

Case Study:

Cultiva

Located in the heart of San Juan Bautista, **Cultiva** offers a seasonal, plant-based menu crafted with locally grown produce from Green Thumb Farms. What began as a way to highlight the family farm has grown into a vibrant eatery and community mini-market featuring fresh veggie boxes and locally made goods.

Sustainability has always guided owner Maria's work, and she began the Green Business Certification process soon after opening. A key focus was **reducing waste by switching to reusables** for indoor dining. She replaced disposable plates and bowls with aluminum and porcelain dishware, and is continuing efforts with a portable station for the new **refillable condiments, three-stream waste bins, and the reusable dishware drop-off container.**

Within months, Cultiva proved that going reusable not only reduces waste, but it also saves money.

Foodware Practices before the Pilot Program:

- Disposable Paper plates
- Disposable Paper bowls

Foodware Practices after the Pilot Program:

- Reusable Aluminum Bun Pan / Sheet Pan
- Reusable 12 oz. Porcelain Bowl
- Reusable 8 oz. Porcelain Bouillon

The Bottom Line

- **\$213** upfront investment for reusable foodware
- **\$689** in total annual net cost savings
- **6,844** disposable items reduced per year
- **227** pounds of annual waste reduction

Business Profile

- Name:** Cultiva
- Business Type:** Fast Casual
- Locations:** San Juan Bautista, CA
- On-site Dining:** 35
- Takeout:** 60%
- Dishwashing Capacity:**
Hand Wash



Before



After



“Together, we can cultivate a brighter, more sustainable future” - Maria Gonzalez, Cultiva

Results

| Disposable Product Replaced or Minimized | Recommendation Implemented | Packaging Impacts | | | Cost Impacts |
|--|------------------------------|------------------------------|---|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| | | Percent Disposable Reduction | Annual Quantity of Disposable Product Reduced | Annual Waste Reduction (lbs) | Annual Net Cost Savings |
| Compostable Paper Plates | Aluminum Bun Pan / Sheet Pan | 75% | 4,563 | 176 | \$415 |
| Compostable Paper Bowls | 12 oz. Porcelain Bowl | 75% | 2,281 | 51 | \$274 |
| | 8 oz. Porcelain Bouillon | | | | |
| Totals: | | | 6,844 | 227 lbs. | \$689 |

*Net Cost Savings considers any upfront and ongoing costs associated with the purchase and care of reusable items and capital improvements needed to carry out the recommendation, and are based on avoided disposable foodware purchases.



Before

After



Before

After