

Northern Rivers Food Links – Local Government Resource Kit

Food Security Policies

Sustainable Catering template policy and supporting documents

This policy template was prepared to assist Northern Rivers Food Links Councils with the development of a Sustainable Catering Policy.

Objective

The Sustainable Catering Policy has been adopted by **** Council** to encourage and promote food security, community health and wellbeing.

Food consumption and catering choices have significant social and environmental impacts, both locally and globally. The choices made about food, materials and transport can support sustainable agricultural practices at the local level, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and translate into improved conditions for both livestock and agricultural workers in developing nations.

**** Council** recognises the importance of ethically and sustainably produced foods to the nutritional health and general wellbeing of our community, the local economy and the wider environment. The Sustainable Catering Policy aims to increase the demand for sustainably produced food products within the **** Local Government** area, while supporting the objectives of the **** Community Strategic Plan**.

The **** Council** Sustainable Catering Policy applies to all food purchased for consumption during Council sponsored functions (i.e. meetings, events etc) and/or food distributed through Council managed facilities and services (i.e. aquatic centres, child-care centres and aged care facilities).

**** Council** desires that, when possible, food products purchased and supplied by Council for consumption will be chosen on the basis of:

- local supply to minimise energy consumption during the transport phase
- local production
- zero disposable packaging and minimal, re-usable or recyclable packaging
- conserving bio-diversity, and
- minimising impacts on climate change.

Council will ensure that it complies with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1993 and Regulations 2005 and all other relevant laws and regulations in relation to the procurement of goods and services.

Scope

The Sustainable Catering Policy applies to all foods purchased and distributed by **** Council**.

Definitions

The following definitions are provided to assist in understanding the requirements of this policy.

Fair Trade - is a trading partnership based on dialogue, transparency and respect, that seeks greater equity in international trade. It contributes to sustainable development by offering better trading conditions to, and securing the rights of, marginalised producers and workers in developing communities.

Fair Trade certification – Fair trade is the only third party certification system providing farmers and producers a fair price (the Fair Trade Price) for their produce, helping protect them from damaging fluctuations in world market prices. The Fair trade Label is backed by a certification and trade audit system that applies to all companies in the supply chain up to the point of final packaging.

Local – within the Northern Rivers region and/ or within 100km of any Northern Rivers Council border.

Related legislation, policies and procedures

**** Council** Community Strategic Plan

**** Council** Policies

Food Act 2003

Local Government Act 1993

Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2001

Attachment 1 – Staff checklist Sustainable Catering

Attachment 2 - Sustainable ethics declaration for potential caterers and food suppliers

Attachment 3 – Best practice catering

Attachment 4 – Sustainable catering resources

Others?

Mandatory Inclusions:

[Council to insert any specific details they require as a “must do / have”]

All food procurement and catering services will:

1. incorporate a buy local philosophy
2. incorporate an ethical purchasing philosophy
3. facilitate a reduction in waste generation
4. encourage bulk and collaborative purchasing
5. accommodate the needs of people with special dietary requirements.

Sustainable catering guiding principles

Council’s sustainability considerations include:

- eliminate un-necessary inefficiency, waste and expenditure
- contribute to the combined purchasing power of local government to stimulate demand for sustainable products
- advance sustainability by participating in closing the “life-cycle loop”
- increase awareness about the range and quality of sustainable products available
- deliver Council’s commitment to ecologically sustainable development (ESD) and other environmental and social objectives
- demonstrate leadership in advancing long-term social and environmental sustainability.

Council will become **OR** maintain recognition as a Fair Trade Workplace by using Fair Trade products and complying with the Fair Trade Workplace requirements.

Buy local

**** Council** recognises it has a role in the economic development of the community and is committed to assisting local industry to do business with the Council. Council supports the area's economic development by ensuring goods and services are sourced from local suppliers where possible.

In order to promote opportunities for sustainable agriculture and assist local industry to do business with the Council, the Council will:

- preference locally-grown, seasonally-available produce and value added products in all catering arrangements
- ensure a 'buy local' culture within the Council
- maintain a local food directory and preferred supplier list
- advertise all tenders, contracts and expressions of interest in local newspapers and by other means as deemed appropriate
- where possible, make all tenders, contracts and expressions of interest available to access and download through the Council's website
- disseminate contract and tender information to local industry, in a manner deemed appropriate
- package requirements in appropriately sized contracts to suit market capacity and encourage competition
- place a prominent newspaper advertisement and conduct adequate local publicity of public tenders to enable local businesses to develop competitive bids, either as direct contractors, through consortiums or subcontracting arrangements, and to meet any prequalification requirements
- ensure that buying practices, procedures and specifications do not disadvantage local suppliers and ensure transparency in quotation, tendering and contract management practices
- encourage local businesses to promote their goods and services to Council and
- encourage the use of local distributors within the delivery chain whenever goods, materials or services have to be sourced from outside the Shire.

Buy ethically

In instances where a locally-grown food item is not available, Council will source value-added products and produce grown/manufactured in Australia with preference given to 'certified organic' and low food miles. Where a product is not able to be sourced nationally, Council will source certified fair trade' produce/products.

To support industries that utilise certified organic, sustainably-produced, 'cruelty-free' and 'fair-trade' production methods and practices, Council will preference organically-grown produce, meat and foodstuffs in all catering arrangements. Suppliers will be required to demonstrate that supplied food items are certified by a recognised certifying agency. Council will only purchase eggs produced using cruelty-free / 'free-range' production methods.

Council will not enter into catering arrangements with suppliers who knowingly source foodstuff with genetically modified (GM) ingredients.

To increase the sustainability of Council's internal practices Council will reduce the food miles and socio-environmental impact associated with Council's catering choices.

Council will aim to promote the welfare of livestock, poultry and agricultural workers and avoid unsustainable fisheries by implementing this catering policy.

Reduce waste

Council will not provide bottled water. Water to be provided in jugs and glasses during council functions, supplied in large refillable containers and dispensed with re-usable cups for functions that are held off-site, use self-serve water bubblers or water coolers and recyclable cups at free-standing locations.

Council will not use food products packaged in single use wrappers i.e. sugar, tea-bags, coffee and will examine bulk purchasing opportunities with other Northern Rivers Councils.

Links with Local Government Shires Association Sustainable Choice Program

**** Council** will attempt to purchase food in line with the Local Government Shires Association Sustainable Choice Program.

Sustainable Choice is a sustainable purchasing program helping local government meet Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) and triple bottom line objectives.

It is a joint undertaking of the Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW and the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH), and participating Councils.

The program provides guidance to Councils on products and services that save energy or water, contain recycled content, are non toxic, have greenhouse or biodiversity benefits or advance Council's social or environmental objectives in some way.

The goal of the Sustainable Choice Program is to make sustainable purchasing an everyday activity integrated into Council's existing processes and systems.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, to ensure the processes and sustainability outcomes are consistent with the policy objectives.