



Annual
Sustainability
Report

2022-2023

**HARVEST
TABLE**
CULINARY GROUP

 **DINING**

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Program Highlights

Sustainability Coordinator

Since 2017, EU Dining has had a Sustainability Coordinator in place to lead sustainability initiatives, set goals for environmental responsibility, and host events on campus.

North Carolina & Local Purchasing

We prioritize local purchasing within 150 miles of our campus, and highlight local products whenever we can in our menus, in our stores, and served at events like Farm Table dinners!

Composting

We provide front-of-house composting for guests along with signage that clarifies which bin to sort waste into. All food waste in the back-of-house is composted as well. Retail locations use compostable packaging and when single-use is necessary and residential locations always use compostables.

Vegan, Vegetarian, and Plant-Based Offerings

We aim to promote and highlight plant-based options and always offer a vegan or vegetarian option in all dining locations. Our website has a filter to find vegan or vegetarian options on our menus.

Coolfood Meals

Low-carbon menu options certified by Coolfood Meals and the World Resource Institute are noted on our menus with the Coolfood logo for emissions-conscious consumers.

Green Boxes

We do not offer single-use products in residential dining halls unless there is a particular circumstance that requires it. Diners who want to take residential food to-go utilize a reusable green box system rather than a single-use product.

Leanpath

Each of our residential dining halls has a Leanpath food waste tracker to track all of our pre-consumer food waste. Lakeside Dining Hall also has a post-consumer tracker that is used to weigh all post-consumer plate waste.

Loy Farm

Elon has their very own farm on campus called Loy Farm. EU Dining partners with Loy Farm to bring hyperlocal produce into our dining halls, as well as hosting our Farm Table dinners out on our farm to highlight the work that the team at Loy does.

Waste Messaging

Using signage and social media, we promote programs called "Just Try It" and "Choose to Reuse" to encourage guests to reduce their food waste and single-use product waste.

Recycling

We recycle cardboard as well as plastic, paper, and metals in our locations. We also participate in a program that recycles our used fryer oil into biodiesel fuel.

Timeline

From the start, Harvest Table at Elon University has been committed to making sustainable choices.



2017-2018

- Created new Sustainability Coordinator position and hired first Sustainability Coordinator.
- Introduced Farm Table dinners, a multi-course meal featuring local ingredients for a very limited number of guests.
- Brought local Gorilla Grains, Mati Energy, La Colombe, and Larry's Coffee to campus for tastings.
- Helped consumers identify plant-forward recipes by introducing a new plant-forward menu icon.
- Hosted sustainability pop ups including Local Bibb Lettuce Wraps, Local Strawberry Salads, Oyster Roast, Iced Coffee and Sustainable Straws, and Kale Smoothies.
- Held monthly Weigh the Waste.
- Sustainability Coordinator visited local farms including Carolina Culture, Paradox Farm Creamery, and Maple View Farms to learn about their sustainable practices.
- Brought new local brands to campus, including Carolina Culture, Mati Energy, Big Spoon Roasters, Paradox Farm Dairy, Larry's Coffee, and Maple View Farms.

2019

- Began partnership with Farmer Foodshare, a local non-profit distributor, to increase our local purchasing.
- Began utilizing peppers and okra from Loy Farm.
- Added vegan options to football concessions menus.
- Began offering house-made creamers including non-dairy options.
- Local vendors including Gorilla Grains, Buchi Kombucha, UpDog Kombucha, Mati Energy, Sunshine Energy, Carolina Culture, Pelican's Sno Balls, Larry's Coffee, La Colombe, Smitty's Ice Cream, Farmer Foodshare, Big Spoon Roasters, Maple View Ice Cream, Sir Kensington's, Village Juice Co., and Natalie's Juices visited campus, many of which are still partners with Elon in 2023.
- Hosted weekly local food trucks, which has continued into 2023.
- Visited by Chef Darren Atkins, a local focused chef, who served a delicious local dish at Clohan.
- Sustainability Coordinator hosted a plant-forward spring roll teaching kitchen and Sustainability Week events including Tahini Milkshakes, Weigh the Waste, Farmer's Market Tasting, and Sustainable Charcuterie.
- Launched reusable to-go container program.
- Donated 930 pounds of protein and whole grains in FY 18-19 for Alamance Community members.
- Donated 850 meals, served 150 families, and had 35 employees participate at Harvest Table Building Community Day.

2020

- Logged a total of 55 local partners.
- Replaced Clohan soda machine with local and house-made juices, teas, coffee, infused waters, kombucha, and smoothies.
- Vegan options increased at Clohan with the start of The Veggie Café led by Chef Myles, influenced by his own vegan lifestyle.
- Hosted a plant-forward recipe development for Harvest Table Culinary Group.
- Collaborated with the “It Takes a Village” project to teach children in Alamance-Burlington schools about local food systems and food preparation where they met the farmer and cows from Carolina Culture and prepared meals for a local food pantry.
- Sustainability events held included a pineapple grain bowl with reusable silverware, local tastings, and Weigh the Waste events.
- Hired a sustainability intern to help coordinate student volunteers with Campus Kitchen which donates space, grains, and protein to help prepare meals for the community.
- New local partnerships included Spicewalla, Tama Tea, Lusty Monk Mustard, The Accidental Baker, and Your Local Greens.
- Partnered along with all of Harvest Table Culinary Group with Farm Forward, a non-profit that implements innovative strategies to promote conscientious food choices, reduce farmed animal suffering, and advance sustainable agriculture.
- Implemented Leanpath waste tracking devices in residential locations.
- Supported our team at home during the pandemic by donating 15-20 meals that feed a family of four each day using local products.
- Donated food 20 cases of beverages to the Burlington Police Department, 1000 pounds of food to Allied Churches, 10 cases of beverages to the Town of Elon Fire Department, and 6 cases of beverages to Elon University Security.
- Maintained our relationships with local partners and vendors during the pandemic.
- Continued to host Farm Table dinners, including throughout the pandemic.
- Added a local section to convenience store Fountain Market that houses all local products and Elon Dining local partner merchandise.
- Management team prepared 500 Thanksgiving meals for food banks in Alamance County, and 250 meals for our own dining team.
- Began sourcing all milk and chocolate milk from local Ran-Lew Dairy, and began selling pints of Ran-Lew milk and gelato in Fountain Market.
- Achieved 32.5% spend from North Carolina.
- Partnered with Elon Environmental Studies students at Loy Farm to grow unique varieties of collards for culinary uses.
- McEwen became our third certified Green Restaurant with a 3-star certification.
- Collaborate with Elon for Campus Sustainability Week with events, including unveiling new, limited time dishes at our retail locations.
- During the pandemic, converted to compostable single-use materials.



