

Love food, hate waste: Sustainable food procurement in practice



Durham University, winners of the Sustainable Procurement award at the Green Gown Awards, will be hosting a Conference session on how to maximise buying power whilst considering environmental and social issues.




→ In most institutions, sustainability in catering focusses primarily on buying environmentally friendly products. This minimises the production of waste and carbon footprint and, in turn, reduces energy and resource consumption. But, sustainable catering can be exceptionally challenging. By its very nature it deals with conflicting factors, such as managing consumption and consumer needs alongside the impacts of policy and regulations.

This is why the theme of sustainable food procurement has been identified as a crucial strand at this year's EAUC Annual Conference, University of York, 27 – 29 March 2012. A dedicated Conference session (day 3, 29 March) will look at Durham University's Green Gown Award winning Procurement Service and Catering Department, who have worked in unison to provide a range of services to its ten fully catered colleges and other catering outlets.

As Green Gown Award winners from both 2010 and 2011 in the sustainable procurement category, representatives from Durham University will give an insight into how it has maximised its buying power

whilst taking into account environmental, social and economic values and responsibilities. Not only has it achieved significant savings, but introduced better quality products that are fresher, seasonal and, where possible, locally produced. The aim of the session is to help and encourage other organisations to strongly consider their own supply chains in relation to food and embedding sustainability within food procurement and production.

As part of the EAUC's continued commitment to sustainability, a conscious effort has been made to reduce the environmental and social impact of all its activities. The 16th Annual Conference is no exception. For example, the EAUC will only use free-range eggs and chicken, Marine Stewardship Council certified fish, and meat with high welfare standards (all being organic wherever possible).

It's not just the welfare of the meat, the wellbeing of delegates is also very important. At its events, the EAUC provides tasty, well-balanced meals with lots of healthy options available. At this year's Annual Conference the EAUC will be going even further by providing information for all menu choices on local ingredients, provenance and impact so delegates can

make more informed decisions. Moreover, the majority of meat, poultry, fish, fruit and vegetables will be fresh, seasonal produce sourced from suppliers based in the Yorkshire and Humberside region.

And, it's not just the food itself – as part of its ongoing Conference sustainability ethos, the EAUC ensures that no disposable crockery or cutlery is used, that bottled water is avoided and that Fairtrade tea and coffee is used as standard. Food waste can also be minimised through careful management and calculating of numbers. Any food waste that is created will be recycled alongside the University of York's other waste. The EAUC aims to share its Conference ethos and best practice with the sector to encourage other organisations to take similar steps.

We look forward to seeing you at the Conference. ●

Contact:

To find out more about the EAUC Annual Conference, including the full programme of sessions, please visit:
www.eauc.org.uk/annual_conference



To find out more about the Green Gown Awards, please visit:

www.greengownawards.org.uk.
Applications for 2012 will open in June 2012. For sponsorship opportunities, please contact the EAUC on 01242 714321.

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