

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- \* **REFUSE** - Choose eco-friendly products, bring reusable bags and containers when shopping, and avoid beauty products with microplastic beads.
- \* **REDUCE** - Cut back on single-use plastics and plastic packaging. Reducing dependency on these products results in less waste materials ending up in landfills, with the associated negative environmental impacts.
- \* **REUSE** - Single-use plastics have normalised a “throw-away” culture. Replace single-use plastics with reusable alternatives to reduce waste.
- \* **RECYCLE** - Try recycling your PET (Polyethylene teraphthalate) bottles. Separate them from your regular garbage and place them in designated recycling bins. The Government supports separation-at source programs in 18 communities in the Kingston Metropolitan Area. These bottles are collected by the National Solid Waste Management Authority and sent to Recycling Partners of Jamaica Limited for recycling.

IT'S TIME TO  
**BREAK  
UP WITH  
PLASTIC**

## LEARN MORE



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MINISTRY OF  
ECONOMIC GROWTH  
AND JOB CREATION

ENSURING A  
**PLASTIC  
FREE TODAY  
FOR A BETTER  
TOMORROW!**



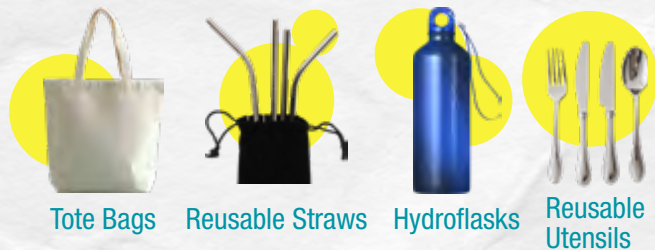
## OVERVIEW OF PLASTIC FREE SUMMER

Plastic is the cheapest and most durable packaging material, but its slow decomposition rate, ranging from **20 to 1000 years**, poses **significant environmental hazards**. The lack of recycling contributes to its accumulation in landfills, waterways, seas, and oceans causing pollution and threatening marine life and human health.

Scientific studies have revealed alarming risks to human health, including cardiovascular disease, respiratory issues, cancer, fertility problems, and toxic poisoning. In response to these concerns, over 127 countries, including Jamaica, have implemented measures to regulate single-use plastics.

These factors and more led the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation (MEGJC) to declare Plastic Free Summer (PFS), beginning in July 2022. **The aim of Plastic Free Summer is to educate the public on the potentially harmful impacts of plastic pollution on Jamaica's environment**, the effort of the Ministry and its agencies to mitigate it, and what members of the public can do to make a difference.

## ALTERNATIVES FOR SINGLE-USE PLASTICS



## BAN ON SINGLE-USE PLASTICS IN JAMAICA

The Government of Jamaica (GOJ) initiated efforts to reduce plastic pollution with a ban on single-use plastic packaging materials. The ban was implemented in four (4) phases.

### PHASE 1: January 1, 2019

- \* Plastic shopping bags (polyethylene or polypropylene) larger than 24" x 24"
- \* Plastic drinking straws

### PHASE 2: January 1, 2020

- \* Polystyrene foam (Styrofoam) used in food and beverage containers

### PHASE 3: January 1, 2021

- \* All plastic bags 24" x 24" or smaller with a thickness of 0.06mm or less
- \* Plastic straws attached to juice boxes and drink pouches

### PHASE 4: July 1, 2024

- \* The importation, distribution, sale, or use of any single-use plastic food container made wholly or in part of polyethylene, polypropylene, or polylactic acid (PLA).

*Note: Transparent plastic lids are temporarily exempt until environmentally friendly alternatives become available. Existing stock imported before this date is allowed for a 6-month transition period.*

### \*Jan 9, 2025

The distribution and use of single-use plastic food containers are prohibited. This was the end of the six-month period during which they were allowed. As such, the importation and use of food boxes made in whole or in part of polyethylene, polypropylene, or polylactic acid are prohibited.

\*The next stage of Phase 4 is, personal care and cosmetic products containing intentionally added microplastics or microbeads.

## MICROPLASTICS - WHAT ARE THEY?

Microplastics are tiny plastic particles that pose a threat to aquatic life and can have negative effects on soil and freshwater ecosystems. They result from the breakdown of larger plastic items or are manufactured and intentionally added to cosmetic products (such as facial scrubs or body washes) as small particles. Researchers warn that terrestrial microplastic pollution is higher than marine pollution, affecting species that maintain soil fertility.

## MICROPLASTICS CYCLE

