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CATERING AND HOSPITALITY

SUSTAINABILITY AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

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Commercial Services Catering and Hospitality plays a key role in the provision and support of more sustainable choices for our customers. Commercial Services strive to incorporate environmental and social considerations into the procurement, production and delivery of our services.

As part of the University's commitment to be an anchor institution for the local communities,

Commercial Services endeavours to source local, smaller suppliers and products wherever possible giving thought to financial sustainability. We encourage our suppliers and contractors to minimise negative environmental and social effects associated with the products and services they provide. Our commitment to environmental sustainability runs throughout our organisation, and we are committed to long-term sustainability in every area.

Why is sustainability important?

Sourcing, producing and consuming food has a wide range of impacts on health and the environment, and universities have a responsibility to create benefits for their students, staff and visitors.

There is no single agreed definition of sustainable food, however.

The Sustainable Development Commission describes sustainable food as food and drink that:

- Is safe, healthy and nutritious for consumers in shops & restaurants.
- Provides equitable economic relationships across the supply chain for farmers, processors and retailers, whose employees enjoy a safe and hygienic working environment whether in the UK or overseas.
- Respects biophysical and environmental limits in its production and processing, while reducing resource consumption and improving the wider environment.
- Respect the highest standards of animal health and welfare, compatible with the production of affordable food for all sectors of society.
- Supports rural economies and the diversity of rural culture, in particular through an emphasis on local products that keep food miles to a minimum.

These are key areas of concern which the Commercial Services Catering and Hospitality team want to address as part of our sustainable food strategy.

In achieving this, we aim to:

- Provide a choice of food options, dominated by healthy and sustainable food to our students, staff, commercial clients and visitors.
- Take seriously health and wellbeing issues and promote the benefits of eating healthily.
- Contribute to thriving local economies and sustainable livelihoods, both in the UK and in the producer countries for imported goods.
- Continue to look for new initiatives to reduce our carbon footprint and other resources such as water.
- Encourage our suppliers and contractors to minimise negative environmental and social impacts associated with the products and services they provide.

To help meet our aims we will:

- Set sustainable targets and measure our performance against these annually.
- Work with our suppliers to progress the sustainability agenda.
- Enhance staff, customers and suppliers awareness of relevant environmental and the social effects of a sustainable diet via promotional guidance, product information and awareness campaigns.
- Review the Policy annually, amend targets and communicate findings to customers.
- Work with the University Sustainability Team to follow best practice and ensure aims are aligned with the University strategic aims.

What are we doing?

We are constantly striving to make our operations more sustainable.

Our menus are prepared using fresh, and where possible, seasonal ingredients by our kitchen teams on campus. We are actively working to source food and drink locally and regionally (we define this as Yorkshire and Humberside region) and, where appropriate, reflect the food of our region.

Our suppliers are nominated and regulated through our membership of TUCO (The University Caterer's Organisation) or via local University contracts.

In our procurement we:

- Make decisions based on a balance between economic, social and environmental factors to achieve best value for money, aligning with the Social Value Act 2012.
 - Take account of whole life costs where applicable to ensure sustainability and minimise impact on the environment.
 - Set specifications for products and services, which include sustainable, renewable and recycled resources and processes, considering the end of life options to ensure minimal impact on the environment.
 - Comply with legislation relating to sustainability and the environment.
 - Encourage best practise in all areas of procurement, such as reducing paper-based transactions within the purchase-to-pay cycle using an e-purchasing system.
 - Work with suppliers to encourage better processes and improvements to the supply chain and the products and services supplied, encouraging these organisations to register with the NETPositives Engagement tool.
 - Continue to develop the use of Fair Trade and other ethically traded products and services.
- Use seasonally available ingredients where possible, to minimise energy used in food production, transport and storage.
 - Encourage Small and Medium Enterprises (SME's), local and regional suppliers to bid for supply agreements. Our range of local suppliers currently include M&K Butchers, Delifresh, Haighs Bakery, Fowler Seafood, Hodgson fish, York Brewery, PP snack, Fields and Fawcetts and York Coin.
 - Exclude fish identified as most at risk by the Marine Conservation Society and only use fish from sustainable sources, such as those accredited by the Marine Stewardship Council. All MCS fish chosen is nominated with suppliers and added to our core list of products that may be purchased by our staff.
 - Communicate this policy to staff and customers.
 - Review this policy annually

