



Grab & Go Reusable Packaging for Groceries Business Plan

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Executive Summary

Company Description

Refilled is a wholesale grocery brand offering healthy, whole, staple foods in prefilled returnable packaging. Our unique, grab-and-go model will put groceries packaged in returnable packaging on grocery store shelves, creating a convenient experience for customers and integrating smoothly into in-store shopping and online ordering. Our vision is a world where reusable packaging connects food producers, retailers, and shoppers in a waste-free system—in every aisle and every store.

Products and Services

Refilled offers a branded line of staple grocery items, pre-packaged in reusable packaging. We source local, regional, and organic products whenever possible. Refilled manages the return, cleaning, and filling of containers, including a container deposit system. Our products are available at Minneapolis retailers for in-store or online shopping.

Marketing Plan

Refilled sees an opportunity to fill an unmet customer desire: convenient, sustainably packaged, and affordable groceries that slot into existing shopping routines. Our niche is our unique grab-and-go model for reusable packaging.

There are no competitors offering a grab-and-go model for groceries in reusable packaging. However, Minneapolis is home to several “zero waste” stores and food co-ops that offer unpackaged groceries. Our target audience—younger, eco-conscious customers—is likely to also shop at these stores. We will aim to place our products at several of these retailers, understanding that we will be competing in-store against their bulk offerings. We will also place our products at grocery stores without bulk sections, expanding our reach to a broader group of shoppers.

To reach our target audience, Refilled will craft a message that focuses on the positive impact of our products and encourages the behavior change required for customers to adopt reusable packaging. Refilled will also need to market our products to retail partners. We will sell our

products directly to retailers to facilitate our reverse logistics system and build close partnerships.

Operational Plan

Refilled was founded to help transform a single-use system that is failing our customers and our planet. The Living Principles for Design will be our guide in this work, translating our commitments into a meaningful, detailed plan for sustainability.

The primary day-to-day functions of Refilled include reverse logistics management (transport, cleaning, and refilling containers), procurement of grocery products, and marketing/sales. Refilled will begin operations with a streamlined staff focused on key business activities and will outsource other needs.

Refilled will be poised to take advantage of a shift in the industry driven by new and upcoming extended producer responsibility (EPR) laws—including Minnesota’s 2024 Packaging Waste and Cost Reduction Act. These laws require businesses to take financial responsibility for their packaging waste and encourage sustainable approaches to packaging.¹

Management and Organization

Refilled will launch as a C-Corp and will seek B-Corp (Benefit Corporation) certification after 12 months in business. We will begin operations with a three-member board of directors, including the CEO, COO, and one outside advisor.

Financial Plan

To launch at the scale proposed in this plan, Refilled would need considerable startup funds and would need to quickly achieve and maintain a significant sales volume. While initial financial projections show promise, profit margins in the grocery industry are slim, and customers are price-sensitive after several years of inflation.

Next Steps

Given its unique value proposition and innovative retail model, Refilled has strong potential—but the financial risk is high. Further research—including additional market research and in-depth financial planning—is needed to determine a realistic, financially viable scale for launch.

Company Description

Refilled is a wholesale grocery brand offering healthy, whole, staple foods in prefilled returnable packaging.

We have a packaging problem. Only nine percent of plastic ever produced has been recycled, and packaging makes up twenty-three percent of landfilled material in the U.S.²

Reusable packaging is an important part of the solution. Refilled will put groceries packaged in reusable, returnable packaging on grocery store shelves—creating a convenient, grab-and-go experience for customers and integrating smoothly into in-store shopping and online ordering.

We will sell a line of staple items—for example, pastas, cereals, and sauces—that are pre-packaged in returnable packaging. All customers need to do is grab their groceries, then return their empties to any participating retailer.

At launch, our products will be sold in stores in Minneapolis, Minnesota, allowing us to remain nimble, leverage local partnerships, and align with Minnesota’s 2024 Packaging Waste and Cost Reduction Act. Looking to the future, we will expand our reach, bringing our products to more shoppers without sacrificing our focus on partnerships and community.

Guiding Principles

Sustainability is at the heart of what we do. Refilled was founded to help transform a single-use system that is failing our customers and our planet. But we know that sustainability goes beyond a big idea or a vision statement—making true change requires action. The Living Principles for Design will be our guide in this work, translating our commitments into a meaningful, detailed plan for sustainability.

The Living Principles for Design framework is a catalyst for driving positive cultural change. Created by sustainability professionals working with the AIGA (a US national graphic arts industry group), the LP Framework distills the four streams of sustainability—environment, people, economy, and culture—into a roadmap that is understandable, integrated, and most importantly, actionable.

The Living Principles: Four Streams of Integrated Sustainability

Environment: Actions and issues that affect natural systems, including climate change, preservation, carbon footprint and restoration of natural resources.

- We will help drive systems-level change to transform food packaging from single-use to circular.
- We will design products and systems that significantly reduce waste and planet-warming emissions compared to business-as-usual approaches.
- We will rigorously measure our impact and test our assumptions to design solutions that deliver quantifiable sustainability benefits.
- We will use materials that are healthy for people and the environment.
- We will source our grocery products from producers using sustainable, organic, and/or regenerative agricultural and production practices.

People: Actions and issues that affect all aspects of society, including poverty, violence, injustice, education, healthcare, safe housing, labor and human rights.

- We will use materials that are healthy for people and the environment.
- We will partner with local producers and retailers to support a strong local food economy.
- We will source our grocery products from producers using sustainable, organic, and/or regenerative agricultural and production practices.
- We will partner with vendors that prioritize worker well-being and safety.

Economy: Actions and issues that affect how people and organizations meet their basic needs, evolve and define economic success and growth.

- We will price our products to be accessible to most shoppers, not just the affluent few.
- We will provide reusable packaging as a service to our customers, maintaining ownership of and responsibility for our packaging throughout its full life cycle.
- We will partner with local producers and retailers to support a strong local food economy.

Culture: Actions and issues that affect how communities manifest identity, preserve and cultivate traditions, and develop belief systems and commonly accepted values.

- Beyond simply selling our products, we will share our vision of a circular future, helping our customers envision the promise of a world with less waste.

Mission, Vision, Values, Goals

Mission Statement

Good food in good packaging—for everyone.

Vision Statement

A world where reusable packaging connects food producers, retailers, and shoppers in a waste-free system—in every aisle and every store.

Values Statement

Accessibility

Our system works—and feels easy—for everyone.

Experience

We create a convenient experience for our customers—one that helps them feel good about creating less waste.

Community

We are part of a vibrant food system. People—growers, sellers, shoppers and eaters—are at the heart of what we do.

Innovation

Our system transforms the way we shop for food. We know that creating systems-level change requires flexibility, innovation, and adaptation.

Goals and Objectives

Our company goals emphasize creating a convenient customer experience, building strong partnerships, and maximizing sustainability benefits:

- Achieve 100 percent container return rate by prioritizing customer convenience and ensuring our return systems run smoothly.

- Keep our containers in circulation for an optimal number of use cycles (TBD during lifecycle analysis) to maximize our sustainability benefit.
- Achieve at least 35 percent improvement in key sustainability metrics—including fossil fuel use, greenhouse warming potential, human impact, and water consumption—compared to single-use alternatives.
- Build strong relationships with our retail partners to collaboratively create efficient in-store and online sales and return systems that work for our business, our retail partners, and our customers.
- Sell at least 30 percent local or regional products and 70 percent organic and/or regenerative products in our product line.
- After three years, expand our operations to a second metro area.

Business Philosophy

We prioritize customer experience and build strong relationships with our partners to create a returnable packaging system that works smoothly for all our stakeholders. We never lose sight of our sustainability metrics—ensuring that our products and systems are truly better for people and planet. And we work to make sure our products are accessible to a wide range of shoppers.

