

# CASE STUDY: Jean's Cafe



## BUSINESS PROFILE

**Name:**

Jean's Cafe

**Location:**

Philadelphia, PA

**On-site dining:** 30 seats

**Take-out:** 50%

**Warewashing:**

3-sink system

**Employees:** 5



Jean's Cafe, located in Center City Philadelphia, is setting a new standard by coupling sustainability and the fast-paced take-away culture so beloved in our east coast delis. Known for its diverse menu and welcoming atmosphere, the high-traffic cafe rings up over 500 transactions daily. By transitioning from 100% disposable foodware for dine-in to using exclusively reusable wares, Jean's Cafe is not only reducing its environmental footprint but also realizing significant financial savings. Annually, they anticipate saving \$2,063 even after factoring in water costs and labor for washing dishes. Their switch is projected to eliminate 326,898 pieces of single-use disposable foodware, equating to 5,183 pounds of waste diverted from landfills, annually. Customers have responded positively to these changes, appreciating both the environmental initiative and the enhanced dining experience at Jean's Cafe.

### Changes to serviceware for less waste and more savings:

Single-use paper plates	→	Ceramic plates
Single-use foam plates	→	Durable plastic baskets
Single-use plastic cold cups with lids	→	Durable plastic cups
Single-use plastic lined paper coffee cups with plastic lids	→	Ceramic mugs
Single-use foam bowls with plastic lids	→	Ceramic bowls
Single-use plastic forks	→	Stainless steel forks
Single-use plastic knives	→	Stainless steel knives
Single-use plastic spoons	→	Stainless steel spoons
Single-use plastic sauce cups with lids	→	Stainless steel sauce cups

**BEFORE and AFTER:**  
Jean's Cafe switched 100% of their disposable foodware to reusable for their dine-in guests.



## THE BOTTOM LINE

- \$2,063 annual net cost savings (accounts for increase in labor and water costs of \$12,000)
- 326,898 disposable items reduced per year
- 5,183 pounds of annual waste reduction
- 1 month average pay-back period
- Did not need to hire new staff, instead offered 2.5 more hours daily for current employees

# RESULTS

Disposable Product Replaced or Minimized	Recommendation Implemented	PACKAGING IMPACTS			COST IMPACTS	
		Percent Disposable Reduction	Annual Quantity of Disposable Product Reduced	Annual Waste Reduction (lbs.)	Payback Period (months)	Annual NET* Cost Savings After Payback Period (\$)
Paper plates	Replace with ceramic plates	100%	38,794	1,796	0.5	\$4,589
Foam plates	Replace with reusable plastic baskets	100%	104,286	1,196	0.2	\$4,380
Plastic cups	Replace with reusable plastic cups	57%	4,171	101	2.3	\$417
Plastic lids	Eliminated	57%	4,171	30	0.0	\$278
Plastic lined paper coffee cups	Replace with ceramic mugs	50%	15,643	905	0.4	\$1,564
Plastic coffee cup lids	Eliminated	50%	31,286	287	0.0	\$1,251
Foam soup bowls	Replace with ceramic bowls	50%	1,774	18	4.2	\$174
Plastic soup lids	Eliminated	50%	1,774	14	0.0	\$87
Plastic forks	Replace with stainless steel forks	76%	39,976	282	0.6	\$360
Plastic spoons	Replace with stainless steel spoons	76%	39,976	247	0.4	\$360
Plastic knives	Replace with stainless steel knives	76%	39,976	282	1.3	\$360
Plastic sauce cups	Replace with stainless steel sauce cups	50%	5,069	25	3.6	\$122
Plastic sauce cup lids	Eliminated	50%	5,069	8	0.0	\$122
Payroll cost increase	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	(-\$11,700)
Water cost increase	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	(-\$300)
		<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>326,898 pieces</b>	<b>5,183 lbs.</b>	<b>1 month</b>	<b>\$2,063</b>

\*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](http://www.rethinkdisposable.org)



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