“We are constantly striving to make our operations more sustainable”

In our menu development, food production and service, we:

- Endeavour to reduce the amount of meat and dairy used and increase the number of vegetarian and vegan dishes available.
- Endeavour to increase provision of healthy food options.
- Offer a range of products based on raw materials from ethical and sustainable sources in all our cafes and restaurants.
- Increase the use of seasonal vegetables and fruits wherever possible.
- Only put sustainable fish on menus working to the MCS "fish to eat" list of fish. Commercial Services Catering and Hospitality will never purchase fish on the MCS "red listed".
- Ensure that our meat comes from local suppliers who demonstrate the highest standards of animal welfare and ensure that livestock are fed on traceable foodstuffs which are sustainable.
- Use of only free range "Red Lion" stamped whole eggs in all our kitchens.
- Reduce of artificial additives, salt and added sugar by production of menu items on sites and eliminating the use of GM food.
- Only provide Fairtrade or Rainforest Alliance teas and coffees in all our outlets and delivered catering, alongside a range of Fairtrade snacks, confectionary, cakes and juices.
- Introduced a "bring your own Cup" scheme in all our outlets and delivered catering, reducing the use of disposable cups, with an aim to see at least a reduction a reduction of at least 50% in the use of disposable cups by 2020.
- Introduced our "YorCup" scheme which encourages the reduction of plastic cup use. Outlets sell reusable cups and wash them for re-use, whilst giving a discounted drink price.
- Make tap water available in all our outlets, where customers own bottles can be refilled, thus reducing single-use plastic waste.
- Encourage students on Catered packages to bring their own take away boxes should they want to take their food away.
- Supply Belu water in our delivered catering services. This company uses ethical glass for their bottles and donate their profits to WaterAid.
- Reduce packaging, labelling, transportation and delivery by producing food on sites.
- Reduce delivery packaging through the use of reusable delivery crates by fruit and veg suppliers, meat suppliers, bread suppliers and our in house bakery.
- Reduce the use in the number of chemicals that are hazardous to the environment by the use of the latest technologies in dishwashing machinery and careful measurement of chemicals with automated dosing units.

increase provision of healthy food options

Reduce packaging, labelling, transportation and delivery by producing food on site

In our recycling and waste management we:

- Strive to reduce the amount of waste whilst balancing customer demand for convenience packaging and disposables for food and beverages.
- Ensure that 0% waste goes to landfill.
- Have replaced plastic cutlery with wooden cutlery in all of our outlets.
- Removed plastic straws and reduce the use of single use plastic where possible.
- Use reusable trays when delivering food via Cucina.
- Ensure that our take away coffee cups are recyclable or compostable.
- Equipped all our back of house and front of house outlets are with recycling bins.
- Recycle cardboard, plastic, plastic outer packaging waste and glass.
- Dispose of cooking oil by having it turned into bio fuel.
- Recycling our food waste into bio fuel and compost.
- Send non-recyclable waste to a specialist waste plant to be used to produce electricity.
- Explore opportunities to deal with unsold food in collaboration with social enterprises.

We are continuously seeking to lessen our impact on the environment, consulting our academic staff for input, looking at new products, technologies and re-assessing our working practices wherever needed.

Ensure that 0% waste goes to landfill

Removed plastic straws and reduce the use of single use plastic

For more information on the University's activities around sustainability, click on the link below.

york.ac.uk/eatatyork/sustainability

Contact information

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