

April 2018 - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Amy Eller
Don't Waste Durham, Board Chair
amy@amyeller.com | 919-597-8740

Crystal Dreisbach
Don't Waste Durham, Executive Director
crystal@dontwastedurham.org

GreenToGo and a Circular Economy in Durham

We have a growing trash problem. Reuse is the solution.

Last year, local nonprofit Don't Waste Durham, launched a revolutionary solution to our home-grown trash problem. And the revolution is growing!

What's the problem? Downtown Durham dining produces over half a ton of takeout container trash monthly in the form of single-use throw-away containers, utensils and plastic bags. We're a city growing in population by about 20 people per day, and we're nestled in the heart of a county that doesn't have its own landfill. Yet, Durham's dense population creates a lot of trash. Our trash is trucked 97 miles away to the Sampson County landfill in tractor-trailers that get 6 miles to the gallon. The Sampson County landfill is expected to reach capacity within a decade... then what?

What's the solution? Prevention. What if we just didn't produce so much trash, regardless of how many people live in our city? Don't Waste Durham founder, Crystal Dreisbach, knew there was a better solution: make a wash-reuse system easy and convenient for the general public to choose! That's the idea behind GreenToGo, the East Coast's first public reusable takeout container service, designed to create a circular economy. It's starting with the Durham restaurant scene with even bigger plans for the future!

GreenToGo is a subscription-based program that allows members to check out and check in reusable containers at participating restaurants. Think of it as the takeout container version of library books. You take your food to-go in a sturdy, leak-proof container, enjoy your food, and then return it to any of the participating restaurants or public return sites. The GreenToGo pedal-powered transportation and sanitation team collects the dirty containers to wash, sanitize, and redistribute back to the restaurants. It's a completely closed loop system, and it's fully permitted by the Durham County Health Department.

Currently there are 17 participating restaurants and 2 more launch on April 18, just in time for Earth Day! In celebration of Earth Month, GreenToGo is offering a special promotion for new members (\$10 off new 3 or 4 box memberships when you use the coupon code: EARTH2018), a social media contest for users to win sustainability-enabling prizes, and 7 of the participating restaurants are offering 10% off GreenToGo takeout orders (some restrictions apply). Full details online at durhamgreentogo.com/earth2018.

National News About Takeout Trash:

<http://www.restaurant-hospitality.com/technology/taking-trash-out-takeout>

<https://www.vox.com/videos/2018/1/3/16842068/climate-lab-takeout-food>

<https://nypost.com/2018/01/16/takeout-food-is-creating-a-trash-epidemic/>

<https://www.treehugger.com/ocean-conservation/are-single-use-plastics-having-their-coal-moment.html>