

Sustainable Recoveries: A Guide to Purchasing and Implementing Reusable Containers

How to Make Your Recovery Process as Efficient as Possible

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FRN National

Food recovery programs operate differently in every community across the country. One common goal, however, brings us all together: fighting waste and feeding people. In an effort to minimize all waste, we encourage our student leaders to execute recoveries using reusable containers, as opposed to single-use trays. Implementing reusable containers also improves chapters' long-term sustainability because they can rely on long-lasting recovery materials instead of regularly purchasing single-use trays. This process requires students to further develop relationships with stakeholders, such as food donors, partner agencies (PAs), leadership team members, and volunteers, to ensure that bins don't get lost and food is recovered efficiently. We created this guide to make this process as seamless as possible for CHIPs that have yet to complete their first recovery, recently approved chapters, and established chapters alike.

As with every resource FRN National produces, this guide takes into account the needs and experiences of more than 200 schools. We consulted with current students and alumni to make sure that this document encompasses as many perspectives as possible. That said, with chapters of all sizes and capacities and schools small, large, and everywhere in between, **there may be gaps in our ability to predict the needs of all food recovery programs**. For that reason, **this is a living document**. We welcome any feedback you have, and we will do our best to incorporate your ideas into this resource.

Browse the table of contents below for an overview. Once you feel prepared to implement reusable containers into your recovery process, continue to the final section for a

starter kit. Remember that our Programs Team is available to assist with any questions that arise 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. EST, Monday to Friday! Feel free to contact us however you prefer:

1. Email: programs@foodrecoverynetwork.org
2. Text: (240) 473-3778
3. Call our office: (240) 615-8813
4. [Schedule a call](#) — if the link doesn't work, navigate to www.foodrecoverynetwork.org/students/#schedule-call.

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1: Introduction

Why You Should Invest in Reusable Containers

- Our motto is: “Fighting waste. Feeding people.” In order to live up to the first half of that motto, we encourage you to minimize your waste by using reusable containers, rather than single-use trays, such as aluminum foil pans.
- Reusable containers save money. Instead of continuing to buy single-use trays every few months when you run out, why not make a one-time purchase of reusable containers? It may seem like more money at first, but this single payment leads to reduced costs in the long run. Most chapters use the same reusable containers for a few years at a time before having to replace them.

Improving the Experience of Your Recipients

- In addition to the environmental and financial benefits of reusable containers, the presentation of the food you recover has a direct effect on the recipients of your food. When the food is distributed in a tidy manner, a recipient of the food is more likely to have a positive experience. It is important not to provide people with food scraps in trash bags, but nutritious meals that were prepared and presented with care.

Why Chapters Should Spend Money On This Material

- **Supporting your PA:** By frequently donating food to your PA, you are directly supporting their efforts. Food donations enable your PA to spend money on other resources, materials, and services. While donating money directly to your PA may seem more immediately beneficial, if you have the money to spend on a material, we recommend spending it in a smart, sustainable way, so that you can save funds for other materials and events in the future.
 - In the 2016-17 academic year, **81.7% of PAs said that they saved money as a result of working with FRN.** These savings allowed organizations to purchase more food, serve more people, and pay for ongoing operating costs.

PRO TIP #1: HOST A FUNDRAISER.

Visit our [list of fundraising events](#) for ideas. Fundraisers for a specific initiative, like reusable containers, are often more successful than general fundraisers.

- **Investment:** It may seem like a lot of money to spend upfront, but we think it's worth the investment. For example, Ivan Cardenas, a representative of FRN at the University of Utah, states that his chapter saved nearly \$700 per month by making the switch from aluminum pans to reusable containers. Grassroots organizing requires fundraising, and FRN National is here to support you with [grants](#) and [fundraising efforts](#). Utilizing connections in your community can lead to fruitful fundraisers.
- **Relationship-building:** This is also an opportunity to strengthen your relationship with your stakeholders. In the Fall 2017 End of Semester Survey, 60% of respondents said that FRN helped them develop skills regarding outreach to stakeholders. Implementing reusable containers into the recovery process will further develop those skills.

