**Green Guide for Food Vendors**

**Goals of a Green Event**

* Conserve energy and natural resources
* Minimize waste
* Promote alternative transportation
* Prioritize healthy, fair traded and sustainable food alternatives whenever possible

**Minimize Waste**

**Benefits of Going Green**

The benefits of having a ‘green’ food services operation includes:

* Saving money by purchasing condiments in bulk
* Attracting customers by promoting the sustainable qualities of the food you serve
* Increasing revenue and promoting your business by selling reusable water bottles
* Reducing the volume of waste that you need to carry back and dispose of after the event by using the composting and recycling services offered at the event

**What Waste?**

Minimizing the amount of waste generated at an event is an important characteristic of a green event.

The goal of minimizing waste can be achieved by:

* Minimizing the amount of packaging and material distributed (e.g. drink lids, straws, paper bags); and
* Choosing to use items that can be reused, composted or recycled.

Event organizers are encouraged to make their event more sustainable by providing re-sortation stations at the event for the collection of compostable, recyclable and waste material.

* Re-sortation stations may include bins to accept the following material:
* Composting – Food Waste (e.g. fruits, vegetables, cheese, meat, bone and soiled paper)
* Refundable – Beverage Containers
* Recycling – Hard Plastics, Metal and Glass
* Paper
* Cardboard
* Miscellaneous Recycling (e.g. soft plastics, styrofoam, batteries)
* Landfill Waste (e.g. most coffee cups, candy wrappers and chip bags)

**How Can Vendors Participate?**

* Set-up bins inside your vending station so compost, recyclables and waste can be sorted during food preparation. The bins may later be emptied into the larger re-sortation stations at the event site.
* Do not put out garbage bins for your customers. Please direct customers to the nearest re-sortation station to properly dispose of their food, recyclables and waste.
* Promote your sustainable practices with signage at your vending station.
* Develop a sales and disposal plan for the type of food, beverage and merchandise you will be selling.

 *The plan should examine:*

* Will the serving ware be compostable? (e.g. uncoated paper products – plates, cups and napkins, and compostable cutlery). If not, can it be recycled?
* Can you purchase products in bulk to reduce packaging? Cream and milk may be served from an insulated carafe. Condiments can be served in a covered dispensable container.
* Avoid use of plastic coffee stirrers and drinking straws

**Prioritize Sustainable Food Alternatives**

**What is Sustainable Food?**

The greatest contribution that food vendors can make towards greening an event is the type of food you will be serving. As a food vendor, it is up to you to decide on the sustainable qualities of the food you will serve. Will the food you serve come from local producers? Will it be fair trade or organic?

**How Can Vendors Participate?**

* When water is available at the event, consider selling reusable water bottles to promote your business.
* Buy seasonal and locally sourced food where possible
* Purchase fair trade and organic coffee and teas
* Order organic or locally made beverages (e.g. juice, milk, wine, beer, ciders)
* Provide vegetarian menu options
* Serve “Best Choice” sustainable seafood as indicated in the Sustainable Seafood Guide at www.SeaChoice.org
* Promote your green practices with signage at your vending station (e.g. food sourced from a local farm on Vancouver Island)

**Green Tip**

Make cleaning up easy for your customers by using only compostable serving ware.