

Catering Consumables

Single-use plastics alternatives



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Introduction

NHS Supply Chain is committed to supporting the reduction of single-use plastics within the NHS. Our Catering Consumables and Equipment framework offers trusts the opportunity to switch to more sustainable catering consumable products.

The following products have been identified as options for NHS trusts to consider in their plan to reduce their use of single-use plastics. All products listed are available to order through NHS Supply Chain.

Material Index

Material	In full
Bagasse	
CPLA	Crystallized Poly Lactic Acid
EPP	Expanded Polypropylene
MFP	Moulded Fibre Pulp
Paper	
PP	Polypropylene
PLA	Polylactic Acid
rPET	Recycled Polyethylene Terephthalate
Wood	

Cups

Cold beverage cups



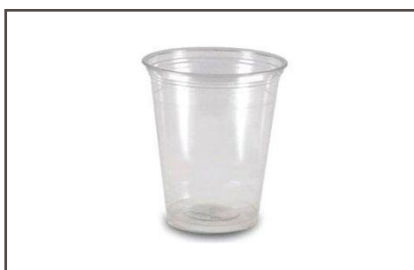
UTC417

7oz Clear Cold Cup

Material: Polypropylene

Disposal: **Recyclable**

Supplier: Berry Superfos



UTP501

7oz Cold Cup

Material: PLA

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UTC3289

4oz Cold Drinking Cone

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Recyclable**

Supplier: Alliance

Cups

Hot beverage cups



UTP401

12oz Double Wall Cup

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance



UTP466

12oz Single Wall Cup

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Biodegradable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UTP457

12oz Single Wall Cup

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Biodegradable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UTP494

12oz Double Wall Cup

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Biodegradable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UMB673

12oz Single Wall Cup

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Biodegradable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



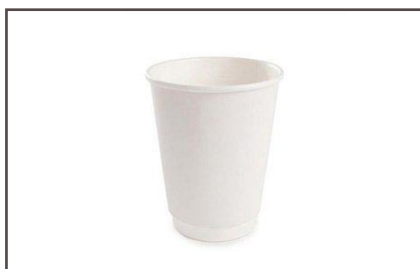
UMB675

12oz Double Wall Cup

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Biodegradable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UMB679

12oz Double Wall Cup

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Biodegradable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UMB672

12oz Double Wall Cup

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Recyclable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UMB692

12oz Double Wall Cup

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance



UTP400

8oz Double Wall Cup

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance



UMB674

8oz Double Wall Cup

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Biodegradable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UTP446

8oz Single Wall Cup

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Biodegradable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering

Cups

Disposable cup lids



UYZ029

12 / 16oz Hot Cup Lid

Material: PLA

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UYZ039

8oz Hot Cup Lid

Material: PLA

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UTB086

8oz Hot Cup Lid

Material: CPLA

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance



UTC3221

8oz Domed Lid

Material: PLA

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance



UTC3222

12oz Domed Lid

Material: PLA

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance



UTB088

10 / 20oz Lid (89mm)

