



Sustainable Events

Sustainable Catering Checklist

<p><i>Choosing a sustainable caterer is a critical decision when planning an event. Use the checklist below to guide your conversation with your caterer and assess whether caterers meet your department's goals for sustainability.</i></p>		Check box if accomplished
SUPPLIER DIVERSITY	<p>Supplier Diversity: Support diverse businesses owned by women or minorities, including people of color, LGBTQ+ owners, veterans, and persons with disabilities. See the below links for businesses in the Cambridge and Boston area to get you started. Cambridge Business Diversity Directory City of Boston Business List</p>	
	<p>Celebrate Cultures: Prioritize vendors and cuisines that incorporate food cultures from around the globe, and offer lots of flavors and ways to incorporate plant-forward options.</p>	
MENU DEVELOPMENT	<p>Local: Food is sourced locally. Food grown within Massachusetts is ideal. Food grown within New England is also a good target.</p>	
	<p>Seasonal: The menu highlights products in season.</p>	
	<p>Organic: Food is USDA Certified Organic.</p>	
	<p>Allergies, Sensitivities, & Dietary Preferences: Based on the dietary needs of the attendees, choices are available for vegan, gluten-free, lactose intolerant, kosher, halal, or other allergies and preferences.</p>	
	<p>Plant-Forward (Vegetarian & Vegan): Vegetarian and vegan entrees are available and prioritized in your order.</p>	
	<p>Kid Friendly: Healthy choices are available for children, for both food and beverages (water, 100% juice).</p>	
RESOURCE CONSUMPTION	<p>Preparation: Ask your caterer if food is prepared fresh, as opposed to pre-prepared or frozen. Prioritize fresh ingredients and preparation.</p>	
	<p>Dishware: Caterer does not use Styrofoam. Reusable dishware is ideal. If reusable dishware is not appropriate, minimize plastic and single-use as much as possible.</p>	
	<p>Serving Platters: To minimize packaging, serve all dishes and condiments family-style or in bulk as opposed to single-serving options.</p>	
	<p>Tablecloths: No disposable linens are used as tablecloth. Bare tables are the best option. If tablecloths are necessary, use butcher paper or reusable linens.</p>	
	<p>Water: No bottled water is provided. Instead, water is provided in large containers, jugs, or reusable, recyclable, or compostable dishware.</p>	
COMMUNICATION	<p>Beverages: No beverages are provided in single-serving containers. Options besides sugar-sweetened beverages are prioritized.</p>	
	<p>Labeling: Food is clearly labeled with name of local farm, dietary information, and ingredients, where appropriate.</p>	
WASTE DISPOSAL	<p>Flexibility: Attendance usually changes a couple days prior to the event. See if some flexibility is permitted to change catering orders prior to the event to make sure you do not over-order. Be accommodating and understanding of the preparation required for catering.</p>	
	<p>Compost: Ask if your caterers can provide composting services, when appropriate.</p>	
WASTE DISPOSAL	<p>Extra Food: Do not let extra food go to waste. Ask your caterer if they have an existing partnership with a food bank or donation center.</p>	