2: Questions to Consider

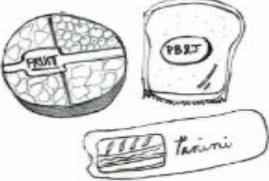
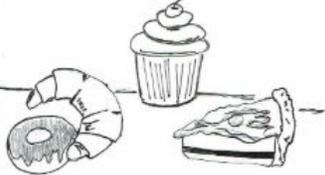
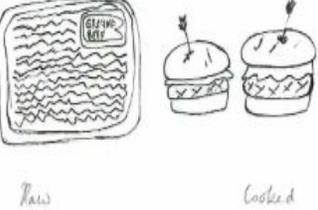
We're a CHIP and we're preparing for our first recovery. Should we start with single-use pans before we make the switch?

- Pros of starting with aluminum pans or other single-use trays:
 - **This will help you learn about what types of recoveries you are executing.**
 - Factors include: how much food you're receiving, what types of food, or how often you recover.
 - **Establish or strengthen a relationship with your PA and food donor.**
 - This takes time and intention. Using disposable containers provides you with some extra time to foster or strengthen a relationship with your chapter's most important stakeholders. Ask your PA and food donor: where can we store our reusable containers? Who will wash them?
- Cons of starting with aluminum pans or other single-use trays:
 - **They're less environmentally friendly.** When you throw away pans, you're creating waste.
 - In many cities, aluminum is acceptable for recycling. If you can recycle aluminum pans, clean them and remove any food remnants first. According to the [DC Mayor's List of Recyclables and Compostables](#), clean and empty metal and aluminum containers are acceptable for recycling. Your city likely has a similar list.
 - Do your research before recycling aluminum. If your city does not accept it, you'll unfortunately need to send it to the landfill (womp, womp). Simply search for "recycling laws in [insert your state]."
 - **They're less financially friendly.** When you are constantly buying aluminum pans, the price adds up.

- **They increase risk of spills.** It's easier for liquids to spill during transportation if they are not in a tightly sealed container. For example, if you are using plastic wrap and aluminum pans, food might seep under the edges. This is avoidable so long as you wrap tightly and drive safely (which you should be doing anyway), but it is something to keep in mind. Nobody wants soup all over their trunk.
- Summary: We recommend starting with aluminum pans for one semester or 10 recoveries. It is OK to create some waste and spend a little extra money if it means establishing a strong food recovery program before committing yourselves to reusable containers. We recommend you pursue financial support and sponsorship from various stakeholders in your community. This is a great way to engage people in your work, and fundraising is an important skill to develop (wink wink, résumé builder!).

What types of food does your chapter recover?

- Below is a list of the most common types of food recovered by FRN chapters. Figuring out which types are most common for your chapter will help you decide what size containers to purchase.

<p><u>Common Types of Food Recovered by FRN Chapters</u></p> <p><i>Drawings courtesy of Katie Aguila</i></p>		
<p>À la carte or buffet</p> 	<p>Prepared and packaged foods, such as sandwiches, wraps, or salads</p> 	<p>Very Liquidy Foods or Beverages</p> 
<p>Pastries</p> 	<p>Raw or cooked meat</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Raw Cooked</p>	

REMINDER:

Tarps are a food rescuer's best friend. If your chapter regularly recovers liquids, fear not: there are containers for you! Check out [Section 5: Finding the Right Containers](#).

What is your average recovery in pounds? (This will help you decide what size bins to purchase, as well as how many of each size.)

- Check out your food tracking form spreadsheet, linked on your [chapter profile page](#), to review your data.
- We've found that medium-sized containers — typically six-quart — are the best for keeping food at a given temperature. Most chapters purchase a majority of medium containers, some small, and just a few large.

1 full size aluminum tray = 10.8 quarts = 43.25 cups

[2 quart reusable container](#): ~8 cups of food.

[6 quart reusable container](#): ~24 cups of food.

[12 quart reusable container](#): ~48 cups of food.

How many recovery sites do you have?

