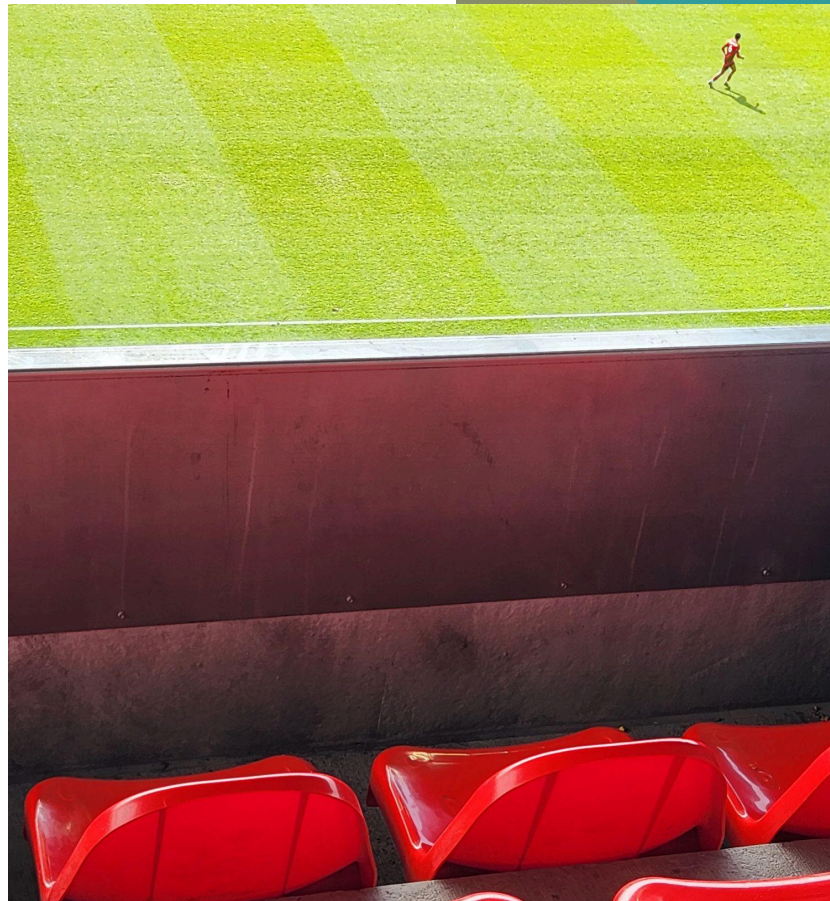


Kicking off with reusables:

The opportunity of the
FIFA World Cup 2026™ for
Canadian events

A Summary



Reusables: A winning strategy

The FIFA World Cup 2026™ tournament will bring millions of people together to celebrate, and it will also shine a spotlight on Canada's host cities: Toronto and Vancouver. While this international spectacle can have a major environmental footprint, it can also be a catalyst for change, showcasing leadership in sustainability.

One key action Canadian host cities can take is to replace single-use, throwaway cups and foodware with durable, reusable options that can be washed and used again. This one action could eliminate more than 2 million disposables, and over 40 tonnes of unnecessary, wasteful single use plastic and foodware. It would create a model for sporting and cultural events across the country, and catalyse the shift to a circular economy.

Reusables have already rolled out at major sports events like the Paris Olympics, and even locally at many events and street festivals in Toronto. Existing reuse systems are ready to meet the scale of this large international event. In fact, BC Place, the Vancouver stadium that will host 7 FIFA World Cup 2026™ games, shifted to entirely reusable cups for poured drinks in fall 2025.

TEA has compiled recommendations on how Canadian cities, venues and event organizers can create a lasting environmental legacy of reuse, and avoid the harmful impacts of thousands of fans using disposable foodware during FIFA and other events.

The report "Kicking off with reusables: The opportunity of the FIFA World Cup 26™ for Canadian events" includes case studies and lessons on effective reuse based on international best practices, interviews with reuse providers in Canada and key policy trends. This report summary provides key learnings to inform and guide implementation of reusables at this pivotal event.

