



Dining Services

SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

2021 - 2022

A NOTE FROM BU DINING

Sustainability has been one of our top priorities for more than a decade. We continue to develop programs and partnerships to better not only the planet but also the lives of people in our community and beyond.

This work cannot be done alone; every day, our team of more than 575 people integrates sustainability initiatives into our 28 locations across the Charles River Campus. Student engagement, in the form of student Zero Waste guides, student interns, and student group collaborations, are invaluable to our program and progress.

This report highlights the breadth of our sustainability work, from sourcing to waste prevention and diversion, low-impact dining, and more. If you'd like to learn even more, you can visit www.bu.edu/dining/sustainability.



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

01

Our Program

02

Local, Sustainable &
Diverse Sourcing

03

Video: Where Does BU's
Food Waste Go?

04

Minimizing Wasted Food

05

Climate Friendly Foods

06

Certified Green Restaurants

07

Farmers' Markets & CSA

08

2022-2023 Programming
& Initiatives

OUR PROGRAM

BU Dining serves 6.2 million meals a year designed to positively impact the environment and the wellness of the BU community. We do this by serving fresh, wholesome foods and by promoting ecologically sound, socially responsible agriculture.



2021 - 2022 By the Numbers

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- **18%** of food and beverages sourced from local and/or sustainable sources
 - **36** Weigh the Waste events held in the dining halls
 - **523 tons** of food waste diverted to composting and anaerobic digestion
 - **8,500lbs** of food donated to local food recovery partners
 - **387** Climate Friendly Menu Items
 - **7** Certified Green Restaurants across campus
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LOCAL, SUSTAINABLE, & DIVERSE SOURCING

Last year, we revised our criteria for local and sustainable sourcing to **ensure they truly reflect our commitment to environmentally sustainable and socially responsible food systems**. These new principles recognize products with a **strong local impact and/or 'best in class' third-party sustainability certifications**. In FY22, nearly 18% of our food and beverage purchases were local and/or sustainable.

LOCAL

Products grown, harvested, caught, raised, produced, or processed within 250 miles of campus and by businesses that are local (within 250 miles) and independently or cooperatively owned. These standards account for both products that have a local farm impact - contains ingredients from a farm within the local radius - and local business impact - products from local or cooperatively owned businesses within the local radius.

By sourcing locally, we can support the local food system and local economy while also helping to preserve local farmland. We work directly with local farmers, ranchers, and processors. Local sourcing excludes products produced by publicly-traded and multinational companies that have a facility within 250 miles of campus.

SUSTAINABLE

Align with AASHE STARS' list of recognized third-party certifications for **sustainable agriculture, sustainable seafood, fair trade/labor, and humane animal care** to ensure best-in-class sustainability accounting.

DIVERSE

In addition to local and sustainable sourcing, we are committed to sourcing from **Minority/Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBEs)**. Last year, about 9% of our purchases were from MWBE suppliers; we are working toward a goal of **25% of our food and non-food purchases being from MWBEs by 2025**.

FOOD WASTE DIVERSION

We diverted more than 523 tons - equivalent to more than 24,900 BLUEbikes- of food waste last year, the majority of which was composted on a farm outside of Boston, producing compost that can then be used to grow local food. The remaining food waste was anaerobically digested, a process that produces energy and a fertilizer byproduct.



BU's dining halls and retail and restaurants generate thousands of pounds of food waste every week. Have you wondered what happens to all those apple cores, onion skins, and uneaten pizza crusts? This video shows Dining Services' innovative, multitiered strategy to keep food waste out of landfills.

Read more on our strategy on [BU Today](#).

MINIMIZING WASTED FOOD

While diverting food waste to composting and anaerobic digestion has environmental benefits, preventing it from being wasted in the first place is even better! We are actively working to reduce pre-consumer and post-consumer food waste across campus.

Too Good To Waste

Last year, we launched the #TooGoodToWaste campaign across residential dining halls to increase mindfulness about post-consumer food waste and simple steps that students can adopt to minimize plate waste.



Weigh the Waste

After more than a year's hiatus, we were able to resume Weigh the Waste events in the Fall 2021 semester and held 36 events over the course of the 2021-2022 academic year.

Through Weigh the Waste events, student guides engage with their peers about food waste, helping them sort their plates and offering suggestions on how to minimize waste, while also seeking feedback about commonly wasted foods. The average **edible food waste collected during these events was about 2.6oz** (the same weight as about two and a half slices of bread), **about 26% lower than the 2018-2019 academic year.**

Food Donations

In line with the EPA's food recovery hierarchy, we try to recover surplus food for donation whenever possible. **In 2021-2022 we were able to recover and donate more than 8,500lbs of food - equivalent to about 7,083 meals** - primarily through working with [Food For Free](#), but also partnering with [Rosie's Place](#) and [BU's Student Food Rescue Program](#).

Climate Friendly Foods



Last year, we launched the Climate Friendly initiative, which **identifies menu items with a lower environmental impact across all meal periods in all four dining halls.** The Climate Friendly icon includes all plant-based foods, as well as proteins, such as fish and poultry, while higher impact foods – like pork, beef, and some dairy products – are excluded. Even small dietary shifts, swapping beef with chicken, for instance, can have significant environmental benefits.



Special thanks to the Sustainability Innovation Seed Grant Low Carbon Dining Project team who collaborated with us on this initiative.



CERTIFIED GREEN RESTAURANTS

We worked with the [Green Restaurant Association](#) to certify **Fresh Fuel at Granby Commons** as our seventh Certified Green Restaurant on campus. Granby Commons is a 3-star certified location, earning more than 208 points across seven categories.



Granby Commons

Energy	31.68
Water	10.94
Waste	66.75
Disposables	15.68
Chemicals	13.75
Food	67.75
Education	2.00
Total GreenPoints™	208.55

CERTIFIED GREEN RESTAURANTS ACROSS CAMPUS

BAY STATE UNDERGROUND

GSU FOOD HALL

LAW SCHOOL CAFE

MARCIANO COMMONS

WARREN TOWERS

WEST CAMPUS

NEW GRANBY COMMONS



Farmers' Market & CSA

After a season-long hiatus, our community programming with local farms and food businesses resumed in 2021-2022! We partnered with [ReVision Urban Farm](#) to offer a [hyper-local Community Supported Agriculture \(CSA\) program](#) to nearly three-dozen community members throughout the summer and early fall.

We also resumed the [Boston University Farmers Market](#) in the fall of 2021, featuring six local businesses – Be Real Dough, Just Hummus, Marshalls Farm Stand, Mei Mei, Supply Bulk Foods, and The Happy Cactus.



2022 - 2023 PROGRAMMING & INITIATIVES

- Organize tours for the BU Dining team to engage with local farmers and food businesses
 - Expand the BU Farmers' Market with an emphasis on women-owned and minority-owned local businesses
 - Engage as a new member in the Menus of Change University Research Collaborative
 - Implement initiatives to reduce the use of single-use disposables
 - Establish a new food donation program with Food For Free to recover surplus food from the GSU daily
 - Redesign processes in line with Zero Waste for operations in the Center for Computing and Data Sciences
 - Launch a sampling program, 'Taste Don't Waste', in the dining halls to combat food waste and introduce students to new menu items
 - Continue to utilize Leanpath for pre-consumer food waste tracking, with the help of student Food Waste Tracking Champions
 - Reintroduce a new and improved reusable container program, 'Choose to Reuse,' in the GSU
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