- Different food donors have different needs and capacities. It may turn out that reusable containers are a viable option for one food donation site, but not another.
 - If this is the case, you might need to use a combination of reusable and single-use containers.
 - If you have a designated pick-up day for each site, you'll need to work this into your system of where you store your containers, who has them at what time, who will wash them, etc.
 - You might want to consider purchasing twice as many containers as you think you need for each recovery; this way, you can store some extra bins at one site and pick them up whenever necessary.

PRO TIP #2:

Use your food donor as a resource regarding food safety to ensure foods avoid the Temperature Danger Zone. Refer to the Steps to Success outlined on Page 10.

Who packages the food?

- Food donor?
- Your Leadership Team?
- Volunteers?

How does your PA store or use the food? Is your recovered food typically frozen or does it have to be reheated?

- This will help you determine the size and type of reusable container that will work for your PA(s).

3: Strengthening Relationships with PAs and Food

Donors

Before purchasing any new materials, it is critical that you communicate with your stakeholders. Please review the following resources and consider the accompanying tips before working out the logistics of your reusable containers recovery system:

- [Improving PA Relationships](#)
 - Through survey responses, we've found that PAs would appreciate greater communication, consistency, and additional help from student volunteers. Here are some ways that you can improve your chapter's relationship with your PA.
- [FAQs for PAs](#)
 - These address the most common questions we receive from prospective PAs.

REMINDER:

Reusable containers must be washed properly in a food safety-certified kitchen.

Do not wash them in your home sink or in a personal dishwasher, as this is a violation of our food safety protocol.

- [Service Learning](#)
 - We encourage you to think about your work through FRN as service learning. Service learning combines academic knowledge with volunteer service to address community needs effectively and meaningfully.
- **Tips:**
 - Make FRN known. Ask yourselves: Does this PA know they partner with FRN vs. just a group of college students?

- If possible, establish 1-2 points of contact at your PA, so that your communication isn't negatively affected if your only contact at the PA is out on vacation, sick, etc.
- Set up a meeting with your PA to discuss reusable containers. This will take some extra time on your end, but you'll thank yourselves later. Schedule this meeting before you purchase your containers so that you can establish a system and clear up any questions ahead of time.

You will need a system for who will wash the containers and where you will store them. Keep in mind, this plan will look different for each school, but the most important aspect to understand is that **communication is a key to success**. Below are suggestions we developed with feedback from students:

- **Storage:** Ask your food donor if they can hold your containers in their kitchen or in a storage space. Work with them to find a spot that is not in their way, such as near other containers in the food donor's dishwashing area.
 - Consider hanging a sign that says "Food Recovery Network" or "FRN BINS ONLY" wherever you store your bins.
 - For more information about how to make sure your bins don't get mixed up with your food donor's, continue to the [following section](#).
- **Washing:** Once you secure a storage space, you'll need to decide who will wash the containers. As part of FRN food safety regulations, ***bins must be washed in an industrial kitchen***. PAs are often willing to wash containers after they serve the food, and this is a great way to split up responsibilities between your food donor, your PA, and your chapter. When you arrive at the PA to drop off the recovered food, grab the now-clean containers. Once you trade containers full of food for clean ones, you'll be on your way! Drop them off at your storage space so the next recovery volunteers have the materials they need.

REMINDER:

If any of these suggestions do not work for your chapter, don't give up! FRN National is happy to help brainstorm other options. Contact us at programs@foodrecoverynetwork.org or [schedule a call](#).

4: Labeling Reusable Containers

Many chapters write "FRN" or their club's name in permanent marker or food safe paint directly on their containers and lids. This is a great way to distinguish your bins from your food donor or PA's bins. In a matter of weeks or months, you may have to write it again as the ink

will likely fade away. But if your containers don't have something to set them apart, **accept the higher risk of misplacing some containers**. For some ideas on how to keep track of your containers, see below.



University of Denver

- Bright tape or paint: [here is one option](#) for dishwasher safe, lime green paint. We recommend writing one layer of “FRN” or your chapter’s name, letting it dry, and writing it one more time to make sure it lasts.
- FRN sticker — [purchase here!](#)



University of Michigan - Flint

- **Suggestions for tracking your containers:**
 - *Number the bins.* This is the easiest way to reference your materials in a tracking spreadsheet. You could give them special names, but numbers are easier.
 - *Tracking spreadsheet.* This should list your food donor(s) or storage space, as well as your PA(s). This allows you to know, for instance, bins 1-5 are at the PA and bins 6-10 are at the food donor.

