Waste Program the top priority is **reduction**. For example, one of our larger projects to support the [Zero Waste Program](#) is our reusable dishware. Since the introduction of our reusable dishware program in 2018, we have averted 12,000+ disposable items from becoming single-use waste.

For new vendors looking to join the WPFM, their choice of packaging will play a significant factor in our decision to invite them to join the market. Vendors returning by invitation agree to work towards reducing their packaging and bags wherever possible to help the WPFM achieve our goal of zero waste. WPFM may choose to accept new vendors with the same or similar products as our existing vendors if their products and packaging better align with our Zero Waste Guidelines.

## The goals of the WPFM Zero Waste Program:

- **Waste Reduction** — to significantly reduce the amount of waste generated both at the market and when customers get home.
- **Diversion** — to divert all the organic waste and recyclable materials discarded at the market away from landfills.
- **Closing the Loop** — to promote the use of post-consumer recycled products.
- **Education** — to encourage shoppers and vendors to reduce, reuse, and recycle both at the market and beyond.

## Required Vendor Participation

Our three-year vision for the implementation of the Zero Waste Program is provided below. We would like to have all our vendors use less packaging overall and alternative packaging materials when necessary. However, we believe it is important to provide time for vendors to select and trial alternatives before committing to new packaging systems (especially ones that may cost more). We also recognize that some products (like raw meats) may still require packaging for health and safety reasons.

We would like to cooperatively work with our vendors to reach these goals. Vendors who use plastic packaging and offer plastic bags will be encouraged to minimize this use in 2022 and explore alternative packaging where needed. WPFM will actively promote via our new website and social media channels those vendors who are complying with this transition.

## Timeframe

Item	2021	2022	2023
<p><b>Shopping bags</b></p> <p>*With some exceptions.</p>	<p>Acceptable materials to give out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Paper bags</li> <li>● **Biodegradable bags</li> <li>● Plastic made from recycled content</li> <li>● Recyclable plastic - Only offer to shoppers by request</li> <li>● WPFM will encourage shoppers to bring their own reusable bags and containers. WPFM will continue the “take a bag - leave a bag” boxes.</li> </ul>	<p>Acceptable materials to give out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Paper bags</li> <li>● **Biodegradable bags - Only offer to shoppers by request</li> <li>● Plastic <u>made from recycled content</u> - Only offer to shoppers by request</li> <li>● WPFM will encourage shoppers to bring their own reusable bags and containers.</li> </ul>	<p>Acceptable materials to give out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Paper bags</li> <li>● Reusable bags and containers</li> <li>● Reused plastic bags are allowed</li> <li>● WPFM will encourage shoppers to bring their own reusable bags and containers. WPFM will continue the “take a bag - leave a bag” boxes.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Produce bags</b></p> <p>*With some exceptions.</p>	<p>Acceptable materials to give out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Paper bags</li> <li>● **Biodegradable bags</li> <li>● Plastic produce bags - Only offer to shoppers by request</li> <li>● Produce baskets if they can be returned by the customer for reuse</li> </ul>	<p>Acceptable materials to give out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Paper bags</li> <li>● **Biodegradable bags</li> <li>● Produce baskets if they can be returned by the customer for reuse</li> <li>● Vendors must accommodate shoppers that bring their own produce bags or containers.</li> </ul>	<p>Acceptable materials to give out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Paper bags</li> <li>● Produce baskets if they can be returned by the customer for reuse</li> <li>● Vendors must accommodate shoppers that bring their own</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vendors must accommodate shoppers that bring their own produce bags or containers.</li> </ul>		produce bags or containers.
<b>Take-out containers and food packaging</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reusable</li> <li>• **Compostable</li> <li>• Made from recycled content</li> <li>• Recyclable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reusable</li> <li>• **Compostable</li> <li>• Made from recycled content</li> <li>• Vendors must accommodate shoppers that bring their own containers.</li> <li>• Vendors must encourage customers to use Muuse take-out containers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reusable</li> <li>• **Compostable</li> <li>• Vendors must accommodate shoppers that bring their own containers.</li> <li>• Vendors must encourage customers to use reusable take-out containers.</li> </ul>
<b>***Plates, bowls, cutlery, and mugs for food &amp; drinks consumed at the market</b>	<p>After our reusable dishware program was on hold due to COVID, WPFM is excited to announce our new partnership with <a href="#">Muuse Canada</a>. Full details will be shared with vendors invited to attend the market. It is expected that vendors make a concerted effort to participate. Some fees may apply.</p>		
<b>Sample items:</b> Small cups, spoons, forks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must be reusable or **compostable.</li> <li>• Withrow Market offers reusable ***beverage sample cups for a small fee.</li> </ul>		
<b>Items not allowed for use or sale at the WPFM:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disposable water bottles, plastic straws, black plastic, styrofoam.</li> </ul>		

**\*Exceptions to consider:** bags and plastic packaging for leafy greens, meat, and cheese.

**\*\*A note about biodegradable items:** To ensure that they will actually fully breakdown, any bio-based plastic bags, cups, utensils, and other supplies you purchase should be certified by the Biodegradable Products Institute ([www.bpiworld.org](http://www.bpiworld.org)). Please note that we use the City of Toronto's waste collection, so we follow the City's [Waste Wizard guidelines](#). Although we feel bio-based plastics have a reduced impact over regular plastics, please keep in mind that in Toronto biodegradable cutlery and plastics cannot go in the organics bin and will still end up in the garbage stream. For the purpose of this Guideline, "compostable" items are those that are accepted in Toronto's Green Bin.

**\*\*\*Vendors are responsible for making sure the reusable dishware is returned at the end of each market. Fees may apply for missing inventory or if inventory is damaged at the neglect of the vendor.**

## Suppliers

[GreenMunch](#) and [GreenShift](#) are both Canadian suppliers that have everything from paper straws to compostable take-out containers and beyond. If you need more help finding alternative packaging just let us know! We're more than happy to research different options for you.

The zero waste movement is growing and customers are increasingly seeking out package-free options!