Industry Overview

The food and grocery market has grown steadily over recent years. Growth is expected to continue at a compound annual growth rate of 3.5 percent through 2028.³ Trends in the industry include expanding e-commerce options, a focus on convenience, inflation-driven price-consciousness, and a growing share of customers who value sustainability.⁴

Customers increasingly expect brands and retailers to offer products with positive ESG (environmental, social, governance) impact—and grocery shoppers pay extra attention to packaging as an important sustainability factor. This is especially true of Gen Z and Millennial consumers: 49 percent of Gen Z shoppers and 48 percent of Millennial shoppers state that they are willing to pay more for environmentally friendly products.⁵

Reusable packaging is growing, but slowly. McKinsey & Company estimates that reusable packaging models will achieve only a five percent penetration in the global market across all product categories by 2032. But, they note that several factors could accelerate adoption,

including a changing regulatory environment, increased consumer demand, and evolving supply chain infrastructure.⁶

Several U.S. states, including Minnesota, have recently passed extended producer responsibility (EPR) laws, which require businesses to take financial responsibility for their packaging waste and encourage sustainable approaches to packaging.⁷ This will impact grocery brands and retailers, which currently rely heavily on single-use packaging.

While customers are growing more aware of waste from single-use packaging, options for groceries in reusable packaging remain niche. Independent, “zero waste” grocers serve a dedicated group of customers who are willing to make an extra stop, bring and fill their own containers, and potentially pay a premium. Some larger trials, like Loop, have focused on offering reusable packaging for products from big brands sold at mainstream retailers, but so far have not achieved widespread success.⁸

Refilled will fill an unmet customer desire—convenient, sustainably packaged, and affordable groceries that slot into their existing shopping routines. We will also be poised to take advantage of a shift in the industry driven by new and upcoming EPR laws. We will need to strike a balance between price and value to ensure that customers are willing and able to buy our products.

Market Segment Overview

Refilled is driven by our vision to make reusable packaging a mainstream option for all shoppers. That said, market research shows that Gen Z and Millennial customers may be most receptive to our innovative, sustainability-forward approach. 49 percent of Gen Z shoppers and 48 percent of Millennial shoppers state that they are willing to pay more for environmentally friendly products—compared to only 23 percent of Gen X and 16 percent of Baby Boomer shoppers.⁹

Company Strengths and Competencies

Strengths:

- **Flexibility:** Our small scale keeps us nimble and able to adapt our systems to meet stakeholder needs.
- **Partnerships & Collaboration:** Our strong partnerships with suppliers and retail partners help us build systems that work for all stakeholders.

- **Systems design and thinking:** We think at a systems level to design solutions that truly work—and deliver on our sustainability promises.

Competencies:

- **Reverse logistics management:** Managing the transport, return, cleaning, and filling of our reusable containers.
- **Product procurement:** Purchasing our products from our suppliers.
- **Container/packaging design:** Creating containers that maximize sustainability and user experience.
- **Communication and marketing:** Making our value proposition clear to our customers and our retail partners.

Competitive strengths:

- Innovative combination of convenience and sustainability
- Poised to take advantage of new regulatory environment (EPR laws)
- Nimble supply chains and strong local partnerships

Legal Form of Ownership

Because Refilled will seek outside investment, the company will launch as a C-Corp. We will seek B-Corp (Benefit Corporation) certification after our first 12 months of business, per eligibility requirements.

B-Corp certification will reinforce our guiding principles, ensuring that our business is aligned with our values—and revealing opportunities for improvement. We also know that our success goes far beyond our bottom line. B-Corp certification will ensure that we measure the value we bring to all our stakeholders, not just our shareholders. Finally, B-Corp certification will enhance our brand perception with our target audience.

Products and Services

Refilled offers a branded line of staple grocery items, pre-packaged in reusable packaging for a convenient, grab-and-go shopping experience.

- Our product line includes shelf-stable pantry staples, such as:
 - Dry staples: Pastas, rice, beans

- Sauces and condiments: Pasta sauce, ketchup, oil, vinegar
- Snacks and cereals: Granola, cereals, dried fruits, nuts
- Locally/regionally sourced products whenever possible (e.g. honey, maple syrup, dried beans, flours)
- We manage the return, cleaning, and filling of containers to be stocked on grocery store shelves—including a container deposit system and multiple drop-off options.
- Our products are available at Minneapolis retailers for in-store or online shopping.

Pricing:

- We offer products at a mid-market price point, aiming for a wide customer reach.

Marketing Plan

Refilled sees an opportunity to fill an unmet customer desire: convenient, sustainably packaged, and affordable groceries that slot into existing shopping routines. Our niche is our unique grab-and-go model for reusable packaging, which creates a convenient experience for customers and integrates smoothly into in-store shopping and online ordering.

Market Research: Opportunity

A strong majority of Americans—76 percent—are concerned about plastic pollution.¹⁰ A similarly large segment of American shoppers—about two-thirds—say that sustainable packaging is at least somewhat important to them.¹¹ One-third of American shoppers reported reducing the amount of single-use plastic they used in 2024.¹² And, many people want to make sustainable choices while shopping, but feel that brands aren't offering them.¹³

At the same time, reusable packaging has been slow to take off.¹⁴ This means that all shoppers, including grocery shoppers, have limited options for circular packaging. Shoppers can make separate trips to local “zero waste” grocers or fill their own containers at bulk sections in some grocery stores—but these stores aren't available in many towns and cities. In rare cases, shoppers may have access to reusable packaging pilot programs run by companies like Loop, though none are currently in operation in the U.S. In short, most U.S. shoppers don't have access to groceries in reusable packaging, either in specialized “zero waste” stores or mainstream supermarkets.

Refilled sees an opportunity to fill an unmet customer desire—convenient, sustainably packaged, and affordable groceries that slot into their existing shopping routines. We will also be poised to take advantage of a shift in the industry driven by new and upcoming EPR laws.

Market Research: Methodology

Refilled will conduct **primary research** to learn more from its two customer segments—grocery shoppers and retailers—about what they want and need from reusable packaging for groceries.

The format for this research will include surveys and interviews to achieve both depth and breadth of responses.

We will also conduct **secondary research** to deepen our understanding of the grocery market and the challenges and opportunities for reusable packaging. Secondary research will include a review of existing research exploring consumer attitudes toward reusable and sustainable packaging, a review of packaging industry literature, etc. Discussions with leaders in reusable packaging—for example, [GoUnpackaged](#) and the [Ellen MacArthur Foundation](#)—will help build understanding of the logistics required for reusable packaging systems to succeed.

Economics

The food and grocery market has grown steadily over recent years. Growth is expected to continue at a compound annual growth rate of 3.5 percent through 2028.¹⁵ Trends in the industry include expanding e-commerce options, a focus on convenience, inflation-driven price-consciousness, and a growing share of customers who value sustainability.

Trends: Food and Grocery

Expanding e-commerce options and a focus on convenience

E-commerce is a major driver of growth across the industry, with an increasing number of customers ordering groceries online for home delivery or store pickup.¹⁶ More retailers are partnering with tech and delivery companies to offer customers seamless and convenient shopping experiences.¹⁷

Inflation driving price-consciousness

Though inflation has fallen from its 2022 peak, the rise in food prices since 2020 has made customers more price-conscious. According to McKinsey, 66 percent of customers reported “trading down” to purchase less expensive grocery items, including in the shelf staples category.¹⁸

Customers care about sustainability

Customers increasingly expect brands and retailers to offer products with positive ESG (environmental, social, governance) impact—and grocery shoppers pay extra attention to packaging as an important sustainability factor. This is especially true of Gen Z and Millennial consumers: 49 percent of Gen Z shoppers and 48 percent of Millennial shoppers state that they are willing to pay more for environmentally friendly products.¹⁹

“Products with ESG-related claims achieve 1.7 percentage points more sales growth than products that don’t.” –McKinsey & Company²⁰

Trends: Reusable Packaging

Extended producer responsibility (EPR) regulations are coming into play

Several states recently passed extended producer responsibility laws, which require businesses to take financial responsibility for their packaging waste and encourage sustainable approaches to packaging.²¹ This will impact grocery brands and retailers, which currently rely heavily on single-use packaging. Refilled will launch in Minnesota, which passed an EPR law in 2024. Under the law, producers must cover at least 50% of packaging recycling costs by 2029. All packaging in Minnesota must be reusable, recyclable, compostable, or managed through an approved alternate collection system by 2032.²²

