

Consumer-Owned Containers: **A New Opportunity to Reduce Waste in Illinois**

Effective August 11, 2023, Illinois food establishments can choose to allow the use of consumer-owned containers for bulk foods, dispensers should be used to prevent direct handling of food.



Container Construction and Condition:

Consumer-owned containers must be designed and constructed for reuse (multiuse) in accordance with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Food Code. Containers should be maintained clean, sanitary, and free from debris and be smooth, durable, and easy-to-clean. Containers should not be capable of causing conditions, through cleanliness or design, that may cause or spread disease. For example, Styrofoam and cardboard are not designed for reuse. Containers made of appropriate materials like plastic, glass, or stainless steel should be in good repair and condition.

Food Establishment Responsibilities:

If a food establishment, chooses to allow consumer-owned containers, they are responsible for:

- Isolating the consumer-owned container from the serving area or cleaning and sanitizing the servicing surface after each filling or refilling, except for bulk foods that utilize a dispenser to prevent direct handling.
- Preparing, maintaining, and adhering to written procedures to prevent cross-contamination. These procedures should be made available to the local health department or municipality upon request (during inspection).
- Ensuring compliance with handwashing requirements.

Contact the IDPH Food Protection Program for more information at DPH.Food@illinois.gov or scan the QR code below.

