

2024-26

Sustainable Food and Beverage Policy



Sustainable Food and Beverage Policy 2022 – 2024

Purpose and Scope

The Sustainable Food and Beverage Policy applies to all food and beverage supplied by Source Catering and in Catering outlets on campus at the University of Bristol.

The University acknowledges its responsibility to address sustainability impacts arising from catering and hospitality operations by engaging in procurement and service delivery practices that are environmentally and socially sustainable, while encouraging healthy and sustainable eating.

Strategic Objectives

This document details the steps we are taking to ensure this occurs across all aspects of our supply chains and services as well as being integrated into the wider culture of food at the University. We recognise our responsibility to engage our suppliers to minimise negative environmental and social impacts associated with the manufacture of their products and services. We will buy from reputable suppliers choosing local supply chains where appropriate.

The quality, nutritional value and sustainability of food has an increasingly high public profile and will become one of the factors by which students and staff exercise choice when selecting their food choices. Healthier, more sustainable food at Bristol University may help to encourage positive lifestyle changes outside the University for both students and staff, leading to a positive impact on health and well-being, as well as on our environment. Different priorities tend to overlap in relation to the production of food. For example, the need to reduce the consumption of meat for environmental reasons coincides with reducing meat consumption for health. There are similar targets in many different sections of this document for this reason.

Source procures more than 50% of supplies through local suppliers located within a 30-mile radius of Bristol. In addition, The University Caterers Organisation Ltd (TUCO) supports the embedding of sustainable procurement into our supply chain to promote responsible sourcing and traceability.

To further improve our sustainability ethos Source will seek recognition through four main channels:

- Membership of menu's of change university research collaborative
- Maintaining and Enhancing Accreditations – Good Egg, MSC, Soil Association, Bristol Eating Better
- Achieve Sustainable Restaurant Association's 'Food Made Good' framework
- Maintaining The University's Fair Trade Status

Through this policy, Source commits to embedding sustainability through the following areas:

1. Sourcing
2. Provision
3. Practice
4. Development
5. Awareness

Social value

Sustainable food has a large part to play in ensuring the University meets its obligations under the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 as well as its moral and ethical obligations as a Higher Education Institution. Social Value represents an opportunity for suppliers to indicate specific contributions that they can make toward supporting the University's objectives and to the economic, social and environmental well-being of the city of Bristol and the surrounding region. Moreover, social value is not limited to suppliers and supply chains, but is also practiced through provision, research, learning, and leadership as laid out in this plan.

Wellbeing, health, and nutrition

The interconnectedness of food systems with the wellbeing of individuals, communities, ecosystems, and the broader environment underscores the importance of sustainable food practices. This comprehensive approach acknowledges that the production and consumption of food impact not only human health but also the health of the planet. As food systems are both influenced by and contribute to climate change, addressing these interconnections is crucial for the wellbeing of current and future generations.

Scope 3 emissions from catering

As part of the University's commitment to reach net zero carbon by 2030 we are striving to map and reduce our scope 3 carbon emissions that emerge from catering practices. The first steps we have taken to reduce our catering emissions have been to introduce meat-free Mondays, removing beef from retail outlets and reducing ruminant meat from all of our menus.

Food/Drink Waste

The University of Bristol aims to take an innovative approach to our catering practices. This ranges from repurposing components of food that may have previously been considered food waste, such as banana peels and coffee grounds to completely banning plastic bottles.

We have made significant efforts to increase the accessibility of a variety of drinks across campus. One of our most notable achievements is the stopping of selling plastic drinks containers as well as all of our cooking oil being converted into biofuel. This has included providing dairy milk alternatives in all of our Halls of Residence and Cafes and increasing access to refillable water bottle points as part of the City to Sea refill scheme.

Food/Drink Disposables

The introduction of a disposable cup levy, later expanded to cover all disposable food and drink containers, represents a significant step towards reducing our waste and carbon emissions. While our sourcing of the most ethical and sustainable disposables available, is important. It is crucial to acknowledge that disposable items remain a major cause of environmental damage.

Food/Drink Carbon Mapping

We have invested in cutting-edge technology, specifically the Klimato app. This innovative tool plays a pivotal role in our strategy by enabling us to accurately measure and analyze the carbon emissions associated with our recipes. The app provides detailed insights into the environmental impact of each ingredient, allowing us to make informed decisions to lower our carbon footprint.

Innovation of Food and Dietary Requirements

The University will strive to be innovative with the food that is produced and will seek to be well informed with food trends. We recognise that there are a wide variety of dietary requirements across the University that must be met due to a wide range of reasons including health, wellbeing, preference and faith.

Palm Oil

Sustainable Palm Oil Policy is a critical component of our broader commitment to sustainability. By adhering to this policy, we aim to mitigate the negative impacts of palm oil production on the environment and local communities, while promoting sustainable development and industry best practices. Through continuous improvement, collaboration, and transparency, we are dedicated to achieving a sustainable palm oil supply chain and contributing to a more sustainable future.

While unsustainable palm oil farming is environmentally destructive, sustainable palm oil is an extremely useful natural oil and more efficient than other similar oils.