Material: CPLA

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance

Cutlery

Forks



UTC399

6.5in Fork

Material: CPLA

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance



UTP440

160mm Fork

Material: Wood

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance



UJZ1190

160mm Fork

Material: Wood

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance

Cutlery

Knives



UTC400

6.5in Knife

Material: CPLA

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance



UTP439

160mm Knife

Material: Wood

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UJZ1189

Knife

Material: Wood

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance

Cutlery

Spoons



UJZ1191

160mm Dessert Spoon

Material: Wood

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance



UTC401

6.5in Dessert Spoon

Material: CPLA

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance



UTP461

160mm Dessert Spoon

Material: Wood

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UTP443

110mm Teaspoon

Material: Wood

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UJZ1192

110mm Teaspoon

Material: Wood

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance

Food Packaging

Bowls



UTP5220

12oz Chinnet Round

Material: MFP

Disposal: Compostable

Supplier: Alliance



UTP5221

8oz Chinnet Round

Material: MFP

Disposal: Compostable

Supplier: Alliance



UTP441

12oz Bowl

Material: Bagasse

Disposal: Compostable

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UTP313

16oz Chinnet Round

Material: MFP

Disposal: Compostable

Supplier: Alliance

Food Packaging

Plates



UTP425

25cm Disposable Plate

Material: MFP

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance



UTP496

10in Disposable Plate

Material: Bagasse

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UTP492

9in Disposable Plate

Material: Bagasse

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UTA091

9.75in Disposable Plate

Material: MFP

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance



UTP5218

22cm Disposable Plate

Material: MFP

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance



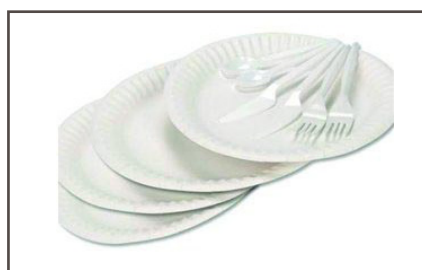
UTP5219

17cm Disposable Plate

Material: MFP

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance



UTP5249

23cm Disposable Plate

Material: Bagasse

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance



UTP5250

17.5cm Disposable Plate

Material: Bagasse

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance



UTP5251

15cm Disposable Plate

Material: Bagasse

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance



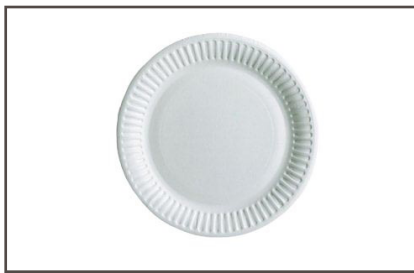
UTP5345

9in Recyclable Plate

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Recyclable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UTP5346

6in Recyclable Plate

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Recyclable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UTP5347

7in Recyclable Plate

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Recyclable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering

Food Packaging Containers



UTC382

4oz Trifle Dish

Material: rPET

Disposal: **Recyclable**

Supplier: Alliance



UTC383

6oz Trifle Dish

Material: rPET

Disposal: **Recyclable**

Supplier: Alliance



UTB097

4oz Cold Portion Pot

Material: PLA

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance



UTZ146

12oz Soup Container

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance



UTP491

650ml Container with Lid

Material: PP

Disposal: **Recyclable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UTP456

450ml Container with Lid

Material: PP

Disposal: **Recyclable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering

Food Packaging

Lids



UTP471

12 / 21oz Flat Tumbler Lid

Material: rPET

Disposal: **Recyclable**

Supplier: Alliance



UTB099

2 / 4oz Portion Pot Lid

Material: PLA

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance

Food Packaging

Deli pots



UTP475

175ml Deli Pot with Lid

Material: rPET

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UTP444

350ml Deli Pot with Lid

Material: rPET

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UTP470

16oz Deli Pot with Lid

Material: PP

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering

Food Packaging

Portion Pots



UFM576

1oz Portion Pot

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Recyclable**

Supplier: Alliance



UFM577

2oz Portion Pot

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Recyclable**

Supplier: Alliance



UFM578

4oz Portion Pot

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Recyclable**

Supplier: Alliance

Food Packaging

Sandwich packs



AHB834

85mm Sandwich Pack

Material: rPET

Disposal: **Recyclable**

Supplier: Alliance



UTP493

65mm Hinged Sandwich Pack

Material: rPET

Disposal: **Recyclable**

Supplier: Alliance



UTP463

65mm Sandwich Pack

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UTP495

75mm Sandwich Pack

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UTP357

1100ml Sandwich Box

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance



UTP337

124mm Sandwich Box

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Recyclable**

Supplier: Alliance



UTP5286

123mm Sandwich Wedge

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Recyclable**

Supplier: Alliance

Food Packaging

Specialist other



UXB512

10 x 10in Paper Bag

Material: Paper

Disposal: Recyclable

Supplier: Alliance



UXB432

6 x 6in Hinged Clamshell

Material: Bagasse

Disposal: Compostable

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UXB433

8 x 6in Hinged Clamshell

Material: Bagasse

Disposal: Compostable

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UXB434

9 x 6in Hinged Clamshell

Material: Bagasse

Disposal: Compostable

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UTP486

Heavy Duty Foodbox

Material: Bagasse

Disposal: Compostable

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UTP482

8 x 9in Clamshell

Material: Bagasse

Disposal: Compostable

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UTP480

5 x 7in Clamshell

Material: Bagasse

Disposal: Compostable

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UTP453

9 x 6in Clamshell

Material: Bagasse

Disposal: Compostable

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UTP464

Large Hot Food Box

Material: Paper

Disposal: Recyclable

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UTP458

Medium Hot Food Box

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Recyclable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UTP462

