

## How German restaurateurs prepare for compulsory re-useability of food trays in 2023

Current survey shows how far gastronomy businesses are with their preparation



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**Bremen, 6 October 2022 - The legal obligation to offer reusable alternatives for food trays will come into force in Germany in a few weeks. But hardly any catering businesses are fully prepared yet - this is confirmed by a current survey conducted by greenbox GmbH among around 720 restaurant and catering customers of the foodservice industry. The status quo: Although more than half of the respondents (58 per cent) have already decided to offer reusable food trays as an alternative or are currently planning to introduce them by 1 January 2023, the 'how' still poses some challenges. Read here about the problems they face in particular. More information about greenbox at [www.biologisch-verpacken.de](http://www.biologisch-verpacken.de)**

Integrating reusable food service containers into catering establishments means acting in a more environmentally conscious way, but at the same time it also creates

challenges for caterers. The choice of the right containers with the appropriate form and function is already an obstacle, as are visual flaws after repeated use or poor thermal insulation of the containers. But the biggest challenge is the return process of the containers. 76 per cent of the respondents have not yet decided on a return system that they would like to offer their customers. The classic deposit system is often discussed. This means customers borrow the containers for a predefined fee and receive their deposit back after returning the reusable food containers. As an alternative to deposit items or money deposit systems, the reusable containers are issued on a trust basis or lent with the help of apps. For the latter option, greenbox will soon present a mobile app solution that is equally free and easy to implement for customers and gastronomy operators.

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## Efficiency and sustainability

In addition to returnability, there are also numerous criteria for the containers themselves that are of high importance to gastronomy operators. "Stackability, a tight-fitting lid and suitability for catering dishwashers are at the top of the list of must-haves, closely followed by bio-based and thus biodegradable or recyclable materials for the reusable containers. It is even more important than the price.

Alternatives to petroleum-based plastic, which lasts for centuries in the environment, are very much in demand," says Michael Brink, managing director of greenbox. "It also turned out that the respondents want reusable containers to be recyclable. greenbox starts here and takes back reusable containers at the end of their life cycle in order to reintegrate them into the production process."

"According to the survey, however, caterers underestimate one important aspect," Brink points out. "And that is microwaveability. Yet this is precisely what is important for consumers to use their reusable products in the microwave. When customers take their food home, they want to be able to heat it up quickly and easily. This is often done in the microwave.

Similarly, the food can be stored in the fridge or freezer to be eaten at a later time if necessary. Aspects that are taken into account in the products of the Häppy Family range from greenbox.

### **The desire for diverse reusable containers**

According to a well-known saying, every pot finds its matching lid - this or something similar is also the case when catering operators are looking for the right container in the desired shape, colour, size and function. From sushi bowls, catering and cake trays, ice cream cups, popcorn and nacho bowls, there should be the right container for every business. For manufacturers of reusable products, this is therefore an opportunity to respond to the specific wishes of catering businesses and to develop optimal solutions so that a suitable container can be offered for every meal. "We offer customer-friendly solutions and a diverse range of reusable containers," Brink sums up.

"No matter which variant gastronomy operators adopt for themselves: It is important to find a solution that is convenient for all sides, which enables them as well as their customers to make the out-of-home business more efficient and environmentally friendly, if possible without additional costs, and to always be prepared for upcoming changes in the catering industry."

### **About greenbox GmbH & Co. KG**

Since 2010, Greenbox has been offering its foodservice sector customers, the hotel industry, gastronomy, wholesalers and food retailers a diverse range of environmentally friendly packaging as disposable and reusable solutions as well as sustainable consumer products made from renewable or recycled raw materials. With over 1,000 different CO2 compensated products, greenbox is a market leading company in the European foodservice packaging. With over 60 employees, greenbox aims to simplify the daily processes in the catering business with its products and reduce the environmental impact of conventional plastic packaging. As the first supplier in the field of

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foodservice packaging, greenbox therefore designs not only its operations but also its own products to be 100% climate-neutral, i.e. CO2 compensated. Greenbox is a member of the BIONATIC Group, which offers environmentally friendly products for businesses and end customers in various business areas.

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