

Sustainability Report

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A note from BU Dining

Elevating Environmental Stewardship

BU Dining is deeply committed to the well-being of our planet and the broader community. In the past year, we have significantly expanded our initiatives, introducing long-planned programs that underscore our dedication to sustainability.

This work cannot be done alone; every day, our team of more than 575 associates integrates sustainability initiatives into our 28 locations across the Charles River Campus. Engaging with students is a cornerstone of our approach, and we are grateful for the invaluable contributions of student Zero Waste guides, Food Waste Tracking Champions, interns, and collaborative student groups. Their involvement is pivotal to the success and advancement of our program.

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/



Lexie Raczka, Sustainability Director

**Every individual
action
contributes to a
substantial,
positive change,
reinforcing our
shared
commitment to a
healthier planet
and community.**

By the Numbers

Each year BU Dining serves more than 6 million meals 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.



18%

of food and beverages sourced from local and/or sustainable sources



607 TONS

of food waste diverted to composting and anaerobic digestion

6 MILLION
meals served each year



38

Weigh the Waste events held in the dining halls

78%

reduction in disposable packaging as a result of Choose to Reuse



8 CERTIFIED

Green Restaurants across campus

8,100 POUNDS

of food donated to local food recovery partners

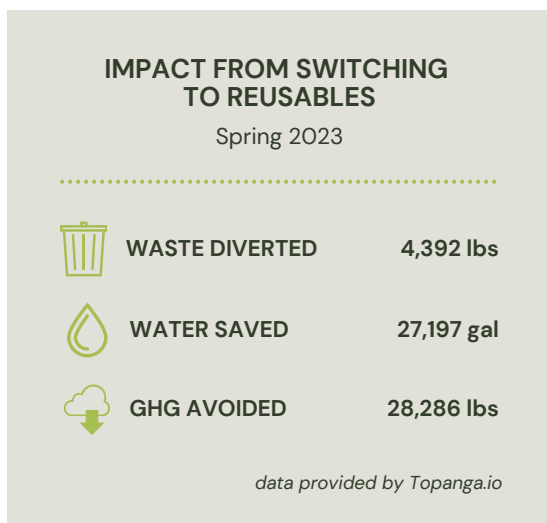


Choose to Reuse

Sustainable Choices, Lasting Impact

We launched *Choose to Reuse*, a reusable container program, in the GSU last February. More than 8,100 individuals participated in the program during the spring 2023 semester. In the first four months of the program, we were able to reduce the use of disposable packaging by more than 78%!

Based on the success of the program, *Choose to Reuse* has been expanded to additional concepts in the GSU, as well as Saxbys, Bay State Underground, Late Nite at Warren Towers, and Late Nite at West Campus, and will be expanding to additional locations in 2024.



As a result of our success, BU Dining was recognized as the Gold recipient of NACUFS' Waste Management Sustainability Award.

Menus of Change University Research Collaborative

Boston University joined the Menus of Change University Research Collaborate (MCURC), an international network of 74 colleges and universities working together to advance healthy and sustainable diets and food systems. These principles are embedded in the sustainability initiatives, menus, and programming across our operations.

At BU Dining, we've woven the principles of Menus of Change into our culinary philosophy. From plant-forward menus to transparent sourcing, join us on a journey toward a better way to eat.

- **Plant-Forward Menus:** Our culinary team actively incorporates more plant-based options into our menus, making it easier for our community to choose sustainable and health-conscious meals.
- **Sustainable Sourcing:** We are committed to sourcing ingredients responsibly, prioritizing local and sustainable options whenever possible to reduce our environmental footprint.
- **Nutritional Transparency:** We believe in providing clear nutritional information, empowering our community to make informed choices about their food.
- **Educational Initiatives:** BU Dining is dedicated to educating our community about the principles of Menus of Change and promoting a holistic understanding of the food choices we make.
- **Continuous Improvement:** We are always exploring innovative ways to enhance the sustainability, nutrition, and overall dining experience for our community.

