



reCircle is making sustainable packaging for fast food takeaways | Photo source [wwf](#)

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## A CIRCULAR MODEL FOR TAKEAWAY LUNCHES

 SUSTAINABILITY

### A Swiss startup has developed a circular model that provides reusable containers to takeaway restaurants

**Spotted:** Plastic fast-food packaging is a scourge. In the UK alone, it is estimated that consumers generate 11 billion items of food packaging waste per year – and that’s just from takeaway lunches. And most of that is non-recyclable. Swiss startup reCircle wants to eliminate this mountain of takeaway waste by changing people’s habits. They have developed a circular system that allows customers to purchase their takeaway food in reusable containers.

ReCircle sells reusable containers to partner restaurants, who pay a fee for membership. The restaurants, in turn, sell the containers to customers with their food. Customers can then trade the empty boxes for filled ones on their next visit, or return the boxes and get their money back. There are currently around 1,200 participating locations in Switzerland. The containers are aubergine-coloured, but can also be customised with company colours and logos.

All of the reCircle containers are made from glass fibre reinforced polybutylene terephthalate (PBT), and cup and container lids are made from Polypropylene. ReCircle does not use silicone, which can cause problems when washing. All of the containers are leakproof, microwave safe, dishwasher safe, and stackable, and they are available in several sizes. When the containers have reached the end of their life, they are sent back to reCircle, which recycles them to create new containers. According to the company, in addition to resulting in less waste, the containers also encourage customer loyalty.

In these times of high prices, reducing costs and waste is fast becoming an imperative for individuals as well as businesses. At Springwise, we have seen circular models for packaging being incorporated in different ways, including recyclable [bottles](#) and [edible packaging](#) made from kelp. And reCircle has recently launched a reusable pizza box.

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Website: [recircle.ch](https://recircle.ch)

Contact: [recircle.ch/en/kontakt](https://recircle.ch/en/kontakt)

## **Takeaway:**

People have gotten used to the idea of replacing disposable plastic shopping bags with reusable ones, so it does not seem very far-fetched that they could also get used to the idea of replacing disposable takeaway containers with reusable ones. The key to the success of reCircle's model will rest in whether they can get a majority of food outlets to participate, reducing the opportunity cost for consumers. In the future, everyone may well walk around with reCircle food containers in their bags as well as reusable shopping bags. Not only would this reduce the amount of non-recyclable rubbish, it would also save money and make it much easier for people to save food and money by taking home leftovers in the containers instead of throwing them away. Interested restaurants can try the system for free for three months.