

Procurement Guide

K-12 REUSABLE FOODWARE & DISHWASHING EQUIPMENT



This guide gives K–12 schools a practical overview of commercially available reusable foodware options and dishwashing equipment, including current pricing.

- The **Products Lists** catalog common products and provide key purchasing considerations.
- The **Sample Purchasing List** offers a budgeting scenario with typical items and average costs for a school serving roughly 300 lunches per day and transitioning from disposable to reusable foodware.

Prices listed are based on 2025 vendor information.

DISCLAIMER: This document was prepared by the Center for Environmental Health and StopWaste. The information is provided without warranty and may not always be accurate. Not all brands and products are represented, and their inclusion does not imply endorsement.

For broader guidance on reusable foodware in K-12 schools, see StopWaste's [Quick Start Guide for Nutrition Directors](#).

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PRODUCT LISTS: REUSABLE FOODWARE

Note: Given the environmental and health implications of foodware made from plastics, this guide lists only stainless-steel reusable foodware products.

GREENSCREEN CERTIFIED REUSABLE FOODWARE

[GreenScreen for Safer Chemicals](#) is a method to assess materials and products for health and environmental risks. Listed below are representative reusable foodware items that have earned the GreenScreen certification and are deemed safe.



Manufacturer/ Brand	Product & Link	Material Type	Made In	Price (each)	Picture
Ahimsa	5-compartment tray	Stainless Steel	US based company; manufactured in India	\$8.85	
Ahimsa	10 oz cup	Stainless Steel	US based company; manufactured in India	\$4.00	
Ahimsa	Fork	Stainless Steel	US based company; manufactured in India	\$1.00	
Ahimsa	Spoon	Stainless Steel	US based company; manufactured in India	\$1.00	
Ahimsa	Plate	Stainless Steel	US based company; manufactured in India	\$7.00	
WeReuse	Tray	Stainless Steel	US based company; manufactured in US	\$8.85	
WeReuse	Spork	Stainless Steel	US based company; manufactured in US	\$2.00	
WeReuse	Fork	Stainless Steel	US based company; manufactured in US	\$1.25	
WeReuse	Spoon	Stainless Steel	US based company; manufactured in US	\$1.25	

UTENSILS

Manufacturer/ Brand	Product & Link	Material Type	Made In	Price (each)	Picture
Ahimsa	Fork	Stainless Steel	US based company; manufactured in India	\$1.50	
Ahimsa	Spoon	Stainless Steel	US based company; manufactured in India	\$1.50	
Libertyware	Fork	Stainless Steel	US based company; manufactured in US	\$0.36	
Libertyware	Spoon	Stainless Steel	US based company; manufactured in US	\$0.28	
Muka	Spork	Stainless Steel	Not specified	\$1.54	
WeReuse	Fork	Stainless Steel	US based company; manufactured in US	\$1.25	
WeReuse	Spoon	Stainless Steel	US based company; manufactured in US	\$1.25	
WeReuse	Spork	Stainless Steel	US based company; manufactured in US	\$2.00	
YFWOOD	Spork	Stainless Steel	Not specified	\$1.59	

NOTE: Some products are sold only in multi-packs. Prices shown are per item, not per pack.

TRAYS & PLATES

Manufacturer/ Brand	Product & Link	Material Type	Made In	Price (each)	Picture
Ahimsa	Tray	Stainless Steel	US based company; manufactured in India	\$8.85	
Aspire	Plate	Stainless Steel	Not specified	\$4.49	
HaWare	Plate	Stainless Steel	Not specified	\$3.59	
Steelys Foodware	Plate	Stainless Steel	Not specified	\$2.95	
WeReuse	Tray	Stainless Steel	US based company; manufactured in US	\$8.85	

NOTE: Some products are sold only in multi-packs. Prices shown are per item, not per pack.

BOWLS

Manufacturer/ Brand	Product & Link	Material Type	Made In	Price (each)	Picture
Ahimsa	8 oz bowl	Stainless Steel	US based company; manufactured in India	\$12.00	
American Metal Craft	8 oz bowl	Stainless Steel	US based company; manufactured in US	\$4.81	

NOTE: Some products are sold only in multi-packs. Prices shown are per item, not per pack.

CUPS

Manufacturer/ Brand	Product & Link	Material Type	Made In	Price (each)	Picture
Ahimsa	10 oz cup	Stainless Steel	US based company; manufactured in India	\$4.00	
Baderke	10oz cup	Stainless Steel	Not specified	\$1.94	
Green Steel	10oz cup	Stainless Steel	US based company; manufactured in US	\$6.25	
Klean Kanteen	10oz cup	Stainless Steel	US based company; manufactured in US	\$6.55	
Steelys	12 oz cup	Stainless Steel	US based company; manufactured in China	\$4.15	

NOTE: Some products are sold only in multi-packs. Prices shown are per item, not per pack.

PRODUCT LISTS: DISHWASHING EQUIPMENT

DISH MACHINE

Note: Consult with professional distributors to ensure the selected model fits the kitchen’s electrical service, plumbing, and available space.

Dish machine type*	Picture	Best suited for:	Dish racks per hour*	Space needed	Approx price (2025)
Undercounter		Small elementary schools < 150 lunches/day	20-35	25 sq. ft.	\$2,500-\$8,000
Door		Most elementary, middle and high schools. Could serve multiple schools. 100-800 lunches/day	40-60	100 sq. ft.	\$10,000-\$25,000 Ventless models: approx. \$25,000)
Conveyor		Multiple schools using a centralized wash model 800+ lunches/day	200-300	150 sq. ft.	\$30,000-\$60,000

* All dish machine types are available as high- or low-temperature models. We recommend using high-temperature dish machines for most school and institutional kitchen settings, see comparison table below.