By aligning with Menus of Change, BU Dining is not just serving food; we are contributing to a global movement towards a more sustainable, healthier, and delicious future.





Guiding Principles

Our guiding principles for local and sustainable sourcing **reflect our commitment to environmentally sustainable and socially responsible food systems**. These principles recognize products with a **strong local impact and/or 'best in class' third-party sustainability certifications**. In FY23, more than 18% of our food and beverage purchases were local and/or sustainable.

Local

We work directly with local farmers, ranchers, and processors. By sourcing locally, we can support the local food system and local economy while also helping to preserve local farmland.

We seek to purchase **products grown, harvested, caught, raised, produced, or processed within 250 miles of our 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.

Local sourcing excludes products produced by publicly traded and multinational companies that have a facility within 250 miles of our campus.

Sustainable

We are aligned 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-owned, women-owned, veteran-owned, LGBT-owned, small, or disadvantaged businesses. **Last year, about 6% of our purchases were from diverse suppliers.**

Local Vendor Partners

Last year we worked with dozens of local vendors to source products across a wide-variety of food categories, including:

Baked Goods

- Bake-N-Joy – North Andover, MA
- Beigel's Bakery – Brooklyn, NY
- Brix Sugar Bakery – Malden, MA
- Calise & Sons Bakery – Lincoln, RI
- David's Cookies – Cedar Grove, NJ
- Fantini Bakery – Haverhill, MA
- Iggy's Bread – Cambridge, MA
- Piantedosi Baking Co – Malden, MA

Dairy

- Cabot Creamery – Waitsfield, VT
- Gifford's Ice Cream – Skowhegan, ME
- HP Hood – Lynnfield, MA

Grocery/Other

- Blount Fine Foods – Fall River, MA
- Cedar's – Ward Hill, MA
- Grandy Oats – Hiram, ME
- Josephs Pasta – Haverhill, MA
- Ken's Foods – Marlborough, MA
- Kettle Cuisine – Lynn, MA
- Lily's Fresh Pasta – Everett, MA
- Sun Sun – Saugus, MA
- Tortilleria Mi Niña – Brockton, MA

Meats & Poultry

- Bianco & Sons Sausage – Medford, MA
- Farmers and Cooks – Chelmsford, MA
- Kayem – Chelsea, MA
- Murray's Chicken – South Fallsburg, NY
- North Country Smokehouse – Claremont, NH
- Old Neighborhood Foods – Lynn, MA

Produce

- Backyard Farms – Madison, ME
- Brookdale Fruit Farm – Hollis, NH
- Carlson Orchards – Harvard, MA
- Czajkowski Farm – Hadley, MA
- JP Sullivan – Ayer, MA
- Little Leaf Farms – Devens, MA
- Plainville Farm – Hadley, MA
- Twin Oaks Farm – Hadley, MA
- Ward's Berry Farm, Sharon, MA
- Wilson Farms – Lexington, MA

Seafood

- Cape Ann Lobstermen – Gloucester, MA
- Ducktrap River of Maine – Belfast, ME
- Foley Fish – Boston, MA
- Rocky Neck Fish Co. – Boston, MA

Food Waste Prevention

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.

Weigh the Waste

In the 2022-2023 academic year, we conducted 38 Weigh-the-Waste events where student guides engaged peers, sorted plates, offered waste reduction tips, and gathered feedback. The average **edible food waste was approximately 1.9oz, a 46% reduction from 2018-2019.**



Food Donations

In line with the EPA's wasted food scale, we strive to recover surplus food for donation whenever possible. **In 2022-2023 we were able to recover and donate more than 8,100lbs of food – equivalent to about 6,750 meals –** primarily through working with [Food For Free](#), but also partnering with [BU's Student Food Rescue Program](#).