All palm oil products used across Source catering are RSPO certified.

Climate Change

In 2019, the University declared a Climate Emergency and is currently aiming towards being carbon neutral by 2030. Sustainable food plays an important role in these plans as it is a way that everyone can actively engage in climate mitigation measures on a daily basis. By raising sustainability awareness through food, we can help to facilitate a culture of Sustainability at the University which will help to lower our wider impact on the environment.

Key Objectives For 2024-26

- 🍷 Increase our % of local suppliers 50% in 2022 - 80% in 2024
- 🍷 We will use zero plastic packaging for our in-house food ranges.
- 🍷 Increase the number of direct independent local suppliers 5 in 2024
- 🍷 We will reduce our single-use packaging even further and aim for 95% of products sold plastic free.
- 🍷 Mapping of protein portfolio to be brought under 4kg co2 eq (2023 – 4.04kg co2 eq)
- 🍷 Promote consumption of non-dairy milk alternatives to increase sales - 31% in 23/24
- 🍷 Reduce reliance on disposable packaging for hot drinks
- 🍷 Reduce cardboard packaging for pizzas
- 🍷 Implement a closed loop disposable recycling scheme for Disposable Packaging by 2026
- 🍷 Identify and provide appropriate training, advice and information for all staff
- 🍷 Become members of the Sustainable restaurant association
- 🍷 All beef products to come from regenerative farms by 2025
- 🍷 Identify and switch to responsibly sourced soya in all products

Our Ongoing Sustainable Pledges

- Run Fairtrade activities to promote the importance of these schemes (Fairtrade.org, fairforlife, fairlife etc).
- Run education campaigns encouraging staff and students to carry out carbon footprint monitoring/reducing
- Promote the environmental & health benefits of plant-based foods, supported by staff & student campaigns
- We will be transparent about our food sourcing and preparation
- Run plant forward cookery classes to encourage students and staff to eat more sustainably
- We will proactively engage our supply chain in our sustainability criteria and report on Sustainability KPI's
- We will review accreditation schemes, such as the sustainable restaurant association and soil association accreditation etc to pursue the most applicable schemes for the University's activities
- Continue to engage with suppliers to reduce waste in our supply chain
- Re-use supplier packaging in our in-house product range

The Plan

The plan for how the above actions will be achieved is laid out in the following tables under the headings sourcing, provision, practice, development and awareness:



The Plan: Sourcing

We will source food and drink that is produced to environmental, social and economically sustainable standards by:

Fruit & Veg

- We will increase the amount of locally sourced produce. All suppliers are chosen after a comprehensive evaluation of their sustainability credentials considering environmental, social and economic factors.

Meat, Fish & Dairy

- Reduce the amount of animal-based produce served and lead with messaging around sustainable choices.
- Introduce regeneratively farmed beef, to cut our carbon footprint and improve bio-deversity

Local

- Strive to increase the amount of local food that is procured, whether it be produced in our kitchens or using local suppliers.

Organic

- Work towards increasing the amount of organic food procured by regular review of product lines. Beef, milks and flours all being transitioned to organic.

Fair Trade

- By continuing to source Fairly traded products and ingredients the University is helping to support farmers across the globe. Fairtrade focuses on increasing farmer's resilience to climate change, aligned with the University's goals.

Oils & Soya

- We will continue to only use RSPO certified palm oil and responsible soya in our products.

Drinks

- We will continue to make healthy and sustainable choices in product ranges.

Culture & Education

- Promoting responsible and sustainable dining practices in all activities, whether at the university or elsewhere

The Plan: Provision

We will provide good value, high quality, healthy and sustainable food that meets dietary needs and enhances wellbeing by:

Fruit & Veg

- Providing generous portions of fruit, vegetables and whole grains enhancing healthy food availability. Utilising crop reports, seasonal and local ingredients where possible.

Meat, Fish & Dairy

- We will move to a reduced meat model, traditional meat proteins dishes will become combination plant and meat protein meals.
- Provide a wider range of plant-based choices and explore the option of changing the default milk in hot drinks to a plant-based options.

Local, Organic & Fair Trade

- We will improve the messaging of local and organic food within our Point of Sale information. Our menus will reflect our purchasing ethos, We will increase the range of products and supply more point of sale information to increase the FairTrade presence in people's minds especially during 'FairTrade Fortnight'.

Health

- Promoting healthy eating is a key tenant of this Sustainable Food Plan and drives our decision making. We have taken steps to promote healthy and sustainable eating in our dining rooms and beyond.

Plants

- As the uptake of low-carbon diets increases we will promote plant based options normal within our catering offers. We will make vegan options more prominent, and increase the variety of meat-free packaged sandwiches in our cafes.

Drinks

- We introduce a disposable cup levy to further encourage our customers to bring their own cup. We source the very best home compostable disposable cups available. We provide cup wash stations for our customers to use FoC to help reduce waste. Engaging in City to Sea 'Refill Bristol' campaign we promotes access to water refills as well as reducing plastic waste. We do not stock plastic bottled drinks.