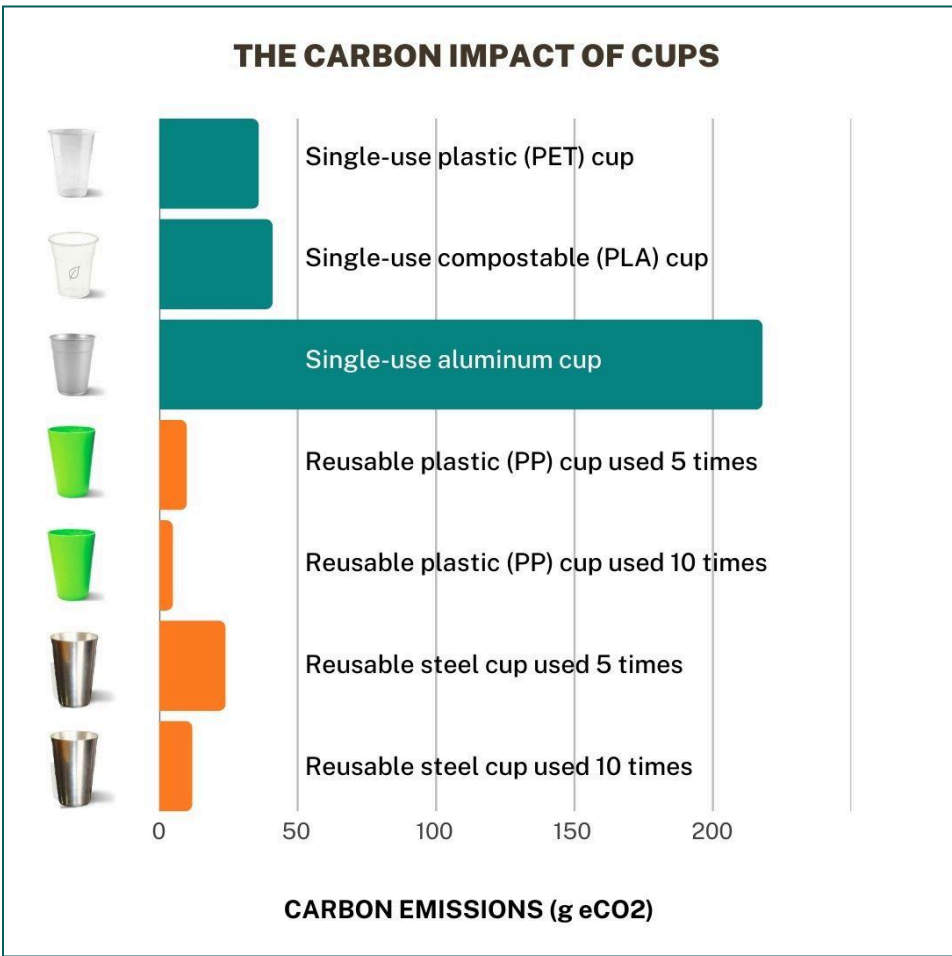
[References, information sources and details of calculations can be found in the full report.](#)

Swapping Single-Use for Reuse	
Toronto	Vancouver
Toronto Stadium 6 games - 45,000 attendance	BC Place 7 games - 54,000 attendance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Avoid 540,000 disposables (90,000 per game) ● Prevent 9.7 tonnes of waste ● Spend \$108,000 less on cups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Avoid 756,000 disposables (108,000 per game) ● Prevent 13.6 tonnes of waste ● Spend \$151,000 less on cups
Fan Festival™ - 25 days Average 25,000 visits per day	Fan Festival™ - 25 days Average 15,000 visits per day
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Avoid 625,000 disposables ● Prevent nearly 11.25 tonnes of waste ● Save \$125,000 on cups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Avoid 375,000 disposables ● Prevent 6.75 tonnes of waste ● Save \$75,000 on cups

Reuse is better for the environment

Reusable cups and foodware, when they are returned and reused in a system, are environmentally the best choice when compared to single-use options of any material, even when accounting for the additional resources for production, washing and transportation.

While some events have swapped single-use plastic for single-use aluminum or compostable options, this does not address the pollution and environmental impacts of producing new single-use items, and the downstream impacts of recycling, composting or disposing of the waste. After just 4 uses, a reusable cup has a lower environmental impact than single-use plastic, aluminum or 'compostable' cups. Single-use aluminum is the most carbon-intensive option.



Economic benefits

Adopting reuse presents a shift to a circular economy, with new growth in local, green services to wash, manage and promote the reuse of materials.

Reuse creates up to 50 times more jobs than single-use, with most employment occurring locally. Nationally replacing just 20% of single-use plastic packaging with reusables could create a \$773 Million CAD economic opportunity.

Across Canada, the reuse sector including full service providers, wash hubs, technology and foodware options is rapidly growing, Service providers are now operating at many major events and venues, where they handle all aspects of reuse including supplying cups, washing them on or off site, and returning them.



How we get there: Implementing reuse

Events and venues are ideal for scaling up reuse

Stadiums, arenas and public festivals offer ideal opportunities for rapid adoption of reusable foodware due to high volumes of food and drink, contained areas to ensure high return rates, and centralized communications and management.

In Canada and the US, most venues currently use third-party reuse service providers to run reuse systems, and to manage and wash the reusable cups and dishes. Some events and venues use generic reusables, and some purchase custom cups and dishes.

Return rates are key to environmental and cost benefits of reuse

Adopting reuse shifts the costs from purchasing disposables, cleaning and waste haulage, to purchasing or renting reusables and washing. Many Canadian reuse service providers set their per-item service fee for rental and washing to be competitive with non-plastic single-use options - such as single-use 'compostable' plastic cups - and the associated waste.