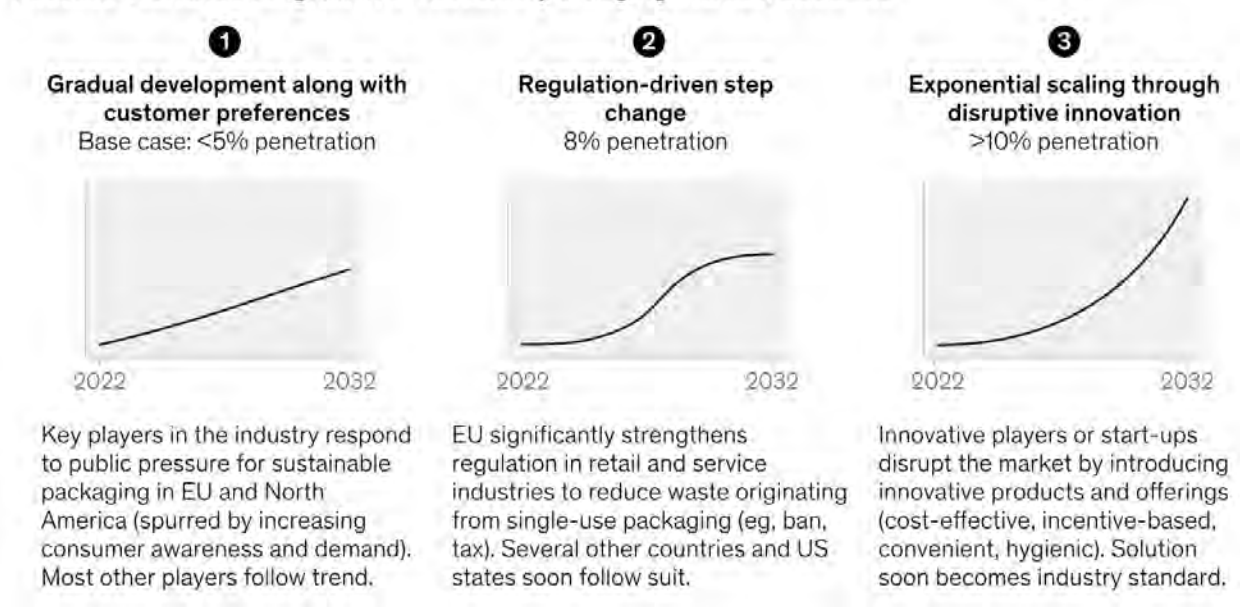
Reusable packaging remains niche

Customers are becoming more aware of waste from single-use packaging, but options for groceries in reusable packaging remain niche. Independent, “zero waste” grocers serve a dedicated group of customers who are willing to make an extra stop, bring and fill their own containers, and potentially pay a premium. Some larger trials, like Loop, have focused on offering reusable packaging for products from big brands sold at mainstream retailers, but so far have not achieved widespread success.²³

An opportunity for disruptive innovation

Reusable packaging is growing, but slowly. McKinsey & Company estimates that reusable packaging models will achieve only a five percent penetration in the global market across all product categories—but they note that several factors, including a changing regulatory environment, increased consumer demand, and evolving infrastructure, could accelerate adoption.²⁴ Refilled aims to both catalyze and capitalize on those accelerating factors, becoming a player creating disruptive innovation in the market.

Possible scenarios for growth of reusable-packaging market, 2022–32



McKinsey
& Company

Figure 1: McKinsey & Company, *Reusable Packaging: Key enablers for scaling*.

Barriers to Entry

Lack of policy and economic incentives

Opportunity: Establish initial operations in Minnesota, a state with new EPR legislation

High capital and production costs—containers, cleaning facilities, transportation

Opportunity: Collaboration with other brands/businesses (e.g. shared cleaning facility)

Consumer acceptance

Must ensure that consumers understand what sets our products apart (the why), and that reuse/return is straightforward and convenient

High marketing costs

Investment in brand and communications will be key to increasing consumer acceptance

Product

Refilled offers a branded line of staple grocery items, pre-packaged in reusable packaging for a convenient, grab-and-go shopping experience.

We manage the return, cleaning, and filling of containers to be stocked on grocery store shelves—including a container deposit system and multiple drop-off options. Our products are available at Minneapolis retailers for in-store or online shopping.

Features & Benefits

Refilled will offer a line of staple grocery items. Our range will focus on commonly purchased items, and we will prioritize items that are typically sold in packaging with higher negative impact (e.g. plastic bottles or pouches). Our value proposition to our customers is inspired by our mission: Good food in good packaging—for everyone.

Good Food...

Our focus is on offering healthy, whole foods—the staples that are at the heart of every home-cooked meal. We will source local and regional products whenever possible, and we will offer organic options across our full range.

...in Good Packaging...

When designing our packaging, we will use Life Cycle Analysis to optimize material, structure, and size to ensure that our reusable containers are truly more sustainable than the alternative single-use packaging. We will prioritize human and ecosystem health when choosing materials. And we will make sure that those benefits are communicated clearly to our customers, so that they can feel good about their impact.

...For Everyone

We want everyone to have sustainable choices. We offer products at a mid-market price point, aiming for a wide customer reach. Our unique grab-and-go format creates a convenient, streamlined shopping experience with broad consumer appeal.

Product Range

Dry Staples

Packaged in reusable jars (material, design, & size TBD)

- Pastas (penne, rotini, etc.)
- Rice (brown, basmati, wild, etc.)
- Dried beans (black, pinto, etc.)
- Oatmeal (steel-cut, rolled, instant)

Sauces and Condiments

Packaged in reusable bottles or jars (material, design, & size TBD)

- Pasta sauce (marinara, etc.)
- Ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise
- Oils (olive oil, coconut oil, sesame oil)
- Vinegars (balsamic, white wine, red wine)
- Sweeteners (honey, maple syrup)

Snacks and Cereals

Packaged in reusable jars (material, design, & size TBD)

- Cereals (generic-brand options, granola)
- Nuts (peanuts, almonds, walnuts)
- Dried fruits (raisins, cranberries)

Return and Reuse Management

We will partner with retailers to create a container management system that works well for customers and stores. This system will be modeled on common practice for returnable glass dairy packaging already successfully in place at some grocers.²⁵

Process:

- Deliver full containers to retail partners and pick up empty containers to be cleaned and refilled (weekly, or per agreed-upon delivery schedule)
- Collect container deposit from retailer for each full container delivered; refund deposit for each empty container collected

- Return empty containers to Refilled facility to be cleaned, refilled, and placed back in circulation

Deposit System:

To incentive returns, we will collect container deposits from our retail partners. Our partners will also independently collect deposits from customers.

- Retail partners will pay a deposit for each container delivered. Refilled will pick up empty containers weekly when a new shipment is delivered, and the retailer will be refunded for each container returned. Refilled will also integrate reusable shipping crates into our delivery system, which retailers can use to store empty containers until pickup.
- Retailers will charge customers a container deposit at checkout. The deposit will be refunded when the customer returns the container. Customers can return empty containers at checkout as part of their normal shopping trip.

This two-part deposit system makes it possible for customers to return empty Refilled containers at any participating retailer, not just the store where they purchased the container. Deposit amounts for both retailers and customers will be based on container production costs, not to exceed \$2 per container.

Competition

There are no competitors offering a grab-and-go model for groceries in reusable packaging. However, Minneapolis is home to several “zero waste” stores and food co-ops that offer unpackaged groceries.

Minneapolis competitors²⁶

“Zero Waste” specialty store: Tare Market (two locations & online ordering)

Grocers offering unpackaged bulk foods: Eastside Food Co-op, Wedge Community Co-ops, Mississippi Market Co-op, Hampden Park Co-op, Seward Community Co-op, Fresh Thyme Market, Cub Foods

While these businesses don't offer the same grab-and-go shopping experience, they still compete with Refilled by offering a wide range of unpackaged grocery items.

The types of customers who are likely to be most interested in our products—younger, eco-conscious customers looking for options to reduce their waste—are likely to also shop at “zero waste” and bulk stores. We will aim to place our products at several of these retailers, understanding that we will be competing in-store against their bulk offerings. We will also place our products at grocery stores without bulk sections, expanding our reach to a broader group of shoppers.

