



SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

2019
INITIATIVES FOR
A GREEN EVENT

APRIL 2-4, 2019
UMASS AMHERST
AMHERST, MA

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CELEBRATE. MOBILIZE. TRANSFORM.

BACKGROUND

The 2019 New England Farm to Institution Summit is designed for food service operators, people who work at institutions, and local food advocates as well as farmers, processors, and distributors. The goal is to maximize collective impact and overcome challenges to buying more local food. The summit will feature programming that focuses on farm to school, farm to campus, farm to health care, farm to corrections, as well as cross-sector themes.

The third New England Farm to Institution Summit kicks off on April 2, 2018. The three-day event will be filled with workshops, panels, networking opportunities, field trips, and more. The months leading up to the Summit are filled with countless decisions that are carried out by FINE staff, the Summit Steering Committee and the Summit Advisory Team. While the impact of these gatherings reaches far and wide, we also know that any event of this scale makes a big impact on the environment. Since the first Summit in 2015, we have worked hard to make sustainable decisions throughout the program planning process; we strive to serve local and regional foods throughout the event and we are dedicated to minimizing waste by using reusable materials and composting.

In order to take these efforts to the next level at the 2019 Summit, FINE has established a Sustainability Committee. In collaboration with the Summit Steering Committee and Advisory Team, the Sustainability Committee has identified sustainability metrics and high level targets for tracking and measuring many of our environmental impacts. This document outlines the Sustainability Committee's plans for implementing identified actions before, during, and after the Summit.

The Summit Sustainability Committee consists of:

Emily Chiara (UMass Amherst)

Kaitlin Haskins (FINE)

Chris Howland (UMass Amherst)

Hannah Leighton (FINE)

John Stoddard (Health Care Without Harm)

ACTION PLAN

The Summit Sustainability Action Plan is organized by three primary metrics: **Food & Beverage**, **Marketing & Education**, and **Energy & Transportation**. Each metric features specific indicators, such as sourcing and waste, with respective high level numeric targets to aid in reaching our goals. Each indicator is also broken into additional activities that provide specific action steps towards reducing our environmental footprint.

METRIC 1: FOOD & BEVERAGE

PROCUREMENT

At the 2019 New England Farm to Institution Summit, we want to showcase the New England farms and food businesses that are helping to build strong local and regional economies. Therefore, we aim to source as much New England produced food and beverage as possible while prioritizing a focus on environmental stewardship and social justice.

SPOTLIGHT ON: FOOD PROCUREMENT



50% of all food and beverages and 100% of all meat protein, dairy, grains, oats, greens, and eggs served at the Summit will be sourced from New England farms and businesses. When possible, we will source menu items from local food processors and farms owned and operated by people of color, women, and beginning farmers. We will reduce meat options by using meat as a side dish or flavoring ingredient and not as a main ingredient. Meat portions will be limited to two ounces per serving.

Activities

Source menu items from regional producers

We are committed to supporting New England's farmers and food producers. Because of this, we strive to meet the New England Food Vision that imagines a region that produces 50 percent of its food by 2060. Therefore, **50 percent of all food and beverage and 100 percent of all meat protein, dairy, grains, oats, greens, and eggs served** at the Summit **will be sourced from New**

England farms and businesses. With the help of UMass, we will implement additional strategies to reduce our environmental footprint and expand our social impact through our purchasing decisions.

Source menu items from underrepresented producers

The Summit is an opportunity to highlight and collaborate with traditionally underrepresented farmers. When possible, we will source menu items from local food processors and farms owned and operated by people of color, women, veteran, and beginning farmers.

Reduce meat options

We will reduce meat options by using meat as a side dish, condiment, or flavoring ingredient and not as a main ingredient. Meat portions will be **limited to two ounces per serving**. Other efforts such as using meat and mushroom blends will be used to help decrease meat consumption. By sourcing 100 percent of our meat regionally and inviting producers to participate in the Summit, we will showcase positive examples of farms producing meat sustainably. We hope that this will encourage participants to reflect on the sustainability of their personal meat consumption.

Provide opportunities for engagement and education

Our goal is to create opportunities at the Summit for participants to engage in discussions and learn more about the decisions behind selecting our menu items, where they are sourced from, and how they are produced.

1. **Provide information on producers:** We will showcase our meal producers by providing information about their location and production practices on our website as well as on placards in the dining areas. Additionally, we will invite producers to introduce lunch by speaking about their farming practices and operations. Producers will be invited to dine with our participants to encourage further conversations and connections.
2. **Host a cool climate meal:** We will host a cool climate breakfast to showcase how our local food consumption habits can address climate change.
3. **Provide recipes:** Recipes from Summit meals will be distributed to participants interested in trying menu items at home or sharing them with their institutions.