Achieving high return rates of reusables has the biggest impact on cost, and is key to unlocking environmental benefits. At a typical return rate of 75% for example, a cup is used an average of only 4 times before being lost or kept as a souvenir. International standards suggest aiming for return rates of 90% or higher are ideal.

Other cost drivers that impact the system include the replacement cost for lost reusables, the comparative cost of single-use options and the cost of managing single-use waste, and whether sponsorship or other incentives can off-set those costs.



Best practices for reuse at major venues and events

TEA looked at examples of reuse from around the world, interviewed multiple reuse service providers and venues to identify the key actions that drive success.

- **Replace all single-use disposable items with reusables to achieve greatest environmental benefits:**
 - Provide reusable cups for draft and fountain drinks in place of packaged plastic bottles and cans.
 - Provide reusable dishes and utensils
 - Offer water fountains and bottle refill stations
- **Avoid custom designs for the maximum environmental benefits**, as custom reusables can't be used at multiple events, and quickly become souvenirs with high loss rates.
- **Consider deposits carefully, especially for large audiences.** Major sports events typically don't require customers to pay deposits to avoid the extra time and frustration with fans, though a refundable deposit increases returns in open-loop systems.
- **Make returns easy and accessible.** Print return directions on each reusable item and ensure return bins are plentiful and visible.
- **Use multiple channels of communication:** Clear signs on return bins, pre-event messages, announcements, host information at entrances and exits, and more.
- **Engage all site staff and decision makers.** Highly effective reuse systems provide training and ongoing communications with staff to help with implementation, trouble-shooting and improvement.
- **Plan for additional waste sorting to reduce waste.** Post-event waste sorting to retrieve reusables and recyclables dramatically cuts waste and costs at stadiums and events.

[These best practices are explained in further detail with examples in the full report.](#)

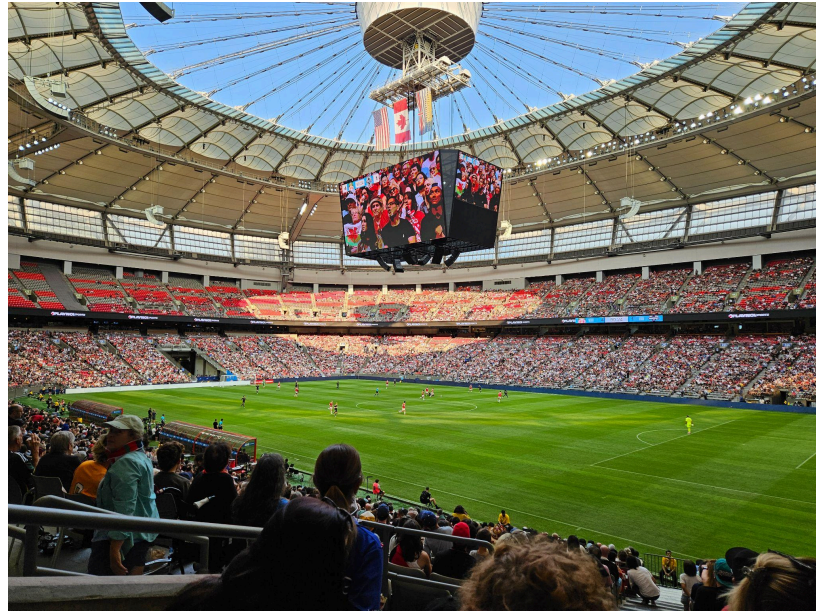


Policies

National, regional and local policies on single-use plastics and reuse can have a major impact on reducing waste and incentivizing a shift to reuse at major venues and events.

Our report highlights four key policies that are already in place, or are being explored in Canada, with examples and implications for events:

- Bans and restrictions on plastics and single-use items
- Access to water refill stations
- Reusables for dine-in
- Accessories on request or “by request”



Case Studies

Looking to examples of more established reuse systems can demonstrate key factors for effective implementation. These insights from events and stadiums across Canada, U.S. and internationally can shape reuse strategies in cities like Toronto and Vancouver.

- [BC Place Stadium](#), host for seven FIFA World Cup 26™ matches provides reusable cups for poured drinks since 2025, after pilots in select areas in 2024. The pilot phase provided lessons on increasing return rates with consistency, additional sorting by staff, and shown that reusables can cost less in the long term.
- [Pride Toronto](#) purchased custom reusable cups to use at two outdoor performance stages at the annual festival. Efforts to improve communications and engage all staff improved cup return rates to over 90% without deposits.
- [Evergreen Brick Works](#) hosts weekly markets and special events demonstrating how reusable cups and dishes can work with a diverse group of food vendors and thousands of visitors each week.
- [Moda Centre, Portland](#) is the First NBA stadium to roll out reusable cups, and provides helpful lessons in a phased roll-out, the importance of ongoing evaluation and collaboration between the venue, the food services and reuse companies.