Dining services at Anderson University is committed to being better stewards of the earth and our community by reducing water waste and usage, food and solid waste, and energy consumption. We are also passionate about providing as much farm-to-fork produce and local products as possible to our guests.

We work in collaboration with the sustainability committee and recycle committee on campus which has been a great way to brainstorm and implement new projects.

"Grow" is our food service sustainability initiative started by Creative Dining (www.growingforthegood.com). It has provided great tools and resources for us to use in becoming more earth friendly.



"Grow & recycling" kickoff. We quizzed students and staff on different recycling and sustainability questions. We also gave out sustainable products as prizes.

Our student body is becoming more aware of what is environmentally friendly and what is not with each growing year. We started our green initiative by creating fun games to make our guests more aware of all the steps dining services is currently taking to be more earth friendly.

At our main dining facility on campus we recycle cardboard, metal, glass, plastic and all paper. After starting our recycle program we have noticed that our trash compactor is requiring unloading only half as much as before. Plus we get paid for our cardboard and paper recycling. Monthly revenue is around $600 + savings on garbage fees.





Dining services has formed a CSA relationship with a local student operated farm (Taylor Family Farms); where we buy fresh organic produce. We also get larger amounts of local produce from our main produce purveyor when seasonally available. We are constantly sourcing local products that can be used in our dining facilities. Red Gold, Prairie Farms and Nestle are three companies we use that are within 15 miles of campus. We also use a local ice cream producer for The Marketplace dining hall.





Tray-less dining is a very effective way dining services saves water waste, chemicals, energy and food waste at The Marketplace; an all you care to eat venue. We started by having tray-less Tuesdays in the beginning of the first semester. Then we gradually went to tray-less Tuesdays and Thursdays the second half of the first semester. Eventually The Marketplace became totally tray-less by the next semester. This was achieved by educating the faculty and staff first. Then we posted the benefits of going tray-less where the trays once were. We still keep a small stack of trays under the cashier stand for guests with disabilities that may need a tray or any guest that insists on having a tray. Annually, 98% of guests that come to The Marketplace do not use trays.



These trays signs were posted above all tray stands to explain the benefits of going tray-less. We save about a ½ gallon of water per tray, energy to heat water, and chemicals it takes to wash it, along with reducing food waste.

We save about 600 gallons of water and the chemicals and heat it takes to wash about 1,000 trays a day in our main dining hall. Being tray-less also saves from 2-4 ounces of food waste per person. That saves about 200 pounds of food waste per day. The only cost involved with implementing this was mainly taking the time to make guests aware of the change, along with a few educational signs.

In addition to the tray-less effort; the dishwasher is operated only when there is a full load. We have a Caroma duel- flow toilet in our dining facility. This single innovation with its Half Flush and Full Flush technology can reduce water usage by up to 67% compared with the traditional toilet.

For outdoor catering events we use large water coolers for water and other drinks instead of bottled water; which helps reduce bottled water waste.



Students, faculty and staff have unlimited free access to this water purification system as long as they utilize a re-usable water bottle.

A water purification system was installed in our retail area for students, faculty, and staff to use free of charge. Every year more than 50,000 bottles of water are sold on campus. Some could argue that sales will drop. That may happen, but we know we are doing the right thing by trying to reduce the amount of bottled water waste that goes into the landfill. Recycle bins for plastic bottles are all over campus to help divert those bottles from the landfill as well. We are switching to Eco-Fina bottled water for our retail area because it uses 50% less plastic than normal for each bottle and it is about $2 less per case. That is about $4,000 in savings a year.

All of our employees were given re-usable cups to use for their drinks instead of disposable cups. Each day about 140 disposable cups were used before requiring that they bring their re-usable cups to work every day. To put in perspective of what was saved from going into the landfill and cost: each employee was using about two disposable cups a day x about 260 days= 31,200 cups @ $.11 per cup =$3,432 a year in savings. Each re-usable mug only cost $1.50 per employee x 60 employees=$90.

Changing all of our disposable products to earth friendly biodegradable disposables has greatly reduced the amount of plastic waste going into the landfill. This meant changing our cups, straws, to-go containers, retail food packaging, utensils and napkins. All of the items that

have been changed to earth friendly products are promoted to our guests so they know if a product is earth friendly. We integrate the cost of the product into the cost of the items for which they are used. Most earth friendly disposable products are becoming very comparable to non-sustainable ones.



Here are a few of the earth friendly disposables we currently use.

- *Eco-foam containers*
- *Potato starch utensils*
- *Cornstarch cups*
- *Bamboo plates*

The containers shown above are made from recycled or renewable products and/or are easily compostable. About 95% of disposables used at all of our dining locations on campus are sustainable and biodegradable.

Fryer oil from our retail and main dining kitchens will be re-used to power the university's shuttle bus next year. This will save the university money spent on fuel and lower its carbon footprint of the bus by about 78%. We save about $30 a month on not having to pay pick up cost on the oil.

Another project we are working on is to use a tricycle for delivering product to different venues across campus where we do not need large vehicles. It will also be used for pizza delivery to dorms.



Anderson Dining Services Grow Initiative

The containers shown are made from

Recycled or renewable products and/or are easily compostable

- Plates made from bamboo for catering
- Potato Starch Utensils
- Evirofoam To-Go Boxes
- Corn cups
- Another grow initiative was giving associates re-usable water bottles for their beverages at work