- The following sample spreadsheet is from FRN at the University of Utah, where they typically recovery food five times per week from five on-campus cafes and one dining hall: [Reusable Containers - Sample Tracking Spreadsheet](#).
- In this spreadsheet, list: the date of the recovery, food donor, PA, how many bins you picked up (at the beginning of the recovery – “Amount Out”), how many bins you dropped off (at the end of the recovery – “Amount In”), and the total number of containers. Additionally, this template lists how many containers are missing. For example, if you dropped off seven containers last week (last week’s “Amount Out”) and picked up five this week (“Amount In”), then mark that you are missing two containers.

Sample Tracking Spreadsheet					
Date:	Pickup Location (Food Donor)	Drop-Off Location (Partner Agency)	Amount Out	Amount In	Total
3/1/2018	Dining Hall	Rescue Mission	Large containers: 4 Medium containers: 10	Large containers: 3 Medium containers: 5	Large containers: 3 Medium containers: 5
					Missing: 1 Large 5 Medium

PRO TIP #3:

Check with your food donor and PA prior to purchasing containers to see what types of bins they use. They may have a preferred brand, size or style of bin. If not, we suggest you purchase containers that look different from theirs for easier recognition. Make sure the bins will be compatible with all stakeholders before purchasing.

5: Finding the Right Containers

As you may have guessed, there are various brands, sizes, and colors of reusable containers. How many you purchase will depend on a few factors. First, consider how many food donors and PAs you work with and how many times per week you recover. Our recommendation is that each chapter purchases **six 6-quart containers**. From there, execute two “pilot” recoveries, and assess whether you have too many, not enough, or just the right amount.

Keep in mind that you can purchase more containers if need be. If you find that you have more containers than you actually require in order to transport the food, you will have back-up containers. These will be useful if your chapter executes an unusually sizeable recovery down the line, like a catered event. If you do not have the space to store the extras and they do not meet the seller’s return policy, consider storing them at home or donating them to your PA or another organization.

PRO TIP #4:

Buy more lids than containers. Common occurrences: lids get lost during the recovery process, they crack, and PAs sometimes hold onto them accidentally!

Refer to the following conversion to determine how many of each type of container you need:

1 full size aluminum tray = 10.8 quarts = 43.25 cups

[2 quart reusable container](#): ~8 cups of food.

[6 quart reusable container](#): ~24 cups of food.

[12 quart reusable container](#): ~48 cups of food.

Below are several tables comparing various reusable containers we recommend. Each table is sorted by size. **Note: most containers require you to purchase a lid *separately*.** While these are intended to be one-time purchases, containers and lids may occasionally break; they are not 100% foolproof. Specifically, the lids are prone to shrinking or cracking while in the

dishwasher. This is not uncommon, and you may need to budget for occasionally replacing the lids.

REMINDER:

FRN National has funding available for chapters for recovery materials. Submit a [grant application or reimbursement request](#) if you are unable to cover the costs. (The grant maximum is \$150 per semester; this is not guaranteed for your chapter.)

Size: 2 Quarts (about 8 cups)	Purchasing Information	Details	Best Uses
	<p>Webstaurant Store</p> <p>Individual price: \$3.59 Bulk price (in lots of six): \$3.43/container; \$20.58 in total</p> <p>Color: clear</p> <hr/> <p>Purchase lid separately.</p> <p>Individual price: \$0.99 Bulk price (in lots of six): \$0.83/lid; \$4.98 in total</p> <p>Color: green</p>	<p>This is a standard, small container. It is clear, which allows you to see the food you're recovering. Due to their small size, many chapters purchase fewer of this size than the 6- and 12-quart containers.</p>	<p><i>What types of food do you typically recover, and are they in small or large quantities? Refer to "Common Types of Food Recovered by FRN Chapters."</i></p> <p>Best for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small amounts of food, such as salad, pasta, or vegetables • Prepared sandwiches or wraps
	<p>Home Depot</p> <p><i>Cannot purchase individually.</i> Bulk price (in lots of six): \$29.14 in total</p> <p>Color: clear</p> <hr/> <p>Purchase lid separately.</p> <p><i>Cannot purchase individually.</i> Bulk price (in lots of</p>	<p>These are slightly more expensive than the option above. It is recommended to buy these in bulk, rather than individually, in order to get your money's worth. Otherwise, same benefits as above container.</p>	

