



The compostable to-go bowls | Photo source Sweetgreen

Innovation > Retail > Eco-friendly takeaway bowls that are truly compostable

## ECO-FRIENDLY TAKEAWAY BOWLS THAT ARE TRULY COMPOSTABLE



### Sweetgreen's compostable bowls are PFAS-free, unlike others that claim to be environmentally-friendly

**Spotted:** Due to consumer awareness of the problem of plastic waste, many restaurants have started to move towards more sustainable options, such as compostable fibre packaging. However, it was recently discovered that the moulded fibre food packages contain poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) which, when used to coat the paper-like surface, remain persistent in compost and can potentially end up in the soil, water or food.

As a solution to the problem, restaurant chain Sweetgreen has partnered with Footprint, a company aimed at eliminating single-use plastic packaging, to launch new compostable to-go bowls. Sweetgreen explored other options for PFAS-free packaging but eventually decided to work with Footprint, making them the first restaurant chain to use the company's packaging.

Founded in 2013, Footprint quickly recognised the problems associated with PFAS and began engineering a different design. Its process uses bagasse, an agricultural waste product, or post-consumer recycled paper and blends them up into a bath of fibres. This is then moulded into a bowl shape, treated with heat, pressure and then coated with a bio-based coating. After tests in their own lab, the packaging Sweetgreen will be rolling out is made of recycled paper that has been repurposed into bowls.

Sweetgreen has already launched the bowls in San Francisco, where a new law banning PFAS in to-go containers took effect on 1st January 2020. The next step for the restaurant chain is to roll out the new packaging across the country and to also replace its plastic lids with the new material.

Written By: Serafina Basciano

29th October 2020

Website: [sweetgreen.com](https://sweetgreen.com)

Contact: [sweetgreen.com/contact](https://sweetgreen.com/contact)

## **Takeaway:**

Despite various efforts by restaurants to move towards more sustainable options, the recent discovery that many compostable food packages contain PFAS has caused setbacks. A new fibre packaging that is PFAS-free will allow restaurants to make the much-needed change while ensuring that no harmful chemicals are leaking into food. Furthermore, for a big brand like Sweetgreen to be at the front of this move could make a huge impact in driving change.