



Solutions for a Sustainable Supply Chain



Sustainable Catering

Did you know that sustainable catering is a simple way to support local and ethical food and business? Local and organic food is lighter on the planet and healthier for the body. Showcasing sustainable catering at your meeting or event will send a strong message to your colleagues and peers that sustainability is a priority for your organization.

What is sustainable catering?

Sustainable catering offers some or all of the following:

- Locally grown and produced food
- Indigenous wild foods and traditional menus (see below)
- Certified organic and certified sustainable foods (see over the page)
- Reusable or biodegradable packaging and dishware and cutlery
- Compost and recycling receptacles for a zero waste event

In sustainable food production systems, soil and water is conserved and toxic chemicals and genetically modified inputs are avoided. Sustainable farmed meat is raised without antibiotics and hormones and in humane conditions, while wild meat is harvested from environmentally managed resources. Sustainable food production also takes into account social issues such as worker health, safety and compensation and farmer compensation.

Indigenous and Traditional Foods

Indigenous cuisine is enjoying a revival in BC and beyond. Choosing Indigenous catering is a wonderful way to connect with fresh, local and wild foods and cooking methods while educating people about Indigenous culture and foods that have been eaten in the region for millennia. A traditional menu is available from [Aramark \(contact information here\)](#).


There are also Indigenous enterprises off campus. As one example, the **Painted Pony Café** in Kamloops offers a variety of both traditional and fusion foods. For more information call 250-828-1131.



Which certification standards for sustainable food are available?

Catering companies that use sustainable products and practices reference eco-labels to identify if their supplier has third-party verified products or practices. Look for the following:

Certification	Summary Overview
 <p>Food Alliance Certified</p>	<p>Food Alliance is a nonprofit organization that certifies farms, ranches, and food processors and distributors for sustainable agricultural and facility management practices. Food Alliance Certification ensures safe and fair working conditions, humane treatment of animals, and careful stewardship of natural resources.</p>
 <p>Canada Organic Canadian Food Inspection Agency</p>	<p>Canada Organic label is for use only on those food products certified as meeting the Canadian standard for organic production and that contain at least 95 percent organic ingredients. These standards limits and prohibit the use of persistent pesticides, synthetic macronutrient fertilizers, routine use of drugs, antibiotics or synthetic hormones, animal cloning, genetic engineering, sewage sludge (“biosolids”), irradiation, and artificial food colours, flavours, sweeteners, preservatives and other processing aids in processed foods.</p>
 <p>Fair Trade Canada</p>	<p>Standards ensure that producers receive a fair wage and work in a safe environment. Certified products include bananas, honey, coffee, oranges, cocoa, chocolate, dried and fresh fruits and vegetables, juices, nuts, quinoa, rice, spices, sugar, tea, and wine.</p>
 <p>Marine Stewardship Council Standards</p>	<p>MSC certification is available to all wild-capture fisheries, regardless of their size, scale, ecology, geography or technology. Seafood bearing this label should meet the MSC standard of maintaining sustainable fish stocks, minimizing environmental impacts, and effective resource management. MSC is a member of ISEAL Alliance which accredits their label.</p>
 <p>Aquaculture Stewardship Council Standards</p>	<p>ASC standards cover 17 species groups [abalone; bivalves (clams, mussels, oyster, scallop); flatfish, freshwater trout; pangasius; salmon; seabass, seabream, meagre; seriola and cobia; shrimp; tilapia, tropical marine finfish] and there is also a joint ASC-MSC standard for seaweed. ASC certification focuses on both the environmental and social impact of farming. Farms must minimise their impact on the surrounding natural environment by careful management of fish health. ASC is also a member of the ISEAL Alliance.</p>
 <p>Certified Humane Humane Farm Animal Care</p>	<p>Certified Humane maintains certification standards for beef, chicken, laying hens, dairy cows, goats, pigs, sheep, turkeys and bison. The standards relate to the mobility, care and treatment, use of equipment and slaughter of the animals. See Comprehensive Standards Comparison chart for other standards related to animal welfare.</p>

Certification	Summary Overview
 <p data-bbox="410 159 678 233">Rainforest Alliance Certified</p>	<p data-bbox="760 153 1479 420">This certification indicates that a farm, forest, or tourism enterprise has been audited to meet standards that require environmental, social, and economic sustainability. Food labeled with this standard has been produced in operations that conserve biodiversity and natural resources with environmental management systems. It also accounts for worker livelihoods, decent wages and respect for human rights.</p>

For a complete listing of relevant eco-labels, refer to the [Ecolabel Index](#).

Quick Checklist: What to Ask Your Caterer

- Plant-based menu items
- A beverage station with reusable drink dispensers and cups
- Condiments in bulk rather than in individually packaged portions
- Reusable dishware, cutlery and cloth if possible
- Biodegradable and compostable dishware, cutlery and napkins
- Donate leftover food

Preventing Waste and Sharing Food

Usually the idea of donating food is an afterthought, and food is wasted. For best results, make food waste reduction a priority and part of your planning from the beginning. When planning your event, research organizations in your community that will pick up leftover food. Plan ahead and make arrangements. There are emerging solutions for donating unused food with initiatives such as [FoodMesh](#) starting in BC. FoodMesh helps public organizations build their own local food recovery networks with their online platform. FoodMesh’s vision is to create local virtual networks of businesses, farmers and charities to safely exchange unsold product to the highest end user, creating a more connected and efficient food system.

Plant Protein

Plant protein is nutritious and good for animal welfare and the environment. It is more efficient than animal production. The one acre of land needed to produce 250 lbs. of beef can grow 50,000 lbs. of tomatoes, 53,000 lbs. of potatoes or 30,000 lbs. of carrots. The average person who eats plant-based can save 162,486 gallons of water a year, and cut their carbon footprint in half ([Source](#)).