



Hospitality Essex

Healthy & Sustainable Food Policy

Hospitality Essex recognises its responsibility to carry out its procurement activities in an environmentally and socially responsible manner, and the considerable influence we have in using our buying power to encourage healthy and sustainable food production and consumption. We will strive to incorporate environmental and social considerations into our product and service selection process. We recognise that it is our responsibility to encourage our suppliers and contractors to minimise negative environmental and social effects associated with the products and services they provide. We will also strive to ensure that local and smaller suppliers are not discriminated against in the procurement process.

There is no legal definition of ‘sustainable food,’ although some aspects, such as the terms ‘organic’ or ‘Fairtrade’, are clearly defined. Our working definition is that sustainable food should be produced, processed and traded in ways that:

- **Contribute to thriving local economies and sustainable livelihoods – both in the UK and, in the case of imported products, in producer countries;**
- **Protect the diversity of both plants and animals (and the welfare of farmed and wild species), and avoid damaging natural resources and contributing to climate change**
Provide social benefits, such as good quality food, safe and healthy products.



Hospitality Essex core principles are as follows:

- Use local, seasonally available ingredients as standard, to minimise energy used in food production, transport and storage.
- Offer meals rich in fruit, vegetables, pulses, and nuts.
Ensure that meat, dairy products and eggs are produced to high environmental and animal welfare standards.
- Exclude fish species identified as most 'at risk' by the Marine Conservation Society, and choose fish only from sustainable sources - such as those accredited by the Marine Stewardship Council.
- Choose Fairtrade-certified products for foods and drinks imported from poorer countries, to ensure a fair deal for disadvantaged producers.
- Promote health and well-being by cooking with generous portions of vegetables, fruit and cutting down on salt, fats and oils, and cutting out artificial additives.

Specifically, we aim to:

- Give preference to products and services that are manufactured, and can be used and disposed of, in an environmentally and socially responsible way.
- Ensure that sustainability criteria are included in specifications to suppliers.
- Ensure that internal purchasers regularly audit their consumption of goods and materials in order to increase and maintain usage of sustainable products.
- Enhance employee awareness of relevant environmental and social effects of purchases through appropriate training, via induction programmes and in continuing professional development.
- Provide guidance and relevant product information to staff members to allow them to select sustainable products and services.
- Ensure non-discrimination against smaller suppliers and encourage them to participate in tendering opportunities.

To allow us to meet our aims we will:

- Develop clear objectives, with all our stakeholders, to minimise the environmental and social effects associated with the products and services we purchase.
- Identify the mechanisms that we intend to use to incorporate environmental and social factors into our product selection process.
- Develop performance indicators and evaluation criteria to measure our progress.
- Clearly specify the role that purchasing officers will play in the identifying and selecting sustainable products and services.
- Conduct purchasing audits to identify good practice and areas for improvement.
- Identify and implement necessary changes to the procurement process and specifications to ensure non-discrimination against local and smaller suppliers.



- Examine this Sustainable Food Policy on at least an annual basis and assess whether the targets have been reached and if, therefore, they can be raised.
- Build responsibility for the management of this policy into the job description of all catering staff.

Hospitality Essex Commitments and Targets:

We will apply this food policy to all of our catering outlets and food served for events. We will ensure this policy is fully reflected in our catering contracts where able.

Overall target: A minimum 50% of our total food budget will be spent on sustainable produce. In detail, our commitments and targets are as follows:

Communication

- We will communicate our food policy, and specific information about what we are doing to improve the sustainability of our food, to service users, visitors and staff via staff meetings, the Essex Experience, daily bulletins and the Hospitality website

Training

- Recognising our responsibility as an employer, catering staff will be made aware of our food sustainability policy on induction. As a minimum staff will be aware of the various certification systems and their relevance for food production and food products that Hospitality Essex uses.

Specific commodities

Fruit and Vegetables

Suppliers

Anglia Produce, Ardleigh, Colchester, Essex
Country fresh, Dereham, Norfolk

- By **August 2013** we will make sure all our menus reflect the seasons - at least three items and vegetables per menu will be served in the season it is naturally abundant in this country.
- Seasonal local fruit will always be stocked in preference to out of season imported fruit.
- Recognising the importance of orchards to biodiversity we stock orchard fruit when in season and juice products all year.



- We will ensure that **25%** of fresh, seasonal orchard fruits (apples, pears, plums, etc), purchased between the months of August and March and **25%** of fresh soft fruit (berries, currants, etc) purchased between the months of April to September are grown to Farm Assured standards or equivalent.
- Where possible we will build links through our suppliers to the growers of fruit and vegetables used in our catering, and promote to staff our commitment to supporting these growers and their communities.

Meat and Dairy

Suppliers

Frank Wrights butchers, Colchester, Essex
Hazels butchers, Norwich, Norfolk

- We are committed to ensuring that 100% of the livestock produce (meat and dairy) meets the Red Tractor Assured standards as a minimum. Where we can reduce consumption of livestock produce we will improve sustainable rearing practices i.e. a 'Less but better' quality approach.
- As a minimum **50%** of the meat purchased will be higher welfare. This amount will increase by 10% per year until 100% of the meat purchased is higher welfare.
- All meat must be stunned prior to slaughter
- We will monitor and reduce the amount of dairy, meat and processed meats that are served, replacing this where necessary with pulses, beans and other sources of protein that are not of animal origin and We will do this by:
- Promoting Feel Good Food days as everyday practice
- Serving 140g cooked weight portions of meat, poultry and oily fish portions. Taking into account 15-30 % shrinkage this equates to roughly 170 g uncooked weight.
- If serving white fish then aim for maximum portion of 100g cooked white fish. Taking into account 15- 30 % shrinkage this equates to roughly 115 – 130 g uncooked weight.
- Cheese will not exceed 30g per portion in cold or cooked meal options.



