CSUSM

SUSTAINABILITY

Green Guide For Events



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This Green Guide for Events is a living document and will continue to be updated with best practices and resources.

Please email sustainability@csusm.edu if you have any recommendations on how this guide and resources can be improved.



So you're making your event sustainable? Awesome!

CSU San Marcos is continuously working towards creating a culture of sustainability and is committed to climate justice. With about 1,500 full-service events hosted here on campus, and roughly 11,000 self-service events annually, there is a huge opportunity to incorporate sustainability into event planning processes. Our campus wide goal is to reduce waste and establish food recovery practices. Events hosted at CSUSM also offer an opportunity to inspire & inform participants of eco-friendly practices, and have a meaningful impact on our campus-wide sustainability & climate justice goals.

This guide is meant to be used as a starting point for ideas, sustainable alternatives, and resources that can be incorporated into your planning process, setting you up for a successful and more sustainable event.

Benefits



- Cost Savings
- Reduce Waste
- Environmental & Social Impact

Click any underlined text for more helpful resources.

Guiding Definitions & Policies

CSUSM'S STRATEGIC PLAN INCORPORATES SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE JUSTICE AS A CORE VALUE

Sustainability holistically addresses the interconnectedness among societies, all living beings and ecosystems by ensuring socially just, ecologically sound, and resilient communities that value diversity, innovation, fiscal stewardship, health, and well-being for all by creating a positive local to global impact for current and future generations. Recognizing that climate change amplifies socioeconomic disparities, climate justice is a lens through which social justice principles are incorporated into sustainability.

- CSUSM Strategic Plan
- CSUSM Sustainability Master Plan
- Presidents' Climate Leadership Commitment
- CSU System-Wide Sustainability Policy
- CSU System-Wide Single-Use Plastics Policy
- California Senate Bill 1383



Zero Waste by 2025

ZERO WASTE

As defined by the Zero Waste International Alliance, zero waste is "The conservation of all resources by means of responsible production, consumption, reuse, and recovery of products, packaging, and materials without burning and with no discharges to land, water, or air that threaten the environment or human health."

At CSUSM, we are working towards a 90% diversion rate by 2025. Which means 90% of our waste should either be recyclable or compostable with only 10% of our waste going to the landfill.

This Zero Waste Hierarchy chart describes best practices for reducing waste.



Quick Guide: It's as Easy as 1-2-3!

TRY YOUR BEST!

We appreciate you taking the effort to make your event more sustainable!

1 PRE-EVENT

- Encourage attendees to bring their reusables such as cups, mugs, utensils, and to-go containers for leftover food.
- Provide guests with vegetarian and vegan options.
- Utilize water pitchers or dispensers over bottled water.
- Minimize printing, and use projectors and other technologies at your event.
- Use reusable décor! Balloons are fun until they end up in the landfill or the ocean. Use the "Decorations Crowdsource" Teams Channel to ask about borrowing decorations.
- Verify that there will be compost, recycle, and landfill bins at your event, especially if you have food. ECS can provide more bins, if needed.
- Follow CSU Single Use Plastics Policy: plastic straws, plastic bags, Styrofoam, and single-use plastic water bottles should not be purchased or distributed on campus. Refer to the CSU Single Use Policy Alternative Matrix for guidance.

2 DAY OF THE EVENT

- Display a zero-waste PowerPoint slide to help attendees with waste sorting.
- Make a quick announcement during the Welcome portion of your event to encourage attendees to properly sort their waste, click here for announcement language.
- Reward guests who brought their reusables, using valuable raffle prizes as a fun incentive.

3 POST-EVENT

- Use the "Leftover Food to Our Community" Teams Channel to share if there is any leftover food available for students, staff & faculty.
- Collect unused materials that can be used for future events.

Communication

Utilize digital resources for promotion and communication before and during your event.

TO ATTENDEES

- Send invitations and reminders digitally.
- Use an online RSVP form.
- Include the following language in your invitation: “As part of our campus-wide efforts to reach Zero Waste by 2025 and to promote edible food recovery efforts, we encourage you to bring reusable utensils, water bottles, mugs, and to-go containers for leftover food, if possible. Your contribution to this effort is greatly valued, one small change can lead to big results!”
- Reward guests who brought their reusables, using valuable raffle prizes as a fun incentive.
- Utilize projectors, whiteboards, TVs or QR codes to minimize the need for printed material.
- Make an announcement at the beginning of your event encouraging folks to sort their waste properly.



TO VENDORS

- Ensure vendors understand and comply with sustainability guidelines and policies as early as possible - Sustainability policies should be already included in vendor contracts.

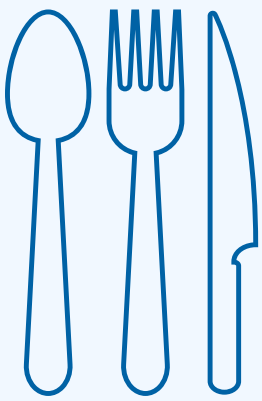
Food & Beverages

Our Sustainability team meets monthly with Sodexo leadership to work towards more sustainable options. When planning your event be sure to talk to Sodexo about sustainable swaps.

FOOD



- Encourage attendees to bring reusable utensils & to-go containers.
- Use a digital RSVP form to order the appropriate amount of food and minimize food waste.
- When deciding how much food to purchase take into account that while people will RSVP, there will still be some who end up not attending.
- Provide vegetarian and vegan options.
- Where possible minimize the use of single serve packets (e.g. "Ketchup bottle verses using individual ketchup packets").
- Ensure there is proper signage for the food explaining what everything is (e.g. "Vegan Cookies").
- Ask for compostable chopsticks as an alternative to single-use plastic utensils.
- If there is leftover food from your event you can share it in the "Leftover Food to Our Community" Teams Channel and encourage your attendees to take some home.