FOOD WASTE

We aim to reduce our environmental footprint as much as possible especially in terms of the amount of food waste produced. We strive to follow the waste reduction standards put in place by UMass and encourage our participants to help us meet these goals.

SPOTLIGHT ON: FOOD WASTE



We will ensure that 100% of pre-consumer and post-consumer food waste is composted. Further, we will donate as much leftover food as possible to The UMass Food Recovery Network. Additionally, 100% of the cups, plates, silverware, and napkins will be reusable. Finally, zero plastic water bottles and single use beverage containers will be offered.

Activities

Reduce the amount of excess food and beverage served

We will actively work with UMass and our Summit attendees to ensure that we are producing the appropriate amount and types of food at each meal.

1. **Collect dietary needs and preferences:** Summit registration will include questions about dietary restrictions and/or preferences. This will allow us to order and prepare the appropriate amounts of ingredients and cut down on waste.
2. **Food service:** All Summit meals will be served buffet-style to ensure that participants are able to take only what they will eat. We will offer multiple serving stations to help increase the flow of meal times and reduce any pressure for diners to over-serve themselves. Each station will feature signs encouraging diners to only take what they will eat and reminding them that they can always come back for more. Furthermore, staff will wait until items are nearly empty before refilling trays of food and will be cognizant of how much food they are putting out each time. This will help us ensure that any unused trays can be properly donated. Ingredients that have not been used during the first two days of the summit will be repurposed into a creative lunch on the final day. Finally, in order to reduce water waste, catering staff will not pre-fill water glasses at mealtimes.
3. **Donate extra food:** We will work with the UMass Food Recovery Network and the Food Safety Inspector to donate extra food when possible.

4. **Increase ease and use of composting and recycling:** We will work with UMass to make it as simple as possible for attendees to properly dispose of waste. All trash, compost, and recycling receptacles will be placed together with clear signage of what to place in each bin. Volunteers will also be staffed at waste receptacles during meals to help attendees place items in their proper place.

Divert pre and post-consumer food waste

We will ensure that 100% of pre and post consumer food waste is composted. Further, we will donate as much leftover food as possible.

Eliminate single use containers

We are committed to not using any non-compostable single use containers and will not offer plastic water bottles. Instead, we will encourage participants to bring a reusable bottle and direct them to water filling stations. All beverages provided will be served in reusable cups from fountains, taps, coolers, or jugs. Compostable to-go ware will only be provided when asked and staff will inform recipients where to properly dispose of it. 100% of all cups, plates, silverware, and napkins will be reusable.

METRIC 2: MARKETING & EDUCATION

MARKETING MATERIALS

We are committed to reducing waste in all marketing materials before, during, and after the Summit. We will use several strategies to cut down on material waste and encourage our attendees, presenters, and sponsors to help us reach this goal.

SPOTLIGHT ON: MARKETING MATERIALS



We will prioritize using recycled and reusable materials for our marketing efforts. This includes working with our printer and UMass Amherst to use post-consumer recycled paper, environmentally-friendly inks, and reusable signs. We will ensure that 100% of nametag lanyards are reusable by not printing any 2019-specific info on them. We will also ensure that 100% of marketing materials are produced by New England-based businesses. Tote bags will be optional and a take-a-bag-leave-a-bag station will allow participants to drop off old or unwanted tote bags to be repurposed.

Activities

Design a more efficient Summit program

1. **Create an online program:** We will reduce our paper use by not printing a full program and instead, sharing the entire Summit program as a downloadable document on our website. Participants will be able to browse this program to find important information on workshops, presentations, tours, and much more. We will also develop a Summit app that participants can use to access this information as well as connect with other attendees and engage in our sustainability initiatives. Both our app and online program will be advertised to participants ahead of time.
2. **Create a small dual-use program and name tag:** We recognize that having a physical program is still helpful for many of our attendees. Therefore, participants will receive a name tag that doubles as a 3.5" x 5" abbreviated event program. This condensed version will replace the typical 8.5" x 11" program, will be made of recycled paper, will not need a plastic sleeve, and will only include essential information such as workshop times and locations. We will establish a name tag recycling station at the end of the Summit where we will collect all lanyards and any unwanted programs.

