Learn about these and more sustainability efforts in Ball State Dining
Current practices to recycle, reuse, reduce waste, & conserve energy

Dining is committed to being a key partner in the university’s sustainability goals, including becoming a carbon-neutral campus by the year 2030.

Major initiatives with greatest impact

• Provide students and faculty/staff with reusable Dining bags, made from recycled plastic bottles, through complimentary handout and retail sales
  • Reusable bags used in place of trays conserve water associated with tray-washing.
  • Bags used for carry-out reduce reliance on single-use plastic bags.
  • This effort supports eventual plans to phase out tray and plastic bag use in Dining with student and staff support.

• Utilize Indiana-based company to purchase locally sourced produce. Goal is 20% of all produce purchased to be local.

• 67% of seafood served on campus is certified as sustainably sourced

• Use disposable dinnerware, carry-out containers, and other packaging options that are highly eco-friendly:
  • Eco-craft paper (brown sandwich wrappers & white breadstick bags)
    --Made from unbleached 100% post-consumer recycled paper
    --21% less wood pulp used
    --10% less greenhouse gases released
    --46% less waste water released
    --16% less solid waste produced
    --Biodegradable and compostable
    --Soy-blended wax instead of petroleum wax
  • Bagasse (plates, bowls, clamshells)
    --Made from renewable sugarcane and bamboo
    --Biodegradable & compostable
  • Water cups
    --Recyclable plastic cold cups available for water without added waste of lid and straw
  • Bamboo and leaf-based plates (in use at Tally Chef’s Station and Catering)
    --Easily renewed resources
• Participate in the local Blue Bag recycling program for trash disposal, capturing more than 40% of the departmental waste stream.

• Donate wholesome leftovers and foods to be discontinued on menus to local services. In place since 2000, the program currently benefits Muncie Mission, Harvest Soup Kitchen, A Better Way, and campus-based Cardinal Kitchen.

• Sponsor a reusable drink container program for patrons in all retail locations—purchase a cold-beverage container or insulated hot-beverage container and refill it for a reduced drink price on subsequent visits. Reusable mugs also provided to AFSCME union employees for use in their beverage program.

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• Recycle oil from fryers; use bulk frying oil to reduce the need for paper and plastic oil containers.

• Collect coffee grounds for campus composting.

• Use eco-friendly chemicals and cleaning methods (Ecolab Green Seal Approved program) and measured dispensing systems to limit use and prevent waste.

**Food preparation and service**

• Serve locally roasted, organic coffee (also fair trade) in majority of locations.

• Utilize herbs grown in campus greenhouse at Woodworth Commons.

• Purchase and use pre-cleaned and cut produce and fruit when feasible to reduce campus food waste. Trimmings are used for animal feed and composted by the manufacturers.

• Maintain waste records for over-production/out-dated, discarded food and trim waste on produce. Train employees in minimizing trim.

• Maintain service records to prepare amounts that match demand to reduce waste.

• Use small food containers at buffets, on salad lines, and on hot lines to prevent over preparation and spoilage.

• Serve portion sizes that encourage patrons to return for seconds rather than over-serving resulting in food waste.

• Conduct weekly inventories to keep stocks low and avoid spoilage/waste.

• Prepare foods, as much as possible, fresh and to order, and in smaller batches throughout the meal period.
• Date and rotate stock to ensure that perishable food does not spoil or sit on the shelf past expiration dates.

• Use computerized recipes to make exact numbers of needed portions.

• Recycle oil from fryers and other waste oils. Use bulk frying oil to reduce the need for paper and plastic oil containers.

**Paper Goods and Packaging**

• Use bulk condiments and salad dressings in all-you-care-to-eat locations and multiple retail locations.

• Promote sales of fountain or dispensed bulk beverages to reduce the use of cans and bottles.

• Participate in the local Blue Bag recycling program for trash disposal capturing over 40% of the departmental waste stream.

• Donate empty pickle buckets and cottage cheese tubs to charitable organizations.

• Recycle corrugated cardboard boxes, glass, paper goods, plastic, newspaper, phone books, office ink and toner cartridges, batteries and office paper from copying, printing, and shredding.

• Purchase and use recycled napkins whenever feasible.

• Purchase plastic containers with lids that can be washed and reused versus boxes and plastic wrap for transport of products from one unit to another.

• Use paper wrappers rather than Styrofoam or plastic whenever feasible; switch in 2009 from plastic sandwich containers to unbleached, recycled content paper wrappers.

• Use stainless steel pans rather than aluminum foil disposable pans when feasible.

• Reinforce the use and selection of china, silverware, and glassware by customers.

• Buy convenience store goods and milk in reusable totes/crates that are returned to the vendor for refilling.

**Cleaning and Chemicals**

• Install air hand dryers in newly constructed locations and in existing locations as those locations are renovated.

• Use eco-friendly chemicals and cleaning methods.
**Maintenance and Repair**

- Administer preventive maintenance programs in all units.

- Recycle grease pumped from grease interceptor collection tanks to reduce landfill solids and chemicals handled by local water treatment plant.

- Properly dispose of paints, solvents, batteries, fluorescent bulbs, printer inks, and other items used in maintaining food service areas, offices, or food service equipment.

- Recycle computers, cell phones, computer printer cartridges, and metals.

**Equipment**

- Buy energy efficient and Energy Star rated equipment.

- Install energy efficient LED lighting to reduce energy consumption and recycle old light fixtures.

- Install new and replacement refrigeration featuring air-cooled condensers where possible to reduce water usage (compared to water-cooled condensers).

- Replace defrost timers on coolers/freezers with microprocessor-driven controller to provide maximum efficiency.

- Cooler/freezer monitoring system remotely alerts staff of temperature changes, ensuring maximum efficiency and preventing temperature-related food loss.

**Administrative and Unit Offices**

- Placement of Dining Director on Ball State’s Council On The Environment (COTE)

- Reduce waste and costs by making Dining Service forms, policies, procedures, and select employee handbooks available as electronic documents. Eliminate unnecessarily paper use whenever possible.

- Reuse printed marketing materials whenever possible; rely on web as main source of consumer information, rather than printed informational pieces.

- Print double-sided whenever possible and only print things that are necessary in hard-copy form.

- Filtered water bottle-filling station in Central Office building to encourage reusable containers instead of bottled water.

**Waste Collection**

- Participate in University co-mingling program with trash hauler who separates recyclables.
• Provide waste containers in which customers can properly dispose of recyclables.

• Recycle pallet shrink wrap on receiving docks of all locations.

**Customer Awareness**

• Place signage in units to heighten environmental awareness of patrons and encourage use of permanent dishware, recycling, and other sustainable habits.

• Place marketing year-round in campus media outlets to promote Dining’s sustainable practices, as well as to promote ways patrons can contribute to Dining’s sustainability—e.g., taking only the amount of napkins you need, forgoing lids on disposable cups when not needed, etc.

• Conduct marketing campaign during Earth Month to promote specific sustainable habits.

• Solicit ideas for change from patrons and knowledgeable campus faculty.

• Partner with Facilities Management to support a student-run Energy Challenge in the residence halls, including four Dinner in the Dark energy awareness meals each academic year.

**Employee Awareness**

• Educate and train employees to encourage a strict adherence to the policies and procedures to facilitate compliance with our environmental goals.

• Dining Service staff personnel shall serve on campus environmental task forces and remain proactive in all environment activities.

• Dining director serves on Ball State’s campus environmental advisory group, COTE (Council on the Environment).