	six): \$11.72 in total Color: green		
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Size: 6 Quarts (about 24 cups)	Purchasing Information	Details	Best Uses
	<p>Webstaurant Store</p> <p>Individual price: \$7.79 Bulk price (in lots of six): \$7.19/container; \$43.14 in total</p> <p>Color: clear</p> <hr/> <p>Purchase lid separately.</p> <p>Individual price: \$1.49 Bulk price (in lots of six): \$1.29/lid; \$7.74 in total</p> <p>Color: red</p>	<p>This is a standard, medium-sized container. We recommend purchasing more of these than the 2- or 12-quart containers.</p>	<p><i>What types of food do you typically recover, and are they in small or large quantities? Refer to “Common Types of Food Recovered by FRN Chapters.”</i></p> <p>Best for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meat (several chicken breasts, beef, or meatballs) • Produce (such as assortments of vegetables) • Grains
	<p>Home Depot</p> <p><i>Cannot purchase individually.</i> Bulk price (in lots of six): \$53.31 in total</p> <p>Color: clear</p> <hr/> <p>Purchase lid separately.</p> <p><i>Cannot purchase individually.</i> Bulk price (in lots of six): \$14.54 in total</p> <p>Color: red</p>	<p>These are slightly more expensive. It is recommended to buy these in bulk, rather than individually, in order to get your money’s worth. Otherwise, these share the same benefits as the above container.</p>	

	<p>Amazon</p> <p>*Individual price (clear): \$10.15 Individual price (white): \$9.15 <i>No bulk discount.</i></p> <p>Color: white or clear</p> <p><i>*recommended</i></p>	<p><i>*This is only recommended as a back-up option in the event that other containers become unavailable.</i></p> <p>These are manufactured by RubberMaid, which is a reputable company. These are not as cost-effective as the previous options, as there is not bulk discount listed. However, in the unlikely scenario that the above websites sell out of their containers, this is a good back-up option.</p>	
	<p>Purchase lid separately. <i>At this time, 6 quart lids are unavailable. The price below reflects the 8 quart lid. If you choose this container, we recommend ensuring that the lid has either become available or you have access to another option.</i></p> <p>Individual price: \$6.26 <i>No bulk discount.</i></p> <p>Color: white</p>		

Size: 12 Quarts (about 48 cups)	Purchasing Information	Details	Best Uses
	<p>Webstaurant Store</p> <p>Individual price: \$13.49 Bulk price (in lots of six): \$12.48/container; \$74.88 in total</p> <p>Color: clear</p>	<p>This is a standard, large container. It is clear, which allows you to see the food you're recovering. You'll often have less of a need for this size than the medium, 6-quart containers. However, we recommend having at least six on-hand, depending on the capacity of your</p>	<p><i>What types of food do you typically recover, and are they in small or large quantities? Refer to "Common Types of Food Recovered by FRN Chapters."</i></p> <p>Best for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large breadsticks • Large pieces of meat <p>While these are effective</p>
	<p>Purchase lids separately.</p> <p>Individual price: \$2.19 Bulk price (in lots of six): \$1.96/lid; \$11.76 in total</p>		

	Color: blue	recovery program.	containers for larger quantities of food, please be cautious of the Temperature Danger Zone (41°F - 135°F). Make sure to properly measure the temperature of the food before the delivery; for any liquid items, please continue to the following section.
	Home Depot <i>Cannot purchase individually.</i> Bulk price (in lots of six): \$84.82 Color: clear	These are slightly more expensive. It is recommended to buy these in bulk, rather than individually, in order to get your money's worth. Otherwise, these share the same benefits as the above container.	
	Purchase lid separately. <i>Cannot purchase individually.</i> Bulk price (in lots of six): \$21.32 in total Color: blue		

