A better supply chain serves us all

Reusable Plastic Containers (RPCs) – your solution for the fresh food supply chain since 1992.
Delivering fresher food with Reusable Plastic Containers (RPCs) since 1992.

IFCO is the leading global provider of reusable packaging solutions for fresh foods, serving customers in 50+ countries.

IFCO operates a pool of over 314 million Reusable Plastic Containers (RPCs) globally, which are used for over 1.7 billion shipments of fresh fruits and vegetables, meat, poultry, seafood, eggs, bread, and other items from suppliers to grocery retailers every year.

IFCO RPCs ensure a better fresh food supply chain by protecting freshness and quality and lowering costs, food waste and environmental impact.

Our pooling system, the IFCO SmartCycle™ is designed to ensure the highest possible levels of operational efficiency, food safety and retail readiness. IFCO manages every step of the pooling system - from delivering clean RPCs to grower/packers, to picking up empty RPCs from distribution centers, to cleaning and sanitizing, again ready for redistribution.

With more RPCs in circulation worldwide than any other supplier, IFCO can supply whatever your business demands.

IFCO SmartCycle™ – A circular approach

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314 m
RPCs in circulation

IFCO SmartCycle™

ifcoglobal.com
Switching from single-use packaging to IFCO RPCs reduce costs in supply chains by up to 27% eliminating up to €681 million each year.

Data from: Analysis of Packaging Cost Impacts, Fraunhofer Institute for Material Flow and Logistics on behalf of IFCO SYSTEMS, 2008; University of Bonn, Institute for Animal Science, Cold-Chain Management Working Group and the Fraunhofer Institute for Material Flow and Logistics, 2013; Analysis of the Impact of Packaging on Indirect Costs in the Retail Fresh Produce Supply Chain, California Polytechnic State University, 2015.
RPCs are designed specifically to transport fresh products

IFCO RPCs reduce product damage by over 96% and are proven to extend the shelf life of fresh produce thanks to their characteristics: sturdy construction, highly-ventilated, foldable, stackable and sustainable.

The most extensive product range of any pool provider

More than 70 models of RPCs suit all types of fresh food, in multiple sizes, with optimized solutions for fresh fruit and vegetables, bananas, meat, fish, seafood, eggs and baked goods.

IFCO RPC Characteristics

Optimal product protection for ideal ventilation and cooling

Maximum inner volume through outward arched walls

Highest level of hygiene Best hygiene properties due to smooth walls

Traceability Label with data-matrix code for individual box identification

Ergonomic Lift Lock closure for easy manual or automatic open/close of RPCs*

*Valid for Lift Lock models only

Reduced height to maximize space

Folding

Stacking

Maximised transport efficiency Reduced height when folded to maximize returned pallets*

*Not included on all models
As supply chains turn to automation to become more cost-effective, IFCO RPCs are ideal for optimizing automated processes.

The right choice of packaging is critical in automated logistics centers for fresh produce. As growers pack fruit and vegetables in IFCO RPCs, and as retailers turn to automation, it means reduced costs and handling throughout the entire supply chain.

As a global market leader in reusable packaging, IFCO offers high levels of product compatibility and standardization. Our RPCs’ compelling characteristics make them ideal for warehouse automation.

Food safety is just as important to our customers as freshness and quality. That’s why IFCO adheres to strictly enforced global standards of hygiene and sanitization.

Because our RPCs are meant to be reused, the cleaning process plays a critical role in ensuring the food safety of our RPCs. This is why we base our wash and sanitation processes on cleaning science. We perform ongoing hygiene testing to verify the cleaning process is effective and free from harmful bacteria.

We use highly-automated processes that are designed to deactivate or remove human and plant pathogens. Our RPCs are prewashed, washed, rinsed and sanitized with disinfectants before they are dispatched again.

IFCO’s SmartGuardian™ continuously monitors wash processes, and the data is regularly validated. Only IFCO offers this level of safety and validated wash and sanitation processes globally.

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Rigorous cleaning processes, continuously improved

1. RPCs arrive at the IFCO service centre and are opened for cleaning
2. Mechanical function check: damaged RPCs are sent for repair or recycling
3. Pre-rinse with hot water at high pressure to loosen and remove further debris
4. Main wash with hot water at high pressure using highly effective detergents
5. RPCs are sanitized using highly effective disinfectants
6. Rinsing with fresh water to remove any residual chemicals
7. Quality check: RPC’s that don’t meet IFCO’s quality standards are washed again
8. RPCs are folded and stacked
9. Centrifugal drying process removes water by spinning the stacked RPCs rapidly
10. Stacks are palletized and secured for safety

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IFCO RPCs: the ideal solution for automated processes

- Durable material
  - Withstands temperature and moisture extremes
- Optimal ventilation
  - Efficient cooling and temperature regulation
- Base configuration
  - Provides smooth passage on rollers or conveyors
- Study construction
  - Protects products in tall stacks
- Standardized dimensions
  - Essential for scanning and recognition
- Large range of models
  - Transports wide range of products
- Securely stackable
  - Avoids tilting and slippage
- Standardized footprint
  - Essential for high volume operations
- Moisture-resistant
  - Maintains shape and size despite high humidity
- High compatibility
  - Minimal deviation between product generations
Less waste out, fewer natural resources in. Make the sustainable choice.

IFCO RPCs have been proven to provide a more sustainable alternative for the fresh supply chain than single-use packaging. RPCs reduce solid waste and environmental pollutants dramatically, while generating significantly lower levels of greenhouse gases, using less water, and requiring less energy.

Along the supply chain, growers, distributors and retailers are changing from single-use to reusable packaging and moving toward a circular business model designed to reduce waste by reusing resources. Sustainability is important to us all. Let’s protect the things that matter!

Environmental Impact

Comparative Life Cycle Assessment of Reusable Plastic Containers and Display-and Non-Display-Ready Corrugated Containers Used for Fresh Produce Applications, Franklin Associates (2017); The Sustainability of Packaging Systems for Fruit and Vegetable Transport in Europe based on Life-Cycle-Analysis (2018); RPC Supply Chain Cost Impact Analysis by Dr. Jay Singh and Dr. Koushik Saha, Cal Poly State University (2015)
Want to know more?
We look forward to answering any questions you may have. To find your local office or for more information visit IFCO.com

A better supply chain serves us all. Let’s eat.