Competitive Analysis

Table 1: Competitive Analysis

FACTOR	Refilled	Strength	Weakness	Tare Market	Wedge Co-ops	Importance to Customer
Products	High	X		High	High	1
Price	Medium (mid-range)	X		Medium	Medium	2
Quality	High	X		High	High	1
Selection	Low (fewer choices)		X	High	High	2
Service	High (convenience)	X		Medium (self-service)	Medium (self-service)	1
Reliability	Medium (not established)		X	High (established)	High (established)	4
Stability	Medium (not established)		X	High (established)	High (established)	4
Expertise	--	--	--	--	--	--
Company Reputation	Low (not established)		X	High (established)	High (established)	3
Location	High	X		High (2 locations & online)	Medium (2 locations)	1
Appearance	High	X		Medium	Medium	4
Sales Method	High (convenience)	X		Medium	Medium	1
Credit Policies	--	--	--	--	--	--
Advertising	Medium	X		High	Medium	4
Image	Low (not established)		X	High	High	3

1 = critical; 5 = not very important

Mainstream Competitors

Refilled's mainstream competitors are grocery brands that offer healthy, staple foods in conventional, single-use packaging. These brands offer products with sustainable characteristics (e.g. certified organic, non-GMO) but don't focus on packaging sustainability. We will need to compete on price and differentiate with our unique packaging model.



Figure 2: Field Day Organic

Field Day Organic

Field Day Organic sells organic staple items at competitive prices. Their products are packaged in single-use packaging (paper bags, paperboard boxes, plastic film pouches, aluminum cans, etc.). They do not share any information about packaging sustainability (recyclability, material use, etc.) on their website.

Staple Grocery Items: Field Day Organic offers a range of products, from staple foods to household and personal care items. Their products are commonly stocked at co-ops and health-food stores, including several Minneapolis co-ops.



Figure 3: 365 by Whole Foods Market

365 by Whole Foods Market

Whole Foods Market is a national supermarket chain with more than 500 stores in North America and the UK. The company was purchased by Amazon in 2017. Whole Foods Market touts their sustainability commitments on their website, including a goal to reduce waste from single-use plastics. However, the 365 line is sold in conventional, single-use packaging.

Staple Grocery Items: 365 by Whole Foods Market is Whole Foods Market's house brand for staple grocery items. The line is competitively priced, with a wide range of products and many organic options. The line is available at two Whole Foods Market locations in Minneapolis.

Sustainability-Focused Competitors

Refilled’s sustainability-focused competitors are “zero waste” grocers and food co-ops that offer bulk, unpackaged staple foods. These models reduce packaging waste by encouraging customers to bring and fill their own reusable containers.



Figure 4: Tare Market

Tare Market

Tare Market is an independent “zero waste” grocer with two locations in Minneapolis. They offer bulk, unpackaged staple foods, along with home and personal care products. Customers can bring their own reusable containers to fill in the store, or they can borrow a jar in store using a returnable deposit system.

The system requires customers to weigh their own containers, then fill them. The container weight is deducted from the weight of the product at checkout. Tare Market also offers online ordering, though most food products are shipped in lightweight single-use packaging.

Tare Market communicates their sustainability impact on their website and social media, focusing on the waste they’ve reduced through their bulk shopping model, in-store recycling drop-offs, and reused packaging supplies for online orders.

Staple Grocery Items: Tare Market carries a wide range of staple grocery items, including dry staples (flour, rice, beans, etc.), snacks, coffee and tea, and oils and vinegars. Many of the products are organic, and the store offers a wide range of local/regional (“Midwest-made”) products.



Figure 5: Cuningham - Wedge Community Co-op

Minneapolis Food Co-ops

Minneapolis is home to several food co-ops that offer bulk, unpackaged staple foods. These stores tend to focus mainly on the impact of local, organic, and/or fair trade foods in their marketing to customers, with somewhat less focus on waste reduction from shopping in bulk.

Some stores, like Wedge Community Co-op, offer co-op members a discount on bulk products. This could create more price pressure for Refilled's products.

Staple Grocery Items: Like Tare Market, these stores encourage customers to bring and fill their own reusable containers in their bulk sections. Most offer a wide range of products, including dry staples (flour, rice, beans, etc.), snacks, coffee and tea, and oils and vinegars. However, they also offer conventionally packaged groceries (including brands like Field Day Organic).

Competitive Field Summary

Refilled will need to differentiate through our unique grab-and-go shopping model and placement at a range of locations, making our products both convenient and widely available compared to current "zero waste" and bulk food options. We will need to compete with conventionally packaged products by making our value proposition clear to our customers, pricing our products competitively, and offering a seamless shopping and return experience.

SWOT Analysis

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unique, convenient grab-and-go experience for customers• Placement in wide range of stores = increased availability• Focus on easy return process• Potential to easily integrate into online ordering & delivery platforms	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Potentially smaller range of products (at least initially)• May be difficult to compete on price with costs from reuse infrastructure (transport, cleaning, etc.) factored in• High start-up costs (containers, reverse logistics infrastructure)
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• New extended producer responsibility laws will affect mainstream competitors• Synergies with existing co-ops to offer customers options for package-free shopping beyond the bulk aisle	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consumers may not adopt model; may fail to communicate value proposition• Need buy-in from retail partners, some of whom may see us as competitors to their bulk offerings• Continued rise in grocery prices could further increase customer price sensitivity (though prices leveled off in 2024)

Customers

Refilled has two customer segments: **consumers** and **retailers or wholesale distributors**.

Consumers

Consumers who are already engaging with reusable packaging systems—like shopping at “zero waste” stores or in bulk sections—are self-identified “greenies.”²⁷ These customers are early adopters who are concerned about sustainability—more than half say that transitioning to reusable packaging is extremely important.

That said, most U.S. consumers—roughly two-thirds—say that sustainable packaging is “at least somewhat important” when making a purchase. But, most consumers also rank other considerations—including price, quality, and convenience—as more important. Hygiene and food safety rank as top concerns for food packaging specifically.²⁸

When we zoom into specific groups of consumers, younger (Gen Z and Millennial) and urban consumers are more concerned about the environmental impact of their purchases than older, rural consumers. 39% of Gen Z and Millennial consumers and 40% of urban consumers state that the environmental impact of a product is “extremely important” in their purchasing decisions, versus only 18% of baby boomers and 21% of rural consumers.²⁹

Finally, most consumers are willing to pay a small price premium for sustainable packaging. And, products with strong ESG claims achieve higher growth than conventional products over time, indicating that consumers are drawn to sustainable choices.³⁰

Primary Audience:

- Millennials (28 to 43 years old)
- Urban (Minneapolis)
- Education: bachelor’s degree and above
- Middle class to upper-middle class
- Regularly cooks at home
 - Millennials cook at home somewhat more often than Gen Z, with health as their primary motivation.³¹

Retailers

Refilled will sell our products directly to retail partners in the Minnesota metro area. This direct relationship will facilitate our container deposit system and help us tailor our approach to meet individual retailers' needs. Refilled will target health food stores and co-ops, which tend to attract the customer base most likely to purchase our products.

Customer Summary

Our average customer: is Gen Z or Millennial, cares about the environment, appreciates convenience, buys store brand products to save money, uses online ordering, has a busy schedule, regularly cooks at home, and is health conscious.

Our average retail partner is a small to midsize health food store or grocery co-op with a preference for organic, mid- to high-quality, and locally sourced products.

Niche

Refilled's niche is our unique grab-and-go model for reusable packaging, which creates a convenient experience for customers and integrates smoothly into in-store shopping and online ordering. Compared to bulk food aisles in available in local stores, our products don't require customers to make a special trip, remember to bring containers, or hassle with tare weights.

Strategy

Refilled's value proposition is inspired by our mission: Good food in good packaging—for everyone.

Our marketing goals are:

- Generate customer buy-in for reuse models (why and how)
- Establish ourselves as a key player in the Minneapolis food system
- Reach target sales volume

We will craft a message that focuses on the positive impact that customers can create by choosing reusable packaging. Our messaging will be positive and encouraging and will focus on fostering the behavior change required for customers to adopt reusable packaging.

