

### WHY REUSE?

Reuse systems are gaining momentum in Canada. Their appeal rests on the many benefits they potentially offer. Reuse **reduces waste** sent for disposal; can offer **cost savings**; and **drives down energy and resource use** by displacing the need to manufacture new items from raw materials. Reuse includes both refill and return systems. Return involves a business-run system where containers are returned, washed and reused for the same purpose. Refill refers to consumer-owned and managed containers, such as bring-your-own programs.

[www.nzwc.ca](http://www.nzwc.ca)

## Fresh Prep – FOOD CONTAINERS



### PARTNERS

Partners with local suppliers and supporting local organizations such as Vancouver Food Runners, Leftovers Foundation and Surfrider Foundation.



### LOCATION

Based in Vancouver. Serves over 35 municipalities throughout British Columbia and Alberta, and recently expanding to Quebec and Ontario.



### SECTOR

Online retail



### PRODUCT CATEGORY

Food containers



### THE COMPANY

Founded in 2015, **Fresh Prep** is a Vancouver-based meal kit delivery service that enables Canadian customers to cook delicious, restaurant-quality meals at home in 30 minutes or less.

Customers receive 2 to 5 recipes per week in insulated cooler bags to reduce cardboard use and freshness. More than half of Fresh Prep's recipes are available in their patented Zero Waste Kits with reusable containers that store pre-portioned meal kit ingredients. Launched in 2021, Zero Waste Kits are available at no extra charge to the consumer.

Fresh Prep recently acquired Montreal-based meal kit company, Cook It, allowing them to expand into Central Canada.

**19g of single-use plastic** per Zero Waste Kit is prevented from entering the waste stream.

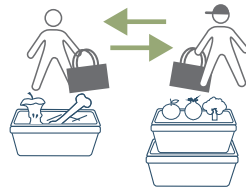
**8% of Canadians** subscribe to a meal delivery kit.

In **2022**, **819,303** recipes in Zero Waste Kits were delivered to customers. This effectively prevented **15,560 kgs of single-use plastics**.

### DID YOU KNOW?

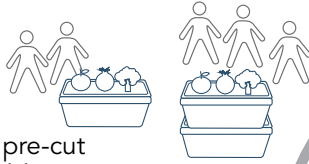
- Meal delivery kits typically use significant amounts of **packaging**: on average, only 35% of the shipment weight consists of food.
- 67.8 % of respondents to a 2022 survey by Dalhousie University said they dropped the service because of the heavy packaging the kits come in. However, Fresh Prep's reusable Zero Waste Kits dramatically reduce the need for single-use plastics.
- Meal kits can help reduce household food waste at home by portioning meals and providing only what is needed for each recipe.
- One study** of 50 meal kit services found meal kits reduce food waste by 27% on average versus grocery-bought meals and decrease food-related greenhouse gas emissions by 45%.

## KEY CHARACTERISTICS: FOOD CONTAINERS



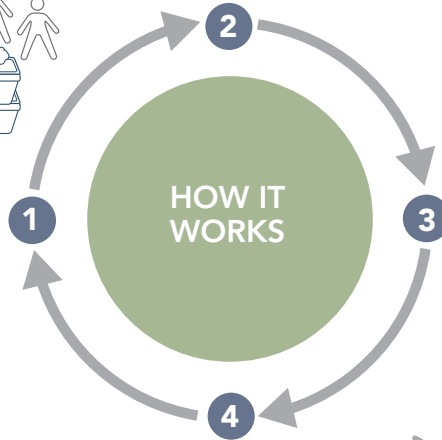
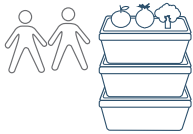
### Collection & Reverse Logistics:

Fresh Prep collects the Zero Waste Kits and cooler bags when they deliver the customer's next order.



### Purchase & Use:

Customers receive pre-cut ingredients in reusable containers, called Zero Waste Kits, which they rinse after use, and store in Fresh Prep cooler bags until collection.



### Washing & Sanitizing:

The Zero Waste Kits are sanitized in a contactless conveyor dishwasher with Health Canada-recommended disinfectants to maintain customer and team safety. FreshPrep owns and operates its own sanitization facilities in BC and Alberta.



### Refilling and/or restocking:

After thorough quality checks, Zero Waste Kits are ready to be re-used for future deliveries.



## FROM SOLUTION TO PRACTICE

- To promote the return of reusable items, Fresh Prep charges for unreturned cooler bags and Zero Waste Kits (\$10 for cooler bags and \$8 for Zero Waste Kits) after 6 weeks. Customers returning these items at a later time get these charges credited back to their account.
- Fresh Prep** has two sizes of Zero Waste Kits to fit all fridge sizes.
- Meat, seafood, and moisture-sensitive powders are packaged in soft plastics to maintain food safety and freshness. Soft plastics containing meat or seafood cannot be recovered for recycling due to the possibility of food contamination.



## POLICY CONTEXT

- In 2023, Fresh Prep received nearly \$350,000 in funding from the **Canadian Food Innovation Network** and **CleanBC Plastics Action Fund** to help develop their zero-waste food prep packaging offering.
- Under **Canada's Single-use Plastics Prohibition Regulations**, manufacturing, importing, selling, and distributing various types of single-use food packaging in Canada is banned. The ban includes check-out bags, cutlery, foodservice ware, stir sticks and straws, which were banned from sale starting December 20, 2023.
- Across Canadian Provinces, producers of packaged products are responsible for recovering their packaging through extended producer responsibility frameworks, costs that can be avoided by switching to reusable packaging.

## OTHER COMPANIES TO CHECK OUT

- Crisper**, which provides plant-based meal kits in Toronto and Mississauga
- The Minnow**, a hyper-local and farm-fresh meal kit delivery company serves Portland, Oregon.
- Zero-waste grocery delivery solutions include **BOOX** and **LimeLoop**, providers of returnable packaging-as-a-service. Many local zero-waste retail stores offer zero-waste delivery services. To find one near you, check the **Let's Go Zero Waste**.

See **Reuse Policy Tracker** hosted by Upstream for more policy examples from Canada/US.