Size: 28 Gallons	Purchasing Information	Details	Best Uses
  	Webstaurant Store Individual price: \$49.99 <i>Cannot purchase in bulk.</i> Color: white Lid included! <i>Disclaimer from Webstaurant Store:</i> "Each container is food safe, meaning it can be used in both storage or prep applications, and you can use the included lid to trap and conceal unwanted odors...Regardless of whether you need a trash can or large bulk storage container, this Rubbermaid can and lid is sure to do the	These sturdy, trash bin-esque containers make a great partner for any liquid items (i.e. soup, juice, or items that may defrost or cause significant condensation). This bin is National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) certified. It is food safe, and the heavy duty lid can trap odors and liquids quite well, probably better than a standard reusable container. This is FRN National's	<i>What types of food do you typically recover, and are they in small or large quantities? Refer to "Common Types of Food Recovered by FRN Chapters."</i> Best for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liquids, such as soup and juices • Items that may defrost or cause condensation

	job!"	recommended choice if you recover any liquids materials. <i>It is food safety-certified.</i>	
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6: You Purchased Reusable Containers — Now

What?!

Steps to Success

1. Mark your bins.
 - a. Prior to delivering them to your storage space, gather your leadership team, volunteers, or a group of friends to mark your bins.
2. Design your tracking sheet.
3. Document the “tare” of the bins.
 - a. Weigh the “tare” of the empty containers, either while you label them or during your first recovery. For instance, if an empty bin weighs one pound, each time you weigh the food in that sized container during a recovery, subtract one pound for your final data.
 - b. Mark down the tare weight of each different bin size at the top of your tracking spreadsheet so that you don’t have to remember it or calculate it during each recovery. You can simply refer to that sheet moving forward.
4. Remember the Temperature Danger Zone: **41°F - 135°F**.
 - a. Unfortunately, taller containers are susceptible to losing temperature more quickly than smaller ones. For instance, a tall container of mashed potatoes will likely lose its temperature after about 25-30 minutes, causing the potatoes to go bad. Yuck!
5. Confirm appropriate container type for food type.
 - a. **Talk to your food donor about the requirements for different types of food.** While it may seem intuitive to put the largest quantities of food in the biggest containers, sticking to our [food safety guidelines](#) and keeping food out of the Temperature Danger Zone, thus preventing any potential illnesses, requires extra attention.
6. Take photos during your first reusable container recovery!
 - a. You should be proud of the fact that you’ve taken steps toward making your chapter more sustainable. Share with FRN by tagging us on social media or uploading through the [Student Portal](#).
7. Schedule a meeting with your food donor(s) and PA(s).

- a. Your meeting could be in a few months or at the end of each semester to check in with all stakeholders about the reusable containers. Consider the following questions:
 - i. Is the process working?
 - ii. Do we have all of the bins and lids that we started with?
 1. Have any broken and/or gotten lost?
 2. Do we need to purchase more bins or lids?
 - iii. Do we have the right sizes, or do we need to expand our inventory?

7: Conclusion

Whether your interest in reusable containers comes from a love for the environment, an interest in saving money, or promising a positive experience for the recipients of your food, *thank you* for taking the time to review this resource. We wish you the best of luck in establishing an efficient system that encompasses all of these values.

Most information from this guide was compiled as a result of interviews with current and former FRN students. We are constantly seeking input from our vast student network, as you are on the front lines of our movement. If you come up with any innovative ways to use reusable containers or have any proposed updates to this resource, contact us at programs@foodrecoverynetwork.org or [schedule a call](#).

8: Appendix

Cost Analysis: Reusables vs. Aluminum Pans

Reusable containers are more cost-effective than disposable pans. Using recovery data from both larger universities and smaller colleges and considering the costs of reusable containers and standard aluminum pans, we created the following **hypothetical** situations. These calculations are **estimates**. FRN National cannot guarantee exactly how much money your chapter will save by using reusable containers.

Note: If you're unable to secure funding locally, [submit a grant application](#) to FRN National.