Fish

Suppliers

Direct Seafoods, Colchester, Essex

- We will eliminate any fish on the menu which are on the Marine Conservation Society's red list and promote only fish that is on the Marine Conservation Society's 'fish to eat' list.
- Marine Stewardship Council chain of custody certification for the caterer is a minimum requirement.
- Our preference for tinned tuna will be pole and line caught or MSC certified.

Fairtrade

- We will ensure an offer of ethically traded tea, coffee and sugar is available in all our units and through our delivered catering service, and will aim to serve more Fairtrade certified products. Further, we pledge to increase our ethically traded offer as more products and product categories become available, adding at least one more ethically traded product per year, where available.

Eggs

- We will ensure that all whole / liquid / dried eggs purchased are from, at minimum, a free-range production system and any products purchased containing egg state that the eggs are from a free-range production system.

Bread

- We will work with our suppliers to introduce baked goods, including bread, which do not feature unnecessary ingredients and additives, and which contain lower levels of salt in line with Department of Health guidance.

Water

- We will use either tap water in jugs, or purified still and sparkling tap water, bottled, using re-usable glass bottles in our hospitality services.
- With immediate effect we will ensure tap water and reusable or recyclable drinking vessels are freely available to all our service users, visitors and staff, choosing mains-fed systems instead of bottled water systems.



Nutrition

We will review the nutritional quality of our food and identify products and practices that can be changed to improve its nutritional value. This will include:

- reducing salt, fat and saturated fat levels, in line with Department of Health guidance; removing hydrogenated fat and other unnecessary additives from all food and ingredients; using healthier cooking oils and cooking methods; promoting dishes containing a high proportion of wholegrain foods, fruit and vegetables; limiting the provision and promotion of snacks that are high in fat, salt and/or sugar, and vigorously promoting healthier alternatives.

Deliveries

- We will assess how many food deliveries are made to Hospitality Essex catering department per week and, working with suppliers, aim to reduce this number to an absolute minimum by **October 2013**.

Waste and Recycling

- We will increase recycling of cardboard, paper, glass and metal waste, from sources generated by the catering staff and restaurant users, by 5%, each year. We will work with suppliers and Estates to reduce packaging and use reusable packaging wherever practicable.
- We will ensure that dry waste (e.g. cardboard, paper, metal) is kept separate from wet waste (e.g. food), and send any unavoidable food waste (e.g. potato peelings) for composting through the Estates management team. By working with suppliers, we will reduce the amount of waste from all sources going to landfill to an absolute minimum by **October 2013**.

Energy and Water

- The catering team will monitor how much energy and water we use and seek to reduce our energy and water usage by at least 10% by 2015. We will also develop a plan to reduce this more, after this point.

To be reviewed and updated on an annual basis from October 2013

Signed by: Tim Morris, General Manager (Hospitality Essex)



Our Initiatives to Reduce the University's Carbon Footprint:

University of Essex Thermal Mugs - October 2012 sees the launch of a brand new, modern reusable mug to replace the stainless steel mugs which we introduced in



2007. Our new insulated "takeaway" style cup in University colours is made from durable plastic and features a rubber grip and screw on lid. They are available to purchase in all our outlets for just £3.00 which includes the cost of your first drink. You then save 10p off the price of any hot drink or 12 oz soda every time you use the mug. This eliminates wastage of takeaway cups and also makes a great souvenir of your time at Essex! Stainless steel mugs and any other suitable mugs from home are also welcome and also save you 10p when used.



Biodegradable Packaging - our trendy new cardboard and paper packaging for items such as sandwiches and salads has eliminated all plastic bags, cutlery and takeaway containers.

Herb Garden introduced in 2009 and situated in the northern amphitheatre below Food on 3, our fantastic new garden now supplies all our outlets with fresh herbs thus reducing food costs and delivery fuel costs and creating tastier dishes! Due to the success of the fresh herbs, we are now working on plans to start growing our own vegetables and salad produce.



Purified Drinking Water Bottling System - installed in 2009, our new system has replaced pre-bottled mineral water on our hospitality menu, providing customers with high quality purified water from the most local source, in re-usable glass bottles bearing the University logo, thus eliminating the need for costly and polluting transportation and packaging. The water is purer than most spring and mineral waters and tastes every bit as good and even costs less than mineral water.

Recycling Old Cooking Oil - waste oil from our catering outlets is taken to a local farm for use in the production of bio-diesel.



Soil Association Award - We are working towards accreditation from the Soil Association whose ethos is "healthy soil, healthy people, healthy planet" by introducing a variety of organic products to our menus. For more information please see [here](#).

Preservation of World Fish Stocks - We are working to reduce the effect of overfishing, the greatest threat to marine wildlife, by only selling fish that do not appear on the Marine Conservation Society "at risk" lists. All fish on our menus are in good supply, thus maintaining stocks and ensuring sustainable levels. If you would like to know which fish you should avoid buying, please follow this [link](#).



Free Range Eggs - Hospitality Essex gained accreditation from Compassion in World Farming with their good egg award, recognising the use solely, of free range eggs and free range egg products.

Red Tractor Assured Meat - all meat bought within the department is Red Tractor assured. Red Tractor Assured food is world class. It is produced on farms that are managed by highly professional, well-qualified and caring farmers and marketed, transported and processed by skilled and expert businesses throughout the food industry. For more information please see [here](#).



Organic Milk - is available in all of our catering outlets, and is an option for any internal hospitality customers to order.