Promotion

Refilled will reach our primary consumer audience through various channels, with a priority on web and social media to reach younger consumers:

- Social media—Instagram, YouTube, Facebook (most popular with Millennials)
- Web ads
- Podcast ads
- In-store displays/ads

We will reach our retail and wholesale partners via direct sales outreach, as well as engage in industry trade shows and events.

Promotional Budget

Refilled will invest in a comprehensive brand platform to support our messaging. Ongoing, we will either hire a part-time marketing position or work with a contractor to provide marketing services.

- Startup cost for initial brand platform and marketing campaign: \$15,000
- Ongoing marketing cost: \$45,000/year

Pricing

Refilled will sell our products at a mid-market price point, competitive with other quality, organic brands. We are not the budget choice—but, importantly, we are not the premium choice, either. Our goal is for our products to be accessible to a broad range of customers.

Example product pricing:

	1 lb. Organic Penne Pasta	1 lb. Unsalted Roasted Peanuts	1 lb. Organic Popcorn Kernels
Refilled	\$2.69 + \$1 container	\$4.69 + \$1 container	\$4.05 + \$1 container

	deposit (refundable)*	deposit (refundable)*	deposit (refundable)*
365 by Whole Foods Market (packaged)	\$1.79	\$3.49	\$2.68
Tare Market (bulk)	\$4.79	\$3.99	\$2.99

*Shelf prices, reflecting a 10 to 15% markup on the retailer’s end.

Proposed Location

Refilled will operate out of the Minneapolis metro area to keep our reverse logistics operations close to our retail partners and reduce transportation costs. Our physical location will not be consumer-facing; instead, it will be the headquarters of our staff and reverse logistics operations.

We will consider opportunities for B2B partnerships or collaboration to support our reverse logistics systems. (For example, a shared container cleaning facility.) This may influence our need for a physical location.

Distribution Channels

Refilled’s products will be sold on shelves at several Minneapolis grocery stores. We will sell our products directly to our retail partners.

Sales Forecast

At a minimum, Refilled will aim to slightly exceed our breakeven point (defined in the Financial Plan section) during our first year of business, with 20% growth each following year.

	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Unit Price	Sales Goal (monthly)	Sales Goal (monthly)	Sales Goal (monthly)
\$3.65	62,000	74,400	89,280
January	\$226,300.00	\$271,560.00	\$325,872.00
February	\$226,300.00	\$271,560.00	\$325,872.00
March	\$226,300.00	\$271,560.00	\$325,872.00
April	\$226,300.00	\$271,560.00	\$325,872.00
May	\$226,300.00	\$271,560.00	\$325,872.00
June	\$226,300.00	\$271,560.00	\$325,872.00
July	\$226,300.00	\$271,560.00	\$325,872.00
August	\$226,300.00	\$271,560.00	\$325,872.00
September	\$226,300.00	\$271,560.00	\$325,872.00
October	\$226,300.00	\$271,560.00	\$325,872.00
November	\$226,300.00	\$271,560.00	\$325,872.00
December	\$226,300.00	\$271,560.00	\$325,872.00
	\$2,715,600.00	\$3,258,720.00	\$3,910,464.00

Operational Plan

The primary day-to-day functions of Refilled include reverse logistics management, procurement of grocery products, and marketing/sales.

Refilled will be located in the Minneapolis metro area to keep reverse logistics operations close to our retail partners and reduce transportation costs.

- **Reverse logistics management:** Transport of full and empty containers between retailers and cleaning/filling facility; cleaning and filling of containers; management of container deposit system
- **Procurement of grocery products:** Wholesale purchasing; inventory management
- **Marketing and sales:** Outreach to customers and retailers

The Living Principles: Implementation Framework

Refilled was founded to help transform a single-use system that is failing our customers and our planet. The Living Principles for Design will be our guide in this work, translating our commitments into a meaningful, detailed plan for sustainability.

ENVIRONMENT: Actions and issues that affect natural systems, including climate change, preservation, carbon footprint and restoration of natural resources.

Behaviors

- Invest in marketing efforts to support and encourage consumer behavior change—to support not just our products but a broader transition to a circular economy.
- Include clear directions for re-use and recycling on our packaging, along with a link to information about our impact and the circular economy.

Creation

- Containers produced with materials and processes that are healthy for humans and environment (exact specifications TBD during container design process)
- Containers designed for efficiency in transport (space and weight)

- Containers produced using at least 50% recycled material
- Fuel-efficient/low-emissions transportation vehicles
- 100% renewable energy and energy/resource conservation measures (e.g. LED/natural lighting, low-flow plumbing, heat pumps) used at headquarters
- All assumptions tested using Life Cycle Analysis to ensure that our packaging system creates significant reductions in waste and planet-warming emissions compared to single-use alternatives.
- In-house or third-party tracking of GHG emissions, plus targets for improvement.

Durability

- Containers designed for an optimal number of reuse cycles to maximize sustainability benefit compared to single-use packaging. Exact reuse cycles will be determined using Life Cycle Analysis as part of the container design process.

Disassembly

- All container designs can be easily disassembled into individual material types for recycling at end of life.

Supply chain

- 30% of grocery products sourced from local and regional producers.
- 70% of grocery products sourced from organic and regenerative producers.
- Creating and implementation of supplier standards (e.g. labor practices, sustainability metrics) to be applied to all vendors.

Waste

- Containers designed for efficiency in production (minimal material waste).
- Containers designed for disassembly and recycling at end of life.
- Facility-wide recovery and recycling program for recyclable materials and food scraps in place at company headquarters.
- All assumptions tested using Life Cycle Analysis to ensure that our packaging system creates significant reductions in waste and planet-warming emissions compared to single-use alternatives.

PEOPLE: Actions and issues that affect all aspects of society, including poverty, violence, injustice, education, healthcare, safe housing, labor and human rights.

Impacts

- Containers produced with materials and processes that are healthy for humans and environment (exact specifications TBD during container design process)
- 30% of grocery products sourced from local and regional producers.
- 70% of grocery products sourced from organic and regenerative producers.

Conflicts

- Ensure ethical supply chains for all grocery products (e.g. Fair Trade cocoa).
- Ensure ethical supply chains for all container materials (e.g. recycled plastics).

Desirability

- Proactively collect customer and retailer feedback about our products and system.
- Establish a routine process for adaptation and integration of feedback to ensure that our products and system meet our customers' needs and desires.

Need / Use

- Reusable containers keep needed, useful materials out of the landfill and in circulation.
- Our containers will not be over-designed/over-engineered and will instead meet the most essential customer/product needs.

Long View

- Ensure ethical supply chains for all grocery products (e.g. Fair Trade cocoa).
- Ensure ethical supply chains for all container materials (e.g. recycled plastics).
- Our reverse logistics operations will create jobs and support the local economy.

ECONOMY: Actions and issues that affect how people and organizations meet their basic needs, evolve and define economic success and growth.

Systemic View

- Strive to create disruptive innovation and accelerate a broader transition to reusable packaging models.

Metrics

- Achieve B-Corp certification to ensure that we are measuring the value of our product according to financial, environmental, and social standards.

Benefits

- Reduced costs from reused packaging over the long term; reduced operational costs from efficient equipment and systems.
- Support of systems that benefit people and the planet (e.g. organic and regenerative agriculture).

Transparency & Truth

- Include clear directions for re-use and recycling on our packaging, along with a link to information about our impact and the circular economy.
- Measure our ESG impacts and publish a publicly available ESG impact report annually.

Waste = Food

- Containers produced using at least 50% recycled material
- Containers designed for disassembly and recycling at end of life
- Facility-wide food scraps composting program
- Donate excess product to local food recovery efforts (food banks, etc.)

From Product to Service

- We will provide reusable packaging as a service to our customers, maintaining ownership of the packaging throughout its full life cycle.

CULTURE: Actions and issues that affect how communities manifest identity, preserve and cultivate traditions, and develop belief systems and commonly accepted values.

Visions

- Give customers a realistic, convenient option for groceries in reusable packaging.
- Prioritize a streamlined shopping and container return experience to support sustainable behavior (adoption of reusable packaging).

- Invest in marketing efforts to support and encourage consumer behavior change—to support not just our products but a broader transition to a circular economy.

Meanings & Reactions

- Our products and messaging communicate an optimistic vision for a circular economy.

A Systemic View

- Our products and messaging communicate an optimistic vision for a circular economy.

