

Less packaging

Packaging waste accounts for a considerable volume of waste that has to be processed. How can this be reduced? There are several solutions, to be adopted at the source. During the EWWR, ask your friends, neighbours, family, etc. to lessen their packaging waste by making a few simple, daily gestures.

General information



reduce



difficulty

Waste stream



reuse



environmental
impact



paper



packaging



recycle



cost



WEEE



organic

Objectives

- ▶ To reduce the quantity of waste generated by household packaging.
- ▶ To encourage people to find alternatives to packaging.

What you need

Zero packaging buffet

- ▶ What is it? A buffet meal that involves as little packaging as possible.
- ▶ How is it organised? Give preference to non-packaged products (e.g.: cut to order, loose, in returnable packaging, obtained directly from the producer, etc.). And ask everyone to bring their own glass.
- ▶ What can it be used to assess? The quantity of packaging waste generated by a buffet.

Water bar

- ▶ What is it? A tasting session for various types of water, including tap water.
- ▶ How is it organised? During a party (e.g.: among neighbours, at school, at the office, etc.), present three or four different types of water in identical glasses. Everyone is asked to taste them blindfold, and they have to guess which one is tap water. They will be asked to commit to drinking tap water instead of bottled water.
- ▶ What can it be used to assess? The quantity of waste generated by drinks packaging.



Zero packaging shopping

- ▶ What is it? Several citizens from a district get together to convince local shopkeepers (butcher, cheese seller, fishmonger, etc.) to allow customers to take their own containers for their purchases.
- ▶ How is it organised? Before the EWWR, have a petition signed by those who are interested and identify the local shopkeepers in the food sector who agree to serve their products in containers brought in by the customer.
- ▶ What can it be used to assess? The quantity of waste generated by household food packaging (over packaging).

Participation panel (communication tool)

- ▶ What is it? A panel on which to note the names and address of the people (neighbours, family, friends, etc.) who wish to take part.
- ▶ How is it used? The panel will be put up in a strategic place where it can be seen by as many people as possible. You can also go round your building, street, district, etc. to collect names.
- ▶ What can it be used to assess? The number of participants.

Poster (communication tool)

- ▶ What is it? A poster that presents the action.
- ▶ How is it used? It will be put up in clearly visible, strategic places.
- ▶ What can it be used to assess? The visibility of the action in the neighbourhood.

Preparing the action: initial assessment of the situation

1 month before the EWWR

Zero packaging shopping

- ▶ Ask those who have registered to collect the packaging from their usual shopping (if possible done in the stores contacted) for a week, and then weigh this packaging and note down the figure.

Preparing the action: development and production

1 month before the EWWR

- ▶ Make posters presenting your action and put them up in strategic places. Share the information and visuals on the social networks, as well.
- ▶ Prepare the panel on which those wishing to participate can register. Briefly describe the reason for the initiative, the date/period (during the EWWR), the place.

Zero packaging shopping

- ▶ Make a list of local food stores that are likely to take part.
- ▶ Create the petition to collect signatures from customers who are interested in being able to bring their own boxes. Go round the neighbourhood to collect as many signatures as possible.

2 weeks before the EWWR

Zero packaging buffet

- ▶ Contact your guests and ask them to bring: 1/ a dish prepared using ingredients with as little packaging as possible, 2/ their own reusable beaker or glass, 3/ a container to take away any leftovers. In addition, think of other environmentally friendly gestures: use local and seasonal fruit and vegetables, let everyone know how many guests there will be so as to adapt quantities and avoid waste, etc. So that everyone enjoys themselves, make sure you have a wide range of different dishes.
- ▶ Choose the place for the meal and provide enough tables and chairs (the guests can bring things if necessary).
- ▶ Provide drinks that do not generate much waste: carafes of tap water, large, returnable bottles of fruit juice, jugs of local wine, large flasks of hot drinks, etc.

Water bar

- ▶ Gather together the things you need (bottles of different waters, glasses, carafes for the tap water, untreated lemons or mint leaves that could be used to flavour the water, etc.).

Zero packing shopping

- ▶ Go round the local food stores to find out whether they are interested in taking part in the action. The document with the names of all those who have promised to take part in the action could be used to convince the shopkeepers.
- ▶ Make a list of the stores that are willing to join in and pass it on to those who have shown an interest. This list of stores can also be circulated more widely via the social networks.

Implementing the action

During the EWWR

Zero packaging buffet

- ▶ Present and serve the dishes prepared by the participants and the drinks in the reusable crockery (brought along by each person or hired).
- ▶ If there are any leftovers, ask guests if they would like to take them away in the boxes they have brought.
- ▶ Provide sorting bins in case there is any waste, after all.

Water bar

- ▶ Present three or four different waters in identical glasses. Everyone is asked to taste the water blindfold and guess which one is the tap water.
- ▶ Make the most of the opportunity to promote tap water (e.g. its many advantages compared with bottled water).
- ▶ Ask the guests to commit to drinking tap water instead of bottled water (register to be signed).

Zero packaging shopping

- ▶ Do the same shopping as during the reference week, using a box rather than the store's packaging if possible. Use a large, reusable bag for all your purchases.
- ▶ Put up a table (with a pen attached to make it easier): everyone can write down their name and address and the result of their own action (weight of packaging during the reference week and weight during the EWWR). This will give you a basis on which to assess your action as a whole.

Evaluation methodology

Zero packaging buffet

- ▶ List the types of packaging waste avoided (beakers, sachets, plastic packaging, paper, etc.).
- ▶ Identify the weight of each item of waste. The total waste = the quantity of packaging waste avoided thanks to your action.

Water bar

- ▶ Note the number of people who commit to drinking tap water.
- ▶ Multiply the number of people by the weight of a bottle of water (30 to 40 g for a 1.5 l-bottle, varying depending on the brand) and then by 7 to estimate the quantity of waste avoided during a week.

Zero packaging shopping

- ▶ The difference between the weight of the packaging waste during the reference week and during the EWWR = the quantity of waste from (over)packaging avoided thanks to your action.

More information

- ▶ Additional information to facilitate this action:
 - Hire of reusable beakers (France): <http://www.sictom-lavaur.fr>
 - Drinking water sources where flasks can be refilled (international): <http://eaputable.info>
 - Water bar event (Belgium): <http://www.la-bruyere.be/vie-communale/les-services-communaux/environnement/journee-de-larbre-et-de-la-nature/edition-2011-2/animation-bar-a-eau.pdf>
 - Organising a blindfold water taste test (United States): <http://www.banthebottle.net/articles/a-simple-way-to-conduct-your-own-water-taste-test/>
- ▶ Other tools for this action (more examples on www.ewwr.eu)
 - Zero waste (United States): <http://myzerowaste.com>
 - Zero waste (Belgium): <http://www.goodplanet.be/goodplanetactions/fr/>
 - 12 actions to reduce waste by reusing (France): <http://cniid.fr/-Les-actions,78->
- ▶ European Week for Waste Reduction: www.ewwr.eu contact@ewwr.eu