Taste Don't Waste

Last year, we launched Taste-Don't-Waste, a sampling program, at select stations at Marciano Commons, Warren Towers, and West Campus. This program grew out of student feedback from Weigh-the-Waste events, providing students with the ability to try menu items before committing to an entire portion.

Celebrating Earth Month

In celebration of Earth Month, BU Dining organized its first Restaurant Night in April. Nearly 80 students participated in a multi-course Zero Waste meal held at the recently opened Center for Computing and Data Sciences. The plant-based menu showcased locally sourced ingredients, and was met with rave reviews.

The event served as a wonderful opportunity for us to showcase every facet of our sustainability program and join in the celebration of Earth Month!





Certified Green

We worked with the [Green Restaurant Association](#) to certify **Fuller's Pub** as our **eighth Certified Green Restaurant on campus**. Fuller's Pub is a 3-star certified location, earning more than 192 points across seven categories.

Certified Green Restaurants across campus

- Bay State Underground
- GSU Food Hall
- Law School Cafe
- Marciano Commons
- Warren Towers
- West Campus
- Granby Commons
- New Fuller's Pub



Fuller's Pub

Energy	46.22
Water	24.41
Waste	52.00
Disposables	33.26
Chemicals	12.50
Food	24.00
Total GreenPoints™	192.39

Farmers' Market & CSA

We partnered with ReVision Urban Farm and the Urban Farming Institute to offer a hyper-local Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program to more than two-dozen community members throughout the summer and early fall.

The Boston University Farmers Market was back by popular demand, and featured many local women-owned, minority-owned, and LGBT-owned businesses. Vendors included Clarke's Cakes and Cookies, Kulture Club MV, Marshalls Farm Stand, Off Our Rocker Cookies, Olive World LLC, Supply Bulk Foods, and The Happy Cactus.



Community Impact

Last year, members of the BU Dining team volunteered for seven different community organizations: The Dimock Center, Home Base, Food for Free, Winter Walk, Mass Audubon, Boys and Girls Club of Boston, and REACH.

During the winter holiday season, the team also hosted a holiday toy drive for Toys for Tots.

For Employee Appreciation Day, we gifted our team members blankets from Beantown Blankets. Through this gift, Beantown Blankets provided matching blanket donations to four local organizations – Hayley House, Rosie's Place, Victory Programs, and Women's Lunch Place.

Additionally, we partnered with two mission-based urban farming organizations for our CSA program, supporting access to fresh, healthy, culturally relevant produce in Dorchester, Roxbury, and Mattapan.



Above Left: Members of the BU Dining team volunteered for Mass Audubon by building and preparing garden beds at their Habitat Education Center and Wildlife Sanctuary in Belmont, MA.



Above Right: Members of the BU Dining team packed boxes for Food for Free's Just Eats program.

2023–2024 Programming & Initiatives

- Grow Choose to Reuse program to include additional retail locations on campus and pilot RFID technology at the GSU
- Participate in MCURC's 'Repurpose with a Purpose' study and implement other ways create menu items with repurposed ingredients
- Launch the Coolfood Meals program in the residential dining halls
- Expand food donation programs with Food For Free and Student Food Rescue to recover food from additional locations
- Continue to grow local and sustainable purchases, including Little Leaf Farms lettuce on the salad bar and 88 Acres granola in the Gluten Free Pantries
- Partner with new diverse suppliers, including True Made Foods, a veteran-owned condiment company
- Begin electrifying Catering on the Charles' vehicle fleet with the introduction of two electric vans
- Complete transition from bioplastic cutlery to wood cutlery across campus
- Expand sustainable offerings in catering, especially targeting waste reduction and diversion
- Pilot Rezzi waste tracking for food waste at Warren Towers and West Campus
- Host sustainability engagement opportunities for the BU Community during Earth Month, and beyond



Thank you to our
partners for their vital
support. Together we
are achieving our
sustainability goals
and fostering positive
change.

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