Diversity

- Whenever possible, we will purchase from a diverse group of local and regional suppliers, including supporting young farmers and farmers from historically disadvantaged communities.
- We will price our products competitively so that they are available to a wide range of customers, not just the affluent few.

Production

Refilled will produce its own line of reusable containers. It will source its grocery products from wholesalers and local producers.

Reusable Containers

Prior to launch, Refilled will design a line of reusable containers to meet various product needs. Life Cycle Analysis will be used throughout the design process to maximize the sustainability benefit of our containers vs. single-use alternatives.

Focus areas for **container design** include:

- Product-to-package ratio
- Container weight and impacts on transport emissions
- Material: environmental/human health, recycled material
- Design for disassembly and recycling
- User experience

Focus areas for **container production** include:

- Local or regional vendors to minimize transport emissions
- Supply chain mapping to understand material sources and impacts
- Vendor checklist to ensure partners meet key sustainability metrics

Grocery Products

Refilled will source grocery products from wholesalers and local producers. Our criteria for purchasing will include:

- Favoring local, regional, and organic/regenerative producers whenever possible
- Vendor/producer checklist to ensure partners meet key sustainability metrics
- Supply chain mapping to understand product sources and impacts

An on-staff grocery purchaser will manage purchasing decisions and inventory.

Quality Control & Customer Service

Refilled will train staff and develop a quality control process for grocery products and containers (cleaning, sanitizing, and inspecting for damage). We will employ a staff member trained to handle customer inquiries and feedback (both retailer partners and shoppers).

Location

Refilled's physical location will not be consumer-facing; instead, it will be the headquarters of our staff and reverse logistics operations. Requirements for the space include:

- Climate-controlled storage of bulk food products, potentially including refrigeration
- Hygienic container cleaning, sanitizing, and filling environment
- Parking area for transport vehicle(s)
- Office space, meeting space, and kitchen/breakroom for staff

Access

Our location will be situated near a major roadway for easy access by car. This will facilitate our reverse logistics operations, as well as deliveries from our food suppliers. A location convenient to public transportation would be ideal to reduce emissions from employees' commutes.

Cost

Refilled plans to lease a commercial space. We estimate that we will require about 2,000 square feet, plus parking area for staff and a single delivery vehicle.

Annual lease estimate: \$20,000–\$40,000

Based on LoopNet property search in Minneapolis metro area

Annual utilities estimate: \$5,000

Based on estimate of \$2.50/square foot³²

Annual insurance estimate: \$3,250

Business owner's policy (general liability, commercial property, business income), worker's compensation policy, commercial auto policy³³

Up front remodeling costs: \$100,000–\$150,000

Build out container cleaning/sanitizing/filling, food storage, and office spaces³⁴

Purchase of delivery vehicle: \$20,000

Used Ford Transit delivery van

Annual maintenance of delivery vehicle: \$1,500

Legal Environment

- FTC Environmental Marketing Claims— Refilled will need to substantiate any sustainability claims made about benefits of reusable packaging
- Impact of Minnesota Packaging Waste and Cost Reduction Act (EPR legislation)
- Licenses and permits³⁵
 - Wholesale food processor license, including inspection (state of Minnesota)
 - General business license
 - FDA food facility registration
- Registration with Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
- Certificate of occupancy and adherence to all relevant building codes and zoning requirements
- Building permits for renovation of leased space
- Insurance: Business Owner's Policy³⁶

Personnel

Management

- CEO
- General manager (1 salaried employee)

Reverse Logistics

- Delivery/pickup drivers (1-2 hourly employees)
- Container cleaning and filling staff (4 hourly employees)

Purchasing & Inventory

- Grocery purchaser & inventory manager (1 salaried employee)

Marketing

- Marketing coordinator (1 part-time salaried employee)

Inventory

Refilled will manage an inventory of **bulk foods** for packaging and sale to retailers. We will also manage an inventory of **reusable containers**, which will require regular inspection and periodic replacement (beyond day-to-day cleaning and refilling).

Though most of the grocery products we stock will be shelf-stable, inventory turnover will be high to ensure freshness. We will strive to maintain a “just in time” system to maximize product quality. We will need to work closely with our partners to ensure that we understand lead times for delivery of all products.

We will strive to design our containers for a high number of reuse cycles. (The exact number will be determined through the Life Cycle Analysis process.) We will need to establish a system to reorder containers as needed from our container manufacturer(s).

Suppliers

Refilled's key suppliers will include:

- Local and regional food producers
- Bulk food wholesalers
- Container manufacturers

We have identified potential suppliers, including:

Minnesota Grown | minnesotagrown.com

Minnesota Grown is a directory of Minnesota food producers. Refilled will plan to use this directory and other resources to source as many of our products as possible from local/regional producers.

Essential Organics | essentialorganicingredients.com

Essential Organics provides wholesale bulk grocery products. Refilled will purchase food products that we are unable to source locally/regionally through Essential Organics (or similar vendors).

Gamer Packaging Inc. | gamerpackaging.com

Gamer Packaging Inc. is a full-service packaging producer located in Minneapolis, with a focus on sustainability and social responsibility.

Refilled will develop a set of criteria to vet any potential supplier to ensure that our partners share our values and focus on sustainability.

Credit Policies

Refilled will sell its products to retailers, who will sell them to consumers. Our standard procedure will be to invoice retailers upon delivery, with net 30 payment terms.

If an invoice is unpaid by 30 days, a non-compounding late fee of 2% will be added to the invoice total the day after the due date has passed, then every 30 days thereafter. We will use an invoicing system that sends automated reminders, including just before an invoice is due.

After 30 days, we will reach out to the client directly by phone and/or email. If an invoice remains unpaid by 90 days, we will send a formal demand letter and initiate legal action.

	Sample Invoice	Current	30 Days	60 Days	90 Days	Over 90 Days
Accounts Receivable Aging	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,040	\$2,080	\$3,020	Demand letter & legal action

Accounts Payable

Net 30 payment terms are common in the grocery wholesale industry, with suppliers typically charging 1-2% late fees after 30 days. We will strive to pay our invoices in cash and will utilize a line of credit as needed to pay invoices on time.

	Total	Current	30 Days	60 Days	90 Days	Over 90 Days
Accounts Payable Aging	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,040	\$2,080	\$3,020	Demand letter & legal action

Management and Organization

Refilled will begin operations with a streamlined staff focused on key business activities. We will outsource other needs, keeping in mind that our staffing needs will evolve as our business grows.

Organizational Structure

Management

- **CEO (founder):** Leads company strategy and provides fiscal oversight. Teams with the COO to lead business operations and the marketing coordinator to shape company messaging. Leads sales outreach and customer feedback/engagement. Deep sustainability experience to shape and guide sustainability efforts.
- **COO (founder):** Leads operations and personnel; creates operational policies; creates and maintains budgets. Partners with CEO to lead strategy and growth. Deep sustainability experience to shape and guide sustainability efforts.

Reverse Logistics

- **Delivery/pickup drivers (1-2 hourly employees):** Responsible for delivering full containers to retailers, picking up empty containers, and returning containers for cleaning and filling.
- **Container cleaning and filling staff (4 hourly employees):** Responsible for cleaning, sanitizing, and refilling reusable containers.

Purchasing & Inventory

- **Grocery purchaser (1 salaried employee):** Responsible for purchasing/ordering all grocery products, finding and vetting suppliers, managing inventory levels, and managing purchase orders and invoicing. Versed in local/regional food systems.

Marketing

- **Marketing coordinator (1 salaried employee):** Directs and manages company marketing efforts, including working with contractors (graphic designers, copywriters, etc.) to execute

campaigns. Experienced with design and communication for sustainability and behavior change.

