

SUSTAINABLE RESTAURANT GUIDE

ABOUT

In an industry that is fast-paced and profit-driven, it can be hard to focus on ways to be sustainable. This guide shows restaurant owners simple changes that can have a positive impact on the environment. **By adopting more sustainable practices, your business can gain a competitive advantage and solidify your role as a community leader.**



GREEN THE MENU

- Refer to **Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch** to identify green seafood options.
- Add **vegetarian meals** and more vegetable-based offerings to the menu.
- Use **USDA Certified Organic** items.

BUY LOCAL

- Connect with **Jersey Fresh** wholesale distributors.
- Source ingredients **within 300 miles** to reduce travel time and support the local economy.
- Look for the **Jersey Seafood Label** to find locally caught seafood.

Visit www.seafoodwatch.org to learn more about green seafood options.

Visit findjerseyfresh.com to find local produce.

WASTE

- Maintain a comprehensive recycling program with good **training** and clear **signage**.
- **Safely dispose of your used kitchen oil** and grease.
- **Minimize disposables** – opt for cloth napkins, tablecloths and hand towels.
- Invest in **reusable cups**, plates and utensils.

Visit recycle.nj.gov to learn about recycling requirements.

WATER

- Provide **filtered water** for customers.
- Upgrade dishwashers, ice machines and steam cookers to **WATER SENSE®** products.
- Swap out old pre-rinse spray valves with **low flow models**.
- Install **touch-less sensor water faucets** and low-flow fixtures.

Visit www.epa.gov/water-sense to learn more about water conservation.

ENERGY

- Upgrade to **LED lighting**.
- Track **monthly energy use**.
- **Turn off equipment** when not in use.
- Purchase energy efficient equipment – look for the **ENERGY STAR®** seal.

Visit www.njcleanenergy.com to learn more about financial incentives.

FOOD WASTE

- **Organize and rotate food** to ensure older products are used first.
- **Donate unused food** to a local food bank, animal rescue or farm.
- **Adjust storage room temperature** and humidity to maximize the shelf life of products.
- Upgrade to an **inventory management system** to order and prepare the right amount of food for service.

Visit www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food to learn how to reduce food waste.

PACKAGING

- Switch to **aluminum** and **#1 (PET, PETE)** and **#2 (HDPE)** plastics for packaging.
- **Eliminate the use of #6** plastic (Polystyrene, Styrofoam) containers.
- Purchase **compostable, bio-based and recycled** content products for disposable items.
- Provide a **discount for customers** who bring their own reusable take home containers and bags.

Visit www.epa.gov/smm/sustainable-packaging to learn more about green packaging.

LEADERSHIP

- Adopt a company sustainability **policy statement**.
- Set annual environmental **goals** and advertise **results**.
- Create a green team to **engage employees** on how to conserve & use resources more efficiently.

Join the New Jersey Sustainable Business Registry. Visit registry.njsdc.com.

CASE STUDY



Daddy Matty's BBQ from Madison, NJ is pursuing a more sustainable method of running their restaurant, their catering services, and their events by:

- **Using compostable takeout containers and utensils**
- **Having purchased all kitchen equipment secondhand**
- **Furnishing the restaurant with repurposed church pews and old Applebee's stools**

All food waste generated by Daddy Matty's BBQ is recycled using Java's Compost Service. This initiative has diverted **11,341 lbs of food waste** from landfills since 2021. [Learn More!](#)



RESOURCES

EPA Guide to Reducing Wasted Food & Packaging

www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-08/documents/reducing_wasted_food_pkg_tool.pdf

Energy Star Guide for Restaurants

www.energystar.gov/sites/default/files/tools/Small_Business_Restaurants_0.pdf

Green Restaurant Association

www.dinegreen.com

National Restaurant Association - Conserve

conserve.restaurant.org/Best-Practices

EPA Safer Choice

www.epa.gov/saferchoice