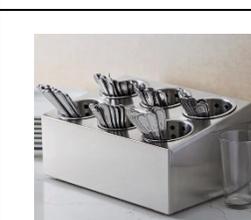
HIGH-TEMP VS. LOW-TEMP DISH MACHINES

	High-temp dish machines	Low-temp dish machines
How they sanitize	Use hot water (~180°F) for sanitization	Use a chemical rinse (chlorine or quaternary ammonium).
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faster drying time. • Use less water overall. • Best for high-volume operations. • Ventless models are more expensive but can save money on hood installation and exhaust systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower energy consumption. • Often plug into a standard 120 V outlet—easier and cheaper to install.
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher electricity use. • Require 208–240 V, 3-phase electrical service. • Higher upfront equipment cost, especially for ventless models. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer drying times. • Higher chemical costs. • Require careful maintenance and calibration to avoid chemical residue or odor. • Less practical for high-volume operations because of slower cycles.

DISH ROOM EQUIPMENT

This section lists dish washing equipment, such as dish racks, baskets, and drying racks, typically needed to operate an efficient dish room.

Item	Brand & Link	Picture	Cost per unit	Notes
Flat dish racks	Cambro		\$18.99	Dish racks are typically not included with dish machines. The type and number of dish racks needed depends on your type of dish machine, foodware types used and meals served.
Peg dish racks	Cambro		\$18.99	

Item	Brand & Link	Picture	Cost per unit	Notes
Dish rack shelf	Channel		\$302.49	Dish rack shelves help keep dish racks stored and allow them to dry while not in use.
Dish rack dolly	Cambro		\$177.35	Recommended for easy transport of clean dishes to the dish storage area.
Flat ware basket	Noble		\$10.99	Recommended for sorting and drying utensils.
Utensil organizer with cylinders	Choice		\$44.49	Displays and organizes utensils for food service.
No slip floor mat	Lavex		\$74.99	
Dishwashing Aprons	San Jamar		\$29.49	
Dish Drying Rack	Metro		\$927.00	Essential for air drying foodware. Be sure to allocate space for the drying rack(s) when planning wash operations.

DISHWASHING CHEMICALS

Item	Brand & Link	Picture	Cost per unit	Notes
Detergent 5 Gallons	ECOS Pro		\$88.49	Actual detergent and rinse-aid use, and the specific products required, will vary by dish machine model, operating practices, water quality, and other site conditions.
Rinse Aid 1 Gallon	Noble		\$186.99	

COLLECTION STATION EQUIPMENT

Item	Brand & Link	Picture	Cost per unit	Notes
Dish Cart	Lavex		\$109.99	Dish carts and bus tubs provide a place for students to return used foodware and can be wheeled back to the dish room for washing.
Dish Tub	Choice		\$10.99	

SAMPLE PURCHASING LIST

The “shopping lists” below outline the typical foodware and dishwashing equipment needed for a transition to reusables, with representative products and average costs for **a school serving 300 lunches per day**.

REUSABLE FOODWARE

Item	Brand & Link	Picture	Cost per unit	# need for 300 lunches/day ¹	Total Cost	Subsidy available ²
Tray	Ahimsa ³		\$8.85	345	\$3053.25	Yes
Windsor Teaspoon	Liberty Ware		\$.28	345	\$96.60	No
Fork	Liberty Ware		\$.36	345	\$124.02	No
Total, Reusable Foodware — \$3,274.05						

¹ **Starting Inventory:** Buy approx. 15% additional trays and utensils to ensure sufficient inventory.

² [Plastic Free Restaurants](#) provides subsidies to help schools purchase reusable foodware.

³ [GreenScreen Certified product](#), indicating it contains no chemicals of concern. Recommended.

DISH ROOM EQUIPMENT

See *Product Lists: Dish Room Equipment* for images and product details.

Item	Brand & Link	Cost per unit	# need for 300 lunches/day	Total Cost
Flat dish racks	Cambro	\$18.99	3	\$56.97
Peg dish racks	Cambro	\$18.99	3	\$56.97
Dish rack shelf	Channel	\$302.49	1	\$302.49
Dish rack dolly	Cambro	\$177.35	3	\$532.05
Flat ware basket	Noble	\$10.99	4	\$43.96
Utensil organizer with cylinders	Choice	\$44.49	2	\$88.98
No slip floor mat	Lavex	\$74.99	1	\$74.99

Item	Brand & Link	Cost per unit	# need for 300 lunches/day	Total Cost
Dishwashing Aprons	San Jamar	\$29.49	3	\$88.47
Dish Drying Rack	Metro	\$927.00	1	\$927.00
Total, Dish Room Equipment — \$2,171.88				

COLLECTION STATION EQUIPMENT

See *Product Lists: Collection Station Equipment* for images and product details.

Item	Brand & Link	Cost per unit	# needed for 300 lunches/day	Total Cost
Dish Cart	Lavex	\$109.99	1	\$109.99
Dish Tub	Choice	\$10.99	3	\$32.97
Total, Collection Station Equipment — \$142.96				

DISHWASHING CHEMICALS (1-YEAR SUPPLY)

See *Product Lists: Dishwashing Chemicals* for images and product details.

Note: The figures below are intended for general planning only. As a reference point, a school serving about 300 lunches per day will run roughly 30 wash cycles per day.

Item	Brand & Link	Cost per unit	# needed for 300 lunches/day	Total Cost
Detergent 5 Gallons	ECOS Pro	\$88.49	4	\$353.96
Rinse Aid 1 Gallon	Noble	\$186.99	1	\$186.99
Total, Dishwashing Chemicals — \$540.95				

GRAND TOTAL: \$6,129.84