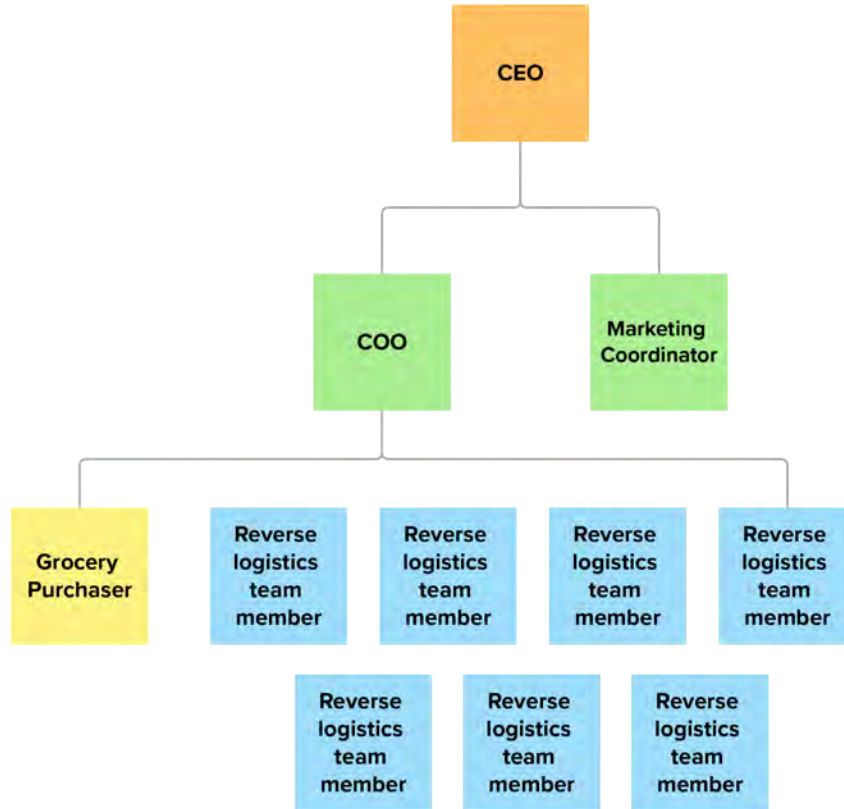


Figure 6: Organizational chart

Professional and Advisory Support

Refilled will outsource roles that fall outside the scope of our key business activities. This includes:

- **Marketing support:** graphic design, UI/UX design and development, copywriting, etc.
- **Container/package design:** We will partner with a packaging designer to create our line of reusable containers at start-up.
- **Legal support**

- **Accounting and payroll management**
- **Insurance agent**

Refilled will begin operations with a three-member board of directors, including the CEO, COO and one outside advisor. We will seek advisory support from an established grocery industry professional—particularly a candidate with a focus on sustainability and circular packaging models.

Startup Expenses and Capitalization

Startup Expenses

FACILITIES & TRANSPORTATION		
Lease		\$ 30,000
Utilities		\$ 5,000
Build-out	\$50/sq. ft.	\$ 100,000
Vehicle purchase		\$ 20,000
Vehicle maintenance		\$ 1,500
Gasoline (annual)		\$ 47,500
Total		\$ 204,000
REUSABLE CONTAINER DESIGN & PRODUCTION		
Container design (contract)		\$ 12,000
Container manufacturing	25,000 units, \$50/unit	\$ 12,500
Total		\$ 24,500
PURCHASE OF INITIAL STOCK		
Wholesale bulk grocery products	Avg. \$2/pound	\$ 40,000
Total		\$ 40,000
MARKETING		
Brand platform (contract)		\$ 10,000
Website design & development		\$ 5,000
Ongoing marketing budget		\$ 45,000
Total		\$ 60,000
PAYROLL		
CEO		\$ 65,000
COO		\$ 65,000
Grocery Purchaser		\$ 55,000
Part-Time Marketing Manager		\$ 35,000
Reverse Logistics Team	4 staff members at \$35,000	\$ 140,000
Employee Benefits		\$ 108,000
Total		\$ 468,000
LICENSING, INSURANCE & ACCOUNTING		
Annual insurance policies		\$ 6,000
Accounting services		\$ 9,000
Payroll management		\$ 1,128
Wholesale food handler license (annual renewal)		\$ 769
Total		\$ 16,897
Contingencies	Estimated at 15% operating costs	\$ 98,000
TOTAL START-UP EXPENSES		\$ 911,397

Capitalization

Refilled will launch with investments from its two founders, plus investments from angel investors. We will seek a business loan to cover remaining startup costs.

Shareholder	Investment	Number of Shares	Percentage Ownership
Founder A	\$218,400.00	72,799	30%
Founder B	\$182,000.00	60,666	25%
Angel Investor A	\$109,200.00	36,400	15%
Angel Investor B	\$109,200.00	36,400	15%
Angel Investor C	\$109,200.00	36,400	15%
Total	\$728,000.00	242,666	100%

Personal Financial Statement

Not included in this plan

Financial Plan

The financial plan consists of:

- Break-even analysis
- 12-month profit and loss projection
- Cash-flow projection
- Opening day balance sheet

Figures are based on an estimated average sale price to retailers of \$3.65 per unit. This average is drawn from wholesale and retail pricing for one pound of organic popcorn kernels.

The profit and loss projection includes estimated revenue and operating expenses for the business's first twelve months. It does not include one-time startup costs (detailed in the startup expenses section), which will be funded by initial investments and by a business loan. Estimated annual repayment for that loan is included in the profit and loss projection.

Break-Even Analysis

Refilled will need to sell a **minimum of 50,590 units per month** in order to break even at proposed operational levels. This calculation assumes an average net revenue of \$.90 per unit (sale price to retailers of \$3.65, less product cost of \$2.75).

Fixed costs: \$352,097 annual / \$29,342 monthly

Lease for commercial space, insurance, accounting fees, marketing budget, vehicle maintenance, salaried staff pay and benefits, and monthly business loan payments

Variable costs: \$300,500 annual / \$.32 per unit

Utilities, gasoline, and hourly staff pay and benefits

Break even calculation:

Formula: fixed costs per month / (sales price - variable costs per unit)

$\$29,342 / (\$.9 - \$.32) = 50,590$ units per month

12-Month Profit & Loss Projection

REVENUE			
Gross sales (annual)	945,000 units at \$3.65	\$	3,449,250
Less product cost (annual)	\$2.75/unit x 945,000 units	\$	2,598,750
Net sales			\$850,500
EXPENSES			
FACILITIES & TRANSPORTATION			
Lease		\$	30,000
Utilities		\$	5,000
Vehicle maintenance		\$	1,500
Gasoline (annual)		\$	47,500
Total		\$	84,000
MARKETING			
Ongoing marketing budget		\$	45,000
Total		\$	45,000
PAYROLL			
CEO		\$	65,000
COO		\$	65,000
Grocery Purchaser		\$	55,000
Part-Time Marketing Manager		\$	35,000
Reverse Logistics Team (4 staff members)		\$	140,000
Employee Benefits		\$	108,000
Total		\$	468,000
LICENSING, INSURANCE & ACCOUNTING			
Annual insurance policies		\$	6,000
Accounting services		\$	9,000
Payroll management		\$	1,128
Wholesale food handler license (annual renewal)		\$	769
Total		\$	16,897
DEBT REPAYMENT			
Annual business loan payment	\$200,000 SBA loan w/ 15% interest	\$	38,700
Total		\$	38,700
Contingencies	Estimated at 15%	\$	98,000
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$	750,597
NET INCOME			
NET OPERATING INCOME		\$	99,903
Profit margin: 2.8%			

12-Month Profit & Loss Projection: Breakeven

REVENUE			
Gross sales (annual)	607,080 units at \$3.65	\$	2,215,842
Less product cost (annual)	\$2.75/unit x 607,080 units	\$	1,669,470
Net sales			\$546,372
EXPENSES			
FACILITIES & TRANSPORTATION			
Lease		\$	30,000
Utilities		\$	4,000
Vehicle maintenance		\$	1,500
Gasoline (annual)		\$	33,250
Total		\$	68,750
MARKETING			
Ongoing marketing budget		\$	45,000
Total		\$	45,000
PAYROLL			
CEO		\$	65,000
COO		\$	65,000
Grocery Purchaser		\$	55,000
Part-Time Marketing Manager		\$	35,000
Reverse Logistics Team (4 part-time staff members)		\$	100,000
Employee Benefits		\$	54,000
Total		\$	374,000
LICENSING, INSURANCE & ACCOUNTING			
Annual insurance policies		\$	6,000
Accounting services		\$	9,000
Payroll management		\$	1,128
Wholesale food handler license (annual renewal)		\$	769
Total		\$	16,897
DEBT REPAYMENT			
Annual business loan payment	\$200,000 SBA loan w/ 15% interest	\$	38,700
Total		\$	38,700
Contingencies	Estimated at 15%	\$	-
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$	543,347
NET INCOME			
NET OPERATING INCOME		\$	3,025
Profit margin: --%			

