GoGreen Reusable Container Pilot Program – FAQ for Dining Services

Q: Why is this program important and why is it being piloted?
A: One of SFU’s 20 Year sustainability goals is to be a Zero Waste University. In addition, many municipalities in British Columbia and Canada are preparing to support a circular economy by enacting bylaws that ban single-use plastics and products (SUPPs) due to their detrimental impact on the environment. In response, SFU will launch a pilot of the GoGreen. Our pilot will help determine the best program for SFU, expansion possibilities, and give us metrics on our overall campus waste reduction.

Q: How can people participate in the official pilot?
A: Email sustainable_spaces@sfu.ca to sign up, or arrange a departmental meeting if more members of your team are interested. We ask that you provide your email address for our records so that we can contact you for any program changes, and send you our feedback survey. In exchange, you will receive a GoGreen sticker for your SFU ID card, and be entered to win fabulous prizes. Having these official sign-ups will help us with our success metrics.

Q: How does the pilot program work?
A: Participation is easy! After registering with the Sustainability Office, simply ask that your meal is put in a GoGreen container when you visit Mackenzie. Enjoy your meal wherever you’d like, and then bring it back to the return receptacles around Mackenzie once you’re done (within 5 days). Check out our infographic for a step by step ‘How To’.

Q: I’m not part of the official pilot, can I still participate?
A: Yes! We hope you will sign up officially, so that we can see how many people are participating, but we can still gather the metrics if you are not part of the official pilot. All you have to do is head to Mackenzie, ask for your meal in a GoGreen container. We ask that you return it when you’re done.

Q: What is the ‘ask’?
A: Use a GoGreen container and return it to Mackenzie. Repeat. That’s it!

Q: What if I need to take my meal to another location on campus?
A: No problem! The GoGreen reusable containers are meant to go. Whenever you’re near Mackenzie again, we kindly ask that you please return your used container to one of our return receptacles, or to a Dining Services staff member in Mackenzie.

Q: Is there a penalty for not returning the container in the same day?
A: There are no penalties at this time. During the pilot, we are working on an honour system, and have reduced barriers to participation. Our ask is that the containers please be returned within 5 days of use so that we can ensure proper sanitization can occur, and so that the containers can be re-used and re-entered into the system as soon as possible.

Q. Can I bring my own container? If not, why?
A: Due to health and safety concerns, you are unfortunately unable to use your own container. Using a GoGreen reusable container ensures that the containers are clean and sterilized before use. You can however bring your own hot beverage mug to use (and often get a discount for doing so). The barista will ask you to remove the lid, as the lid is the risk to health and safety, fill your mug up, and return it to you where you can then put the lid back on.
Q: What is the life span of a GoGreen container?
A: Each GoGreen container is estimated to last over 1000 washes. Longevity is dependent on how many times each container is used.

Q: What are the GoGreen containers made out of?
A: GoGreen container features:
   - 100% BPA Free
   - Commercial Dishwasher Safe
   - Highly Durable Polypropylene
   - Microwave Safe for Re-Heating
   - Leak-Resistant Designs
   - Stackable
   - Reusable & Recyclable (#5)
   - NSF Certified

Q: How does the overall resource consumption for a GoGreen container compare to single use take-out containers?
A: GoGreen containers require initial energy and resource inputs for their creation. We see both the economic and environmental benefits of these containers, including a lower carbon footprint, with increased use. For every time they are reused, a disposable item is saved from being created, used once, and ultimately ending up in the landfill.

While we realize the washing the GoGreen containers will require increased amounts of water and energy, the ecological benefits of reusing these containers far outweighs the amount of resource inputs of and waste generated by single-use, disposable containers.

Q: What do I do with my damaged GoGreen container?
A: Please bring your damaged container back to the Mackenzie cafeteria and leave it with a staff member. This will ensure the damaged container is not recirculated back into the system. Each time you request your meal in a GoGreen container, you will receive a clean container.

Q: I have a severe food allergy. How do you clean & sanitize the reusable containers?
A: All items (cutlery, plates, cookware, utensils, GoGreen containers, etc) are washed in industrial grade dishwashers and meet all food health and safety standards. Dining Services staff take the temperatures daily. They are inspected by the Chartwells’ Quality Assurance Manager as well as the Fraser Health Inspector regularly to ensure they are up to temperature and also ensure the chemicals are at the proper levels.

Q: Are the GoGreen containers micro-wave safe?
A: Yes!

Q: I’m a student. Can I participate?
A: Absolutely! Our aim is to reduce the overall waste on campus, and every action helps. Even if you are not involved in the pilot officially, you can still request a GoGreen reusable container at Mackenzie. We ask that you please return the container within 5 days.

Q: What else can I do to reduce my single-use-products use?
A: Every little action helps! Bring a reusable water bottle and mug/tumbler with you, use reusable cutlery or bring your own, avoid single-use packets, refuse straws and plastic bags, bring your own fabric bag, buy in bulk and reuse those bags/containers, just for some examples. Once you begin to change these behaviours, you’ll find that they will be become habits in no time.