Culture & Education

- Training catering managers, chefs and front-of-house staff on how to best provide sustainable and nutritious food will support creating a culture of health and sustainable food helping achieve all of our goals.

Food Waste

- We will place a focus on ensuring that food waste is dealt with in a sustainable manner through campus wide food waste campaigns. This initiative may involve 'no tray' days in Halls of Residence Dining Halls.

The Plan: Practice

We will act responsibly towards the environment and people employed in our supply chains, and we will influence our suppliers to do the same, by:

Suppliers

- All suppliers are chosen after a comprehensive evaluation of their sustainability credentials considering environmental, social and economic factors. We will design menu's to reflect fresh, seasonal produce

Fruit & Veg

- We strive to use seasonal products where possible, will reduce portion size and emphasise calorie quality over quantity to support our health and sustainability ethos.

Meat, Fish & Dairy

- We will reduce ruminant meat starting with removing beef from café & retail outlets. Livestock farming is a significant contributor to climate change. We commit to reducing the amount of foods from animal origin (meat, fish, dairy and eggs).

Local & Organic

- We aim to buy products that support our local community and if we can't buy local, we'll aim to buy products that support other communities accredited by the Soil Association Food for Life Catering Mark.

Fair Trade

- We work with suppliers to increase and broaden lines of Fairtrade and other fairly traded products which are key to ensuring we act responsibly towards people and planet with our suppliers, aiming to become a Fairtrade University.

Oils & Soya

- All waste kitchen oil is made into biofuel and we hope to reduce our overall oil consumption in the coming years. We will reduce the amount of oil and hydrogenated vegetable oils used in cooking; choosing healthier and more sustainable oils.

Energy & Water

- Reducing our energy and water usage is a vital part of the University Carbon Free by 2030 strategy. We aim to replace equipment with water-saving and energy efficient options and liaise with suppliers to improve the efficiency of water during production.

Drinks

- Mains water drinking facilities have been installed in key locations promoted through the Refill Bristol campaign; and we aim to serve 50% of drinks in reusable container by 2026

Culture & Education

- Menus are designed with the cross utilisation of products in mind. Food is ordered daily to reduce the levels of food waste by just in time use of raw ingredients. We are listed on the 'To Good To Go' app which reduces food waste through food sharing.

The Plan: Development

We will support initiatives that deepen understanding, collaboration and action on sustainable food by:

Local & Organic

- The university aims to connect with students and other stakeholders to effectively support student led planting projects, take action on organic food issues and implement the most appropriate recommendations from stakeholders.
- We will endeavour to have a holistic approach to choosing our supplies and products, looking at the impact of supply and demand balancing local versus global markets.

Fair Trade

- We currently engage students and staff in Fairtrade campaigns and events. We aim to create a steering group within a wider sustainable food action group and create additional educational opportunities by inviting speakers to discuss Fairtrade at one off events. Maintain fairtrade university status

Health

- While we already provide healthy food options, these need to be communicated more effectively to encourage positive lifestyle changes for our whole community, leading to a positive impact on health and well-being, as well as on our environment.
- We aim to ensure there is sufficient nutritional information available at point of purchase and promote the health benefits of plant-based.
- We promote plant forward cooking through our student and staff cookery classes.

Plants

- We aim to move to encouraging less meat at every meal time by changing the way protein is viewed. We engage with the Cabot institute a food research group. To consider how best to share information around the benefits of a plant-based diet. We will use social media to share how carbon is connected to the food system. We will implement other appropriate actions as recommended by the food research group and other stakeholders.

The Plan: Awareness

Through great leadership and by adopting transparent and inclusive policies and practices that reflect our institutional values and aspirations we will seek to raise awareness of sustainable diets and practices through:

Awareness Campaigns

- We currently run Fairtrade activities to promote the importance of fair trade schemes and support the South West Fairtrade Network. We aim to set up a Fairtrade University Steering Group (within the Sustainable Food Action Group) and work with the food research group to implement education and curriculum changes.
- We publish a monthly article for TUCO magazine to encourage plant forward dining in the university sector
- We engage with our local council to promote healthy eating
- We have worked with industry leaders, podcasters and suppliers to promote sustainability.
- We have given seminars to students and faculty
- We established a local procurement group Good food and eating well

Food Groups

- A Food Development action group will be created early in 2024 with guest members invited from across the University. The action group will discuss food trends and ensure that the sustainability goals set out in the Sustainable Food Plan are woven into the development of food and menus.
- Additionally a 'Sustainable Food and Student Society Forum' will support the Catering department to deliver the sustainable objectives.
- Good food and eating well group, set up to bring suppliers and purchasers together in our region.

Awards

- We currently support the South West Fairtrade Business Awards and we have achieved Fairtrade University status. We have received the Good Egg award for our use of free-range eggs in catered halls of residence, functions, cafes and delivered food, and aim to maintain this level of attainment. We work with the Soil Association Food for Life Catering Mark, Sustainable Restaurants award, Bristol Eating Better and MSC accreditation. These awards provide an independent guarantee that what is on your menu is freshly prepared, free from undesirable additives and better for animal welfare and ensures that fish is sustainably sourced.