Cash Flow Projection

Starting cash on hand

\$ 20,000.00

Starting date

Jan 2025

Cash minimum balance alert

\$ 2,000.00

	Jan 2025	Feb 2025	Mar 2025	Apr 2025	May 2025	Jun 2025	Jul 2025	Aug 2025	Sep 2025	Oct 2025	Nov 2025	Dec 2025	Total
Cash on hand (beginning of month)	\$ -	\$ 15,761.50	\$ 32,042.00	\$ 48,262.50	\$ 64,543.00	\$ 79,923.50	\$ 95,354.00	\$ 111,834.50	\$ 128,135.00	\$ 144,565.50	\$ 159,996.00	\$ 176,396.50	

Cash receipts

Cash sales	\$ 287,437.50	\$ 287,437.50	\$ 287,437.50	\$ 287,437.50	\$ 287,437.50	\$ 287,437.50	\$ 287,437.50	\$ 287,437.50	\$ 287,437.50	\$ 287,437.50	\$ 287,437.50	\$ 287,437.50	\$ 3,449,250.00
Total cash receipts	\$ 287,437.50	\$ 287,437.50	\$ 287,237.50	\$ 287,437.50	\$ 287,437.50	\$ 287,437.50	\$ 287,437.50	\$ 287,437.50	\$ 287,437.50	\$ 287,437.50	\$ 287,437.50	\$ 287,437.50	\$ 3,449,450.00
Total cash available	\$ 287,437.50	\$ 303,199.00	\$ 319,279.50	\$ 335,700.00	\$ 351,980.50	\$ 367,361.00	\$ 382,791.50	\$ 399,272.00	\$ 415,572.50	\$ 432,003.00	\$ 447,433.50	\$ 463,834.00	

Cash paid out

Marketing	\$ 3,750.00	\$ 3,750.00	\$ 3,750.00	\$ 3,750.00	\$ 3,750.00	\$ 3,750.00	\$ 3,750.00	\$ 3,750.00	\$ 3,750.00	\$ 3,750.00	\$ 3,750.00	\$ 3,750.00	\$ 45,000.00
Insurance (other than health)	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 6,000.00
Materials and supplies (in COGS)	\$ 216,562.00	\$ 216,562.00	\$ 216,562.00	\$ 216,562.00	\$ 216,562.00	\$ 216,562.00	\$ 216,562.00	\$ 216,562.00	\$ 216,562.00	\$ 216,562.00	\$ 216,562.00	\$ 216,562.00	\$ 2,598,744.00
Lease	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 30,000.00
Utilities	\$ 418.00	\$ 418.00	\$ 418.00	\$ 418.00	\$ 418.00	\$ 418.00	\$ 418.00	\$ 418.00	\$ 418.00	\$ 418.00	\$ 418.00	\$ 418.00	\$ 5,016.00
Gasoline	\$ 3,858.00	\$ 3,858.00	\$ 3,858.00	\$ 3,858.00	\$ 3,858.00	\$ 3,858.00	\$ 3,858.00	\$ 3,858.00	\$ 3,858.00	\$ 3,858.00	\$ 3,858.00	\$ 3,858.00	\$ 46,296.00
Vehicle Maintenance	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 750.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 750.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,500.00
Accounting Fee	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 9,000.00
Payroll Management	\$ 94.00	\$ 94.00	\$ 94.00	\$ 94.00	\$ 94.00	\$ 94.00	\$ 94.00	\$ 94.00	\$ 94.00	\$ 94.00	\$ 94.00	\$ 94.00	\$ 1,128.00
Payroll	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 360,000.00
Employee benefit programs	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 108,000.00
Licensing	\$ 769.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 769.00
Loan repayment	\$ 3,225.00	\$ 3,225.00	\$ 3,225.00	\$ 3,225.00	\$ 3,225.00	\$ 3,225.00	\$ 3,225.00	\$ 3,225.00	\$ 3,225.00	\$ 3,225.00	\$ 3,225.00	\$ 3,225.00	\$ 38,700.00
Subtotal	\$ 271,676.00	\$ 271,157.00	\$ 271,017.00	\$ 271,157.00	\$ 272,057.00	\$ 272,007.00	\$ 270,957.00	\$ 271,137.00	\$ 271,007.00	\$ 272,007.00	\$ 271,037.00	\$ 271,277.00	\$ 3,256,493.00
Total cash paid out	\$ 271,676.00	\$ 271,157.00	\$ 271,017.00	\$ 271,157.00	\$ 272,057.00	\$ 272,007.00	\$ 270,957.00	\$ 271,137.00	\$ 271,007.00	\$ 272,007.00	\$ 271,037.00	\$ 271,277.00	\$ 3,256,493.00
Cash on hand (end of month)	\$ 15,761.50	\$ 32,042.00	\$ 48,262.50	\$ 64,543.00	\$ 79,923.50	\$ 95,354.00	\$ 111,834.50	\$ 128,135.00	\$ 144,565.50	\$ 159,996.00	\$ 176,396.50	\$ 192,557.00	

Opening Day Balance Sheet

ASSETS

CURRENT ASSETS

Bank	One month payroll	\$	28,166
Accounts receivable		\$	-
Inventory		\$	40,000
Prepaid expenses	Insurance premiums, etc.	\$	6,769
Total current assets		\$	74,935

FIXED ASSETS

Machinery & Equipment	Dishwashing equipment, containers	\$	27,500
Furniture & Fixtures		\$	20,000
Leasehold Improvements		\$	65,000
Other		\$	47,500
Total fixed assets		\$	160,000

TOTAL ASSETS		\$	234,935
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LIABILITIES & NET WORTH

CURRENT LIABILITIES

Accounts payable		\$	-
Taxes payable		\$	-
Current portion of long-term debt		\$	38,700
Total		\$	38,700

LONG-TERM LIABILITIES

Bank loans payable (greater than 12 months)		\$	348,504
Total		\$	348,504

TOTAL LIABILITIES		\$	387,204
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OWNER'S EQUITY (NET WORTH)		\$	(152,269)
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Next Steps

Given its unique value proposition and innovative retail model, Refilled has strong potential—but the financial risk is high. Further research is needed to determine a realistic, financially viable scale for launch.

Situation

To launch at the scale proposed in this plan, Refilled would need considerable startup funds, and the company would need to quickly achieve and maintain a significant sales volume. Profit margins in the grocery industry are slim, and customers are price-sensitive after several years of inflation.³⁷

Given this high-risk environment, three questions loom over the potential financial success of the company:

- Can Refilled realistically compete well enough on price compared to conventionally packaged alternatives, given the cost of reverse logistics operations?
- Are there enough interested customers in the Minneapolis area to support our target sales volume? What are their attitudes toward reusable packaging?
- Will Refilled find enough retail partners willing to integrate our products into their stores?

Target

Launch Refilled at a sustainable operational level, informed by answers to the above questions.

Proposal

Using this plan as a foundation, conduct additional in-depth research, including:

- Conduct in-depth market research (primary and secondary) to determine realistic market size and sales volume for the Minneapolis metro area. Emphasize primary research to gain a better understanding of customer attitudes toward reusable packaging.

- Create a thorough estimate of reverse logistics costs and an in-depth product pricing plan to determine financial viability and further define market niche and price point.
- Conduct outreach to potential retail partners to determine how many locations may be willing to integrate Refilled's products and to collect retailer feedback on proposed system.

Realistically, this research may reveal that Refilled should launch at a smaller scale than what is outlined in this plan. Approaches could include:

- Launch with a limited product line (e.g. only one specialized product category)
- Launch a pilot program with one or two retail locations to test viability
- Bootstrap a small-scale launch, using low-cost options for commercial space and transportation and limited or no staff beyond the founders. Expand operations as sales increase, guided by a strategic plan with specific targets and clearly defined next steps.

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