Reduce excess paper waste

1. **Printing:** In order to create reusable materials, we will make a conscious effort to reduce printing signs with information specific to the 2019 Summit unless necessary. When 2019 Summit-specific signs are needed, we will work with our printer and UMass to use reusable A-frame signs, print only on post-consumer recycled paper, and use environmentally friendly poster substitutes such as EnviroBoard. Furthermore, we will work with our marketing team and printers to avoid designing materials that will need to be trimmed. This will help us reach our goal to cut down on paper waste. Finally, we agree to reduce the size of our promotional postcards to 3.5" x 5.5" instead of 4" x 6". We will print fewer postcards this year while increasing online advertising for the Summit.
2. **Presenter materials:** We will inform our presenters about our Sustainability Policy and encourage them to use creative ways to disseminate information without the use of paper handouts or gift swag.

Minimize gift swag

All attendees will have the option to take a 2019 Summit reusable canvas tote. Any unclaimed or unwanted bags will be collected by volunteers at the end of the Summit and reused or donated to The Bagshare Project. Attendees will also have the option to leave an old tote bag and take a Summit bag at this station. The collection area will be placed in a central location and announced to participants throughout the event.

Support local business

100% of marketing materials will be produced by New England-based businesses. Our printed materials will be produced by Minuteman Press in Brattleboro, Vermont, and our canvas totes will be made by Silver Screen Design in Greenfield, Massachusetts.

SUSTAINABILITY OUTREACH

The success of our sustainability initiatives depends on the engagement of our Summit participants. We want this event to be an opportunity to foster conversations about sustainability education and outreach in institutional food systems.

Activities

Provide opportunities for engagement and education

An important first step in developing a sustainability framework is to inform attendees about our policy before the Summit and demonstrate how they can participate in generating a bigger impact. More information on our policy, metrics, and collaborators will be available at information booths during the Summit.

We look forward to working with sustainability leaders at UMass Amherst to strengthen the breadth and depth of Summit capabilities. We will collaborate with faculty and staff to ensure our policy goals are met and recruit volunteer support from on-campus student food access and sustainability organizations.

Publish Summit sustainability report

Following the Summit, we will produce a sustainability scorecard that indicates how we met our goals and what levels of impact they generated. In order to gain a better idea of how we reached our goals, we will survey attendees asking how they participated in our sustainability initiatives and request feedback on how we can further improve our efforts. This report will be sent to all Summit attendees and featured on our website.

METRIC 3: ENERGY & TRANSPORTATION

Part of our mission of implementing sustainability initiatives is to create a baseline measurement against which we can set goals in the future. This includes measuring and reporting our energy consumption at the Summit. We will work with UMass representatives to track the energy produced by the kitchens and conference rooms used within the Campus Center throughout the event. We will prioritize reducing our energy consumption by ensuring all lights and electronics are powered off when not in use.

SPOTLIGHT ON: TRANSPORTATION



Our goal is that 100% of participants use an alternative form of transportation at least once during the Summit. To further cut down on travel miles, 100% of workshops and Summit events will be located within walking distance of the Campus Center. We will provide group transportation for any off-site field trips.

Activities

Encourage alternative transportation

Hosting the Summit on the UMass Amherst campus allows us to take advantage of alternative transportation around Amherst and the Pioneer Valley. We want to make it as simple as possible for Summit attendees to carpool, bus, walk, and bike to campus and the surrounding towns during the event. We will promote the use of carpools, rideshares apps, the local PVRTA and regional Peter Pan bus systems, and the Valley Bike Share program. We will provide information, schedules, and maps of bus and bike routes on our website prior to the event. We will also create a carpool forum within our Summit app where participants can post messages requesting or advertising rides during the event. In order to encourage participation, we will feature a raffle that attendees can enter every time they use a form of alternative transportation during the Summit.

Provide on-site lodging

We want to encourage participants to further reduce their travels miles and make their stay at the Summit as simple and comfortable as possible. All Summit events will be located in the UMass Campus Center located directly below Hotel UMass. We will block off rooms at Hotel UMass to provide lodging to as many participants as possible. We will also create a message board on our website and Summit app for participants interested in sharing hotel rooms or hosting other attendees.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Sustainability: Reducing our demand on natural and nonrenewable resources, fostering the growth of robust local economies and ethical industries, and promoting social justice and equitable access to resources and information.

Local: For Summit food procurement we will use a regional food definition, defined as within the six New England states.

Pre-consumer food waste: Organic material, such as food scraps, that are created during the food preparation process.

Post-consumer food waste: Excess food that is partially consumed or has been placed in buffet stations or on dining tables. Post-consumer food waste cannot be donated and must be composted.

Leftover Food: Excess food (ingredients or dishes) that has not been placed in buffet stations or on dining tables. Leftover food that is not required to be temperature controlled can be donated.

Alternative transportation: Using carpools, rideshare apps, buses, bikes, or walking.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Summit Sustainability Committee

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To learn more about FINE's initiatives, visit: www.farmtoinst.org