Window Food Box

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Recyclable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UTP474

Large Window Food Box

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Recyclable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UTP468

Medium Window Food Box

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Recyclable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UTP452

Hinged Food Box

Material: EPP

Disposal: **Recyclable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UTP488

Large Hinged Food Box

Material: EPP

Disposal: **Recyclable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UFH717

15cm Deep Gastronorm

Material: PP

Disposal: **Recyclable**

Supplier: Alliance



UMM042

21.25cm Kraft Bag

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Recyclable**

Supplier: Alliance



UMM043

25cm Kraft Bag

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Recyclable**

Supplier: Alliance



UXB332

7in Bag

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Recyclable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UXB440

8.5in Bag

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Recyclable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering

Napkins



MWK033

33cm 2ply Kraft Napkin

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UTP436

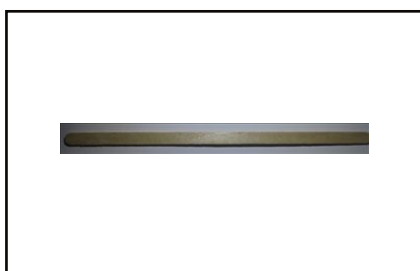
33cm 2ply Kraft Napkin

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance

Stirrers



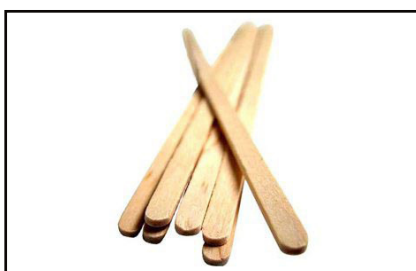
UJB523

140mm Drink Stirrer

Material: Wood

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



UTZ129

5in Drink Stirrer

Material: Wood

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance



Straws



UTS025

8in White Straw

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Bunzl Catering



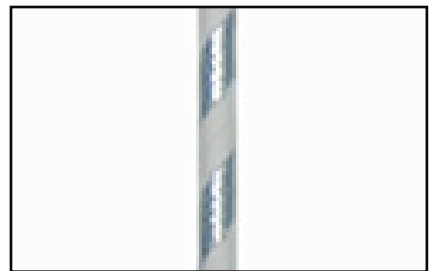
UTS033

5.25in White Straw

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance



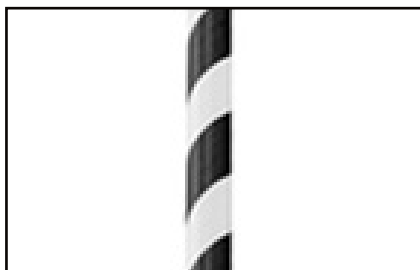
UTS034

20cm Silver Stripe Straw

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance



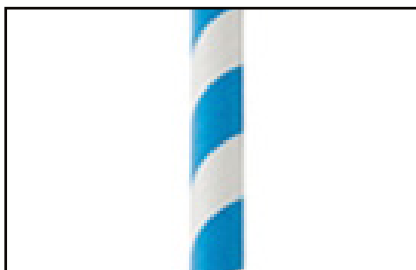
UTS035

20cm Black Stripe Straw

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance



UTS036

20cm Blue Striped Straw

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance



UTS037

20cm Red Striped Straw

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance



UTS038

20cm Green Striped Straw

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance



UTS019

20cm White Straw

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance



UTS031

20cm Black Straw

Material: Paper

Disposal: **Compostable**

Supplier: Alliance

Understanding Disposal Methods

Sustainable products can be disposed through a variety of methods, and specific infrastructures are required in most cases to enable effective disposal. What follows is a short guide to help explain each of these methods, and what should be considered when purchasing sustainable alternatives.

