Rotomolded HDPE vs Stainless Steel vs Cardboard Bulk Containers

A comparison for plant and procurement teams. LT Plastics, authorized Bonar Plastics distributor (USA). November 2026. Figures for HDPE come from Bonar Plastics official specifications; other rows describe material properties qualitatively where no single source applies.

Empty weight of comparable containers

Container	Size	Empty weight	Source
Bonar MonsterCombo 2748 (HDPE)	48 x 44 x 48 in, 337 gal	118.5 lb	bonarplastics.com
Bonar CageBuster 330 (all-plastic IBC)	48 x 40 x 58.75 in, 330 gal	220 lb	bonarplastics.com
Bonar Roto Gaylord Bin (HDPE)	50.2 x 47.2 x 37 in, 411 gal	120 lb	bonarplastics.com

How the materials compare

Factor	Rotomolded HDPE	Stainless steel	Corrugated cardboard
Reuse	Many years of trips; seamless, washable	Many years; heavy to handle	Usually one or few trips
Moisture	Not affected	Not affected	Loses strength when wet or humid
Cleaning	Hot water and common sanitizers	Excellent, CIP friendly	Cannot be washed
Impact	Absorbs forklift impact; no dents	Dents can trap residue	Tears and crushes
Up-front cost	Medium	High	Low
Best fit	Closed loops, food plants, wet loads	High-heat or solvent processes	One-way shipping of dry goods

Cost per trip, not price per unit

Divide purchase price by the expected number of trips, then add cleaning, repair and return freight. Bonar states its CageBuster IBC pays for itself in 2–3 trips compared with replacing caged IBCs, with no cage repair cost. Use the LT Plastics cost-per-trip calculator: https://ltplastics.us/tools/cost-per-trip-calculator

Specifications and quotes

Bulk containers: https://ltplastics.us/products/bulk-containers · IBC totes: https://ltplastics.us/products/ibc-totes · Gaylord boxes: https://ltplastics.us/products/gaylord-boxes

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