- Minimize the use of boxed lunches, instead ask for a buffet/self-service style where sandwiches, chips, fruit, and cookies can be picked up individually. Boxed meals offer convenience, but we can reduce waste and promote better waste sorting habits.

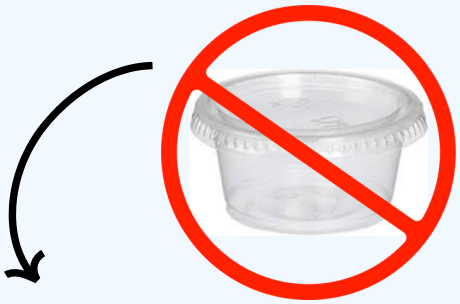
Food & Beverages

Have a conversation with food vendors about sustainable practices and alternative food options.



FOOD TRUCKS

- Ask vendors to use compostable clamshells.
- Make sure they are aware of and comply with the CSU Single-Use Plastics Policy - this includes eliminating the use of plastic straws, plastic bags, Styrofoam, and single-use plastic water bottles. Refer to the CSU Single Use Policy Alternative Matrix for guidance.



If it looks and feels like plastic, it is not biodegradable. Be aware of greenwashing!



BEVERAGES

- Ask for beverage pitchers, dispensers, air pots, and coffee creamer dispensers.
- Encourage attendees to bring their reusable water bottles and mugs.
- Share this CSUSM Hydration Station Map.
- Do not use single-use plastic water bottles as it is against CSU Policy.

Event Materials

The best way to reduce your environmental impact is to control what materials are coming into your event.



TABLECLOTHS

- Use linen tablecloths where possible rather than plastic single-use ones.

CENTERPIECES

- If using flowers, ask the florist if they are locally grown.

DECORATIONS

- Utilize the "Decorations Crowdsource" Teams Channel to ask other department for decorations.
- Purchase decorations that can be reused for different events.
- Limit the use of dates or years in decorations so they can be reused in the future.
- Balloons might seem like fun decorations, but they are terrible for the environment. As an alternative, try reusable paper lanterns.
- Please remember, confetti and glitter are litter. Avoid bring them to campus! Renting a bubble machine through the library is a great alternative.

SWAG - ASK YOURSELF THESE IMPORTANT QUESTIONS:

- Is it necessary to have giveaways for every person? Would it be more cost effective to have higher-quality items for a raffle?
- Consider the full life of the product. What is it made of? Will it actually be used? Is it recyclable or compostable?
- When you do have to purchase swag or raffle items please purchase them from a sustainable brand or store, such as Eco Promotional Products, which is an approved CLC licensed company.

Waste

It is our campus wide goal to achieve zero waste by 2025, which means a 90% diversion rate. 90% of our waste should be recyclable or compostable, leaving only 10% going to the landfill.

WASTE RECEPTICALS

- Each waste station should have a compost, recycle and landfill bin.
- Ensure there are enough waste stations for your event.
- Consider bin placement, the distance between each waste station, and ease of access.
- Make sure there is proper signage on all bins.

ENCOURAGE PROPER WASTE SORTING PRACTICES

- Make announcements before and/or during the event about proper waste-sorting practices.
- Display a Zero Waste slide during the welcome portion of your event. You can request a customized PowerPoint slide by emailing sustainability@csusm.edu.
- Collect and store all reusable items for future events, you can share resources via the "Decorations Crowdsource" Teams Channel.



Resource List



CSU SINGLE USE POLICY ALTERNATIVE MATRIX

Use this to help you choose better alternatives to plastic straws, plastic bags, Styrofoam, and single-use plastic water bottles



HYDRATION STATION MAP AND WEBSITE

This is a map of the hydration stations across campus, share this with your event attendees, and encourage them to bring their reusable water bottles.



DECORATIONS CROWDSOURCE TEAMS CHANNEL

Staff and faculty can join this teams channel to give, ask, and lend decorations or centerpieces.



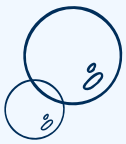
LEFTOVER FOOD TO OUR COMMUNITY TEAMS CHANNEL

Staff and faculty can join this teams channel to be notified when there is leftover food after a campus event. Push notifications will be sent to students.



FREE FOOD PUSH NOTIFICATIONS

Share this with students so they can sign up for push notifications regarding free food on campus.



RENT A BUBBLE MACHINE

Use this link to rent out a bubble machine through the library, it is a great alternative to confetti or glitter.

Resource List



SHOP SUSTAINABLY

Shop sustainably by emailing Michelle Carvalho at Eco Promotional Products.



ZERO WASTE MATRIX

Use this to help you properly sort your waste.



ZERO WASTE POWERPOINT SLIDE

Make a copy of this slide to display at your event and encourage proper waste sorting practices.



ZERO WASTE WEBSITE & MORE RESOURCES

Utilize these and other resources to make your event more sustainable.

Examples of some short and sweet language that can be used for announcements:

- "Here at CSUSM we are all on a mission to achieve Zero Waste by 2025, thank you for joining this effort by properly sorting your waste in the appropriate bins."
- "Please remember food scraps, paper napkins and food soiled cardboard go into the compost bin, aluminum and most plastic can be recycled, plastic utensils, chip bags, and saran wrap should all go to the landfill."

Sustainable Swaps

Ketchup Packets	→	Ketchup Bottle
Honey Packets	→	Honey Bottle
Plastic Utensils	→	Reusable Utensils
Plastic Stirrers	→	Should not be distributed on campus, use wooden stirrers



THANK YOU!

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, OR NEED ANY CUSTOMIZED RESOURCES FEEL FREE TO EMAIL US!

www.csusm.edu/sustainability

sustainability@csusm.edu