Biodegradable

Biodegrading is the naturally occurring breakdown of materials, either by microorganisms such as bacteria and fungi or through other biological activity. A product that is able to break down naturally due to this process is not inherently eco-friendly. An example of this being most plastics, which over time will break down, resulting in the creation of microplastics, which impact the ecological balance on a microscopic scale infiltrating the food chain water cycle.*

An alternative is bioplastics, which is plant biomass such as corn starch, sugar and wheat. These should fully break down naturally and in some instances be compostable.*

Biodegradation is a natural process with no human intervention.*

Compostable

Compostable products are those which decay into biodegradable materials, ultimately turning into nutrient rich matter that can be used to aid the growth of new plants. Compostable products have a circular life cycle, in which the plant-based product is produced, disposed of, processed and then reproduced in a non-ending cycle. This type of product is particularly well suited to catering consumables. The products do not need to be sorted or cleaned of all food and drink contaminants prior to disposal, as the biodegradable contaminants can also be processed in this way.

Special conditions are required for the composting process. These conditions do not naturally occur at appropriate levels in landfill sites. If disposed of through the appropriate commercial method, bioplastics used for compostable catering products will decompose at a rate similar to other organic and biodegradable materials. Home composting is not an adequate waste stream for bioplastic products as they do not sustain the required conditions for the relevant period of time to enable breakdown of the molecular bonds.

Composting is a human controlled process which ensures that optimal conditions for microbes are met in order to reach the result faster. All compostable material is biodegradable, the difference in categorisation is time. For something to be compostable, it must break down within 12 weeks.*

* Alliance environmentally conscious guide: <https://www.alliancenational.co.uk/e-catalogues.html>

Recyclable

Recycling is defined as “the action or process of converting waste into reusable material”. There are various materials that can be recycled including metal, paper, cardboard, glass, and plastics.

By using recycled material in the production process manufacturers are able to reduce the amount of energy used through processing raw materials, this also helps reduce the amount of waste being taken to landfill.

The best method of sorting recyclable material within the trust is to provide separate bins, one for each type of material to be disposed in. Bins need to be clearly labelled to allow for easy identification.

Reusable

The nature of reusable products means that waste generation from single-use alternatives is avoided. Collection and incorporation of recycled materials back into the manufacturing process still requires additional energy, with only a small percentage of which being provided from renewable sources.

The Catering Consumables and Equipment framework offers a whole range of reusable catering products. To see the range of products available through our catalogue please click on the following links:

Crockery - <https://my.supplychain.nhs.uk/Catalogue/browse/126/crockery>

Feeding aids - <https://my.supplychain.nhs.uk/Catalogue/browse/610/feeding-aids>

Glassware - <https://my.supplychain.nhs.uk/Catalogue/browse/593/glassware>

Stainless steel cutlery - <https://my.supplychain.nhs.uk/Catalogue/browse/599/stainless-steel-cutlery>

National Impact

We launched the Single-Use Plastic Alternatives Brochure in July 2021. Since then we've seen the NHS make tangible progress in this area. We are continually working to remove all avoidable single-use plastics from the Catering Equipment and Consumables framework and hope to see the NHS continuing to utilise and switch to these products.

During 2021 the NHS collectively purchased the following number of sustainable alternatives:

- Food packaging * - **11,405,904**
- Cups - **4,301,520**
- Cutlery - **9,664,800**
- Stirrers - **13,587,840**
- Straws - **2,567,762**

Over the last three years:

- We have seen a 28.1% decrease in SUP purchased by the NHS
- and an increase of 246.8% in sustainable disposables ordered.

By March 2023 NHS Supply Chain aims to remove 190 tonnes of single-use plastics from its supply chain, in addition to the 350 tonnes already identified.

*Food packaging contains Bowls, Plates, Containers, Lids, Sandwich packs and Specialist other.

Ready to make the switch?

Get in touch with your local Customer Relationship Manager here:

<https://www.supplychain.nhs.uk/contact/account-managers/> and find out how many tonnes of single-use plastic your trusts could save.

To ensure continuity of supply, trusts wishing to switch must submit a **demand capture form** with four weeks' notice via their NHS Supply Chain Customer Relationship Manager.

For additional information on alternative products please email our Catering Consumables Specialists at hotelservicessupport@supplychain.nhs.uk.

Please take a look at the resources available at www.supplychain.nhs.uk/sustainability to understand more about our sustainability strategy and how we can support trusts and ICSs in their work.