

CASE STUDY:

Interfaith Neighbors Meals on Wheels Monmouth County



BUSINESS PROFILE

Name:

Interfaith Neighbors
MOWs program

Location:

Monmouth County,
New Jersey

On-site dining: 0%

Take-out: 100%

Warewashing: NA



Founded in 1988, Interfaith Neighbors has been assisting the most vulnerable in Monmouth County, New Jersey in securing life's critical necessities, while working to improve the quality of life for individuals, families, and their communities. Interfaith Neighbors provides multiple services, including daily meals through their Meals on Wheels programs. Prior to working with ReThink Disposable, the organization has been providing a fruit cup in small single-use containers and monthly spent thousands of dollars ordering products. As a result of working with ReThink Disposable, Interfaith Neighbors has eliminated distributing fruit cups, as well as individually wrapped desserts, and is now providing clients with fresh fruit. This practice also reduces the number of paper bags used for delivery. The changes are a healthier alternative for both the client and environment and saves essential funds that can be used to better serve their client.

Changes to serviceware for less waste and more savings:

Single-use polypropylene (#5) 4-ounce plastic cup	→	Fresh fruit
Single-use coated-aluminum foil seal line Single-use paper bag Single-use plastic wrapped dessert	→	Eliminated

BEFORE and AFTER: Interfaith Neighbors replaced their daily 4-ounce fruit cocktail containers and plastic-wrapped individual desserts for fresh fruit. Staff are pleased with providing healthier food to their clients and clients have expressed their delight at getting fresh fruit.



“My eyes were made wide open. We replaced a plastic fruit cup, mainly sugar, with a fresh piece of fruit. We took sugary desserts out of our meals as well. Many are diabetic so this is a cost savings as well as a much more nutritious alternative.”

— Beth Paterno, Director, Nutrition Program

THE BOTTOM LINE

- \$72,000 total annual net cost savings
- 986,960 disposable items reduced per year
- 8,702 pounds of annual waste reduction
- \$0 upfront cost for new zero-waste practices

RESULTS

RESULTS		PACKAGING IMPACTS			COST IMPACTS	
Disposable Product Replaced or Minimized	Recommendation Implemented	Percent Disposable Reduction	Annual Quantity of Disposable Product Reduced	Annual Waste Reduction (lbs.)	Payback Period (months)	Annual NET* Cost Savings After Payback Period (\$)
Fruit cup with sealed lid	Replace with fresh fruit	100%	425,000	2,100	NA	\$65,600
Individually wrapped dessert (multiple layers of polymers: BOPP, LDPE #4, Surlyn)	Eliminate	100%	209,000	848	NA	\$0
Paper lunch bag	Eliminate	100%	352,960	5,754	NA	\$6,400
		TOTALS:	986,960 pieces	8,702 lbs.	NA	\$72,000

*Net Cost Savings considers any upfront and ongoing costs associated with the purchase and care of reusable items and capital improvements needed to carry out ReThink Disposable's recommendations. Net cost savings are based on avoided disposable foodware purchases.

ReThink Disposable is a program of Clean Water Action and Clean Water Fund conducted in partnership with local organizations, businesses, and government agencies. Generous support is provided by a changing list of public and private funders. To learn more about the program, its partners, and funders, visit: www.rethinkdisposable.org



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