Before reviewing the Cost Analysis, consider these fundraising suggestions and strategies:

1. Contact your university's student life center or sustainability office.
2. Many colleges and universities offer exclusive funding to official clubs. If you're an official club on campus, conduct some research on your school's student life webpage or contact a

student government representative. If you're not an official club, this is a great reason to consider applying.

3. [Browse some examples of fundraising events](#) that other FRN Chapters have conducted. If you'd like to run any ideas by our Programs Team, [we're here to brainstorm](#).

1 full size aluminum tray = 10.8 quarts = 43.25 cups

[2 quart reusable container](#): ~8 cups of food.

[6 quart reusable container](#): ~24 cups of food.

[12 quart reusable container](#): ~48 cups of food.

Hypothetical 1A:

- The University of Maryland, College Park has a combined undergraduate/graduate student population of nearly 40,000 students. FRN at UMD partners with five food donors on a regular basis and typically recovers food six times per week, with an average of 199 lbs per recovery. They typically use anywhere between 20-30 trays per recovery. Let's say they purchased 100 full-sized aluminum trays at the beginning of the semester. WebstaurantStore sells these trays at a rate of **\$26.49 per case (50 trays/case)**. That's **\$52.98 for 100 aluminum trays**. After shipping costs, the **total is \$80.16**. After about one week of recoveries, UMD will run out of aluminum pans.
- At this rate, UMD FRN spends about **\$320.64/month**. If they consistently buy this amount of trays for the remainder of the school year, they'll spend about **\$2,885 (spending this once/year for 5 years = 14,425.)**

Hypothetical 1B:

- They purchase 64 medium, 6-quart containers. According to UMD's food tracking data, this should be enough bins for two recoveries, considering that they keep one set at their PA and one set at their DSP. In lots of six, WebstaurantStore sells these at a rate of **\$6.41 per container**. That's **\$412.16 for 64 containers**. After shipping costs, this amounts to **\$462.09**.
- At this rate, UMD FRN saves **\$2,422.91** in the first school year.
 - Over the course of five years, UMD FRN will save **\$13,962.91**.

Hypothetical 1A:	One-time price	Per month	Per school year	5 years
100 full-sized aluminum trays	\$80.16	\$360.64	\$2,885	\$14,425

Hypothetical 1B: 64 6-quart reusable containers	Per container	Total with shipping	Savings per year	Savings per 5 years
		\$6.41	\$462.09	\$2,422.91

Hypothetical 2A:

- On average, Macalaster College has a total student body of about 2,100 students. FRN at Macalaster partners with one on-campus food donor and executes recoveries about once per week, with an average of about 70 lbs per recovery. They typically use 11 aluminum trays for each recovery. Let's say they purchase 100 full-sized aluminum trays at the beginning of the semester. WebstaurantStore sells these trays at a rate of **\$26.49 per case (50 trays/case)**. That's **\$52.98 for 100 aluminum trays**. After shipping costs, the **total is \$80.16**. After about nine recoveries (just over two months), they'll run out of trays.
- At this rate, Macalaster FRN spends more than **\$360 each school year** (not including any additional recoveries). **Spending this once/year for five years = \$1,800.**

Hypothetical 2B:

- Macalaster students decide to make the switch to reusable containers. They purchase 42 medium, 6-quart containers (in order to have enough for two recoveries). WebstaurantStore sells these at a rate of **\$7.19 per container**, as long as they buy more than six at once. That's **\$301.98 for 42 containers**. After shipping costs, this comes out to **\$329.46**.
- At this rate, Macalaster FRN saves **\$30.54 in one academic year**.
 - Over the course of five years, Macalaster FRN will save **\$1,470.54**.

Hypothetical 2A: 100 full-sized aluminum trays	One-time price	Per month	Per school year	5 years
	\$80.16		\$360	\$1,800
Hypothetical 2B: 42 6-quart reusable containers	Per container	Total with shipping	Savings per year	Savings per 5 years
	\$7.19	\$329.46	\$30.54	\$1,470.54

Note: The amount of money that you save will add up over time as your containers should last for several years. Instead of continually re-purchasing them (as you would with aluminum or other disposable trays), you will most likely only have to purchase these containers once — as long as you take good care of them. Read on to learn about how to keep track of them to make sure they do not break or get lost.