

Ball Corporation Includes Eco Takeout Containers in Sustainability Program

Ball Corporation is a large packaging and aerospace company headquartered in Broomfield, CO that has launched company-wide sustainability initiatives. Therefore, it wasn't a stretch for Eco Takeout Containers to become a part of Ball's foodservice operations, which are managed by [Guckenheimer](#). In a recent interview, Foodservice Director Tim Leary expressed sincere enthusiasm for Eco Takeout Containers as a product. He likes their durability, stackability, — and the fact that once they do wear out, he can recycle them. Although he has tried compostables, he found that they break down quickly, sometimes before a meal is completed.

Tim provided additional details — helpful information for other B and I accounts interested in setting up a reusable to-go program:

Accountability System

Ball buys all containers, and there is no cost to employees to use them. The honour system has worked well, and 80% to 90% of the containers are returned to the cafeteria promptly. The rest are left in break rooms for pick-up by cafeteria staff. Tim also provides incentive for non-foodservice employees to return “strays.” It's not uncommon for a custodian to return ten containers found in odd places. The effort is rewarded with a free biscuit or drink.

Logistics

Ball's 3-mile corporate campus is made up of seven buildings. So yes, it requires more work from his team to retrieve containers from each location. However, as you will see once you read on, the savings more than offset the additional labour needed to collect containers.

Keys to Success

Here's why Tim believes the reusable container program has been successful:

- Top-down support. Ball executives eat in the same cafeteria with other employees. They use Eco Takeout Containers and return them to the cafeteria, just like everyone else.
- Company-wide commitment to sustainability.
- A DVD produced by corporate communications to introduce the program and explain how to participate. Email reminders were also sent during the first few weeks of the program.
- Foodservice management commitment and staff buy-in.

The Bottom Line

- Before Eco Takeout Containers, Tim bought 50,000 Styrofoam™ containers a year.
- Instead, he buys 1,000 or so Eco Takeout Containers every other year. (He does buy a case of disposables once or twice per year for visitors.)
- Estimated savings — \$800 per month.
- Other savings: two hours per day in labour (less trash to manage) and one less Dumpster every other week.

We applaud Tim Leary and Ball Corporation for making the commitment to maintain a reusable to-go container program. Ball employees also deserve recognition for their part in making it work. Their efforts are paying off in cost savings and environmental benefits!