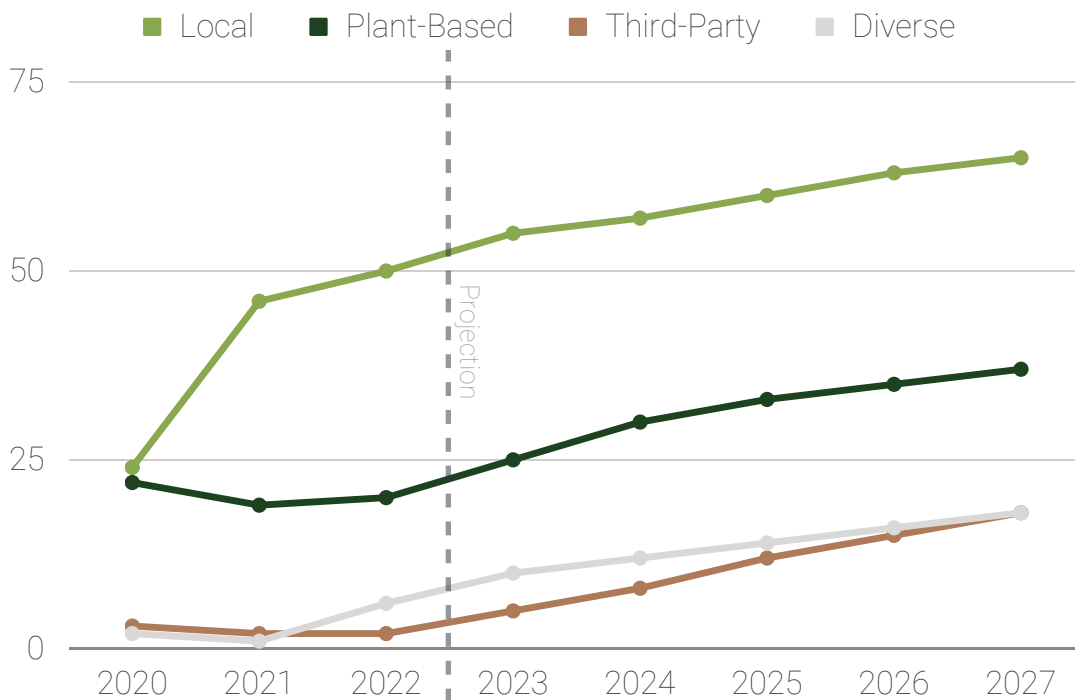
2021

- Director of Culinary participated in a culinary trip organized by the North Carolina Department of Agriculture around the NC coast to learn about heirloom Carolina Gold Rice grown by Tidewater Grain Co., shuck and taste sustainably grown oysters from Lighthouse Shoals Oyster Co., and caught some NC crabs and fish with Paradise Shoals Adventures.
- Partnered with Tractor Beverage Co., an organic and responsibly sourced brand of carbonated and non-carbonated beverages.
- Hosted local-focused pop ups including Ran-Lew gelato, Larry's Coffee cold brew, Barbecue, Nate's Cookies, and produce from local farms.
- Hosted a Taste of the Carolinas themed meal.
- Hosted our first annual Earth Day celebration, including 11 different stations with chef-crafted menus centered around local vendors to promote our local food system. Partners included:
 - Joyce Farms, Your Local Greens, Barbecue, Ashe County Cheese, Tidewater Grain Co. Latta's Egg Ranch, Sweet Pea's Urban Garden, Ran-Lew Dairy, Lewis Nursery, Tribucha Kombucha, San Giuseppe Salami Co., Marsh Hen Mill, Blue Ridge Apiary, Cottle Organics, Sunny Creek Farm, and Burch Farms.
- Sustainability Coordinator hosted Earth Week events including Local Toast Pop Up, Plant-Based Breakfast Taco Chef's Table, Babylon Farms Station Takeover, and Local Honey and Tea Tasting.
- Installed a Babylon Micro Farm hydroponic grow tower at McEwen Food Hall.
- Increased local spend to 43.5%.
- Converted all residential milk, shell egg, and coffee to local purchasing.
- Added new local partnerships with Barbecue, No Evil Foods, French Broad Chocolate, Ran-Lew Gelato, and Wicked Crisps.
- Planned to invest in hiring a full time Loy Farm manager, fund construction of a high tunnel, and increase student culinary and agriculture experiential education at Loy Farm.
- Launched a mobile shopping market on Transact Mobile Ordering app for local groceries.
- Visited local partners over the summer including Tidewater Grain Co., costal fisherman, oyster farms and crab farms, Larry's Coffee, Ashe County Cheese, Goodnight Brothers, Joyce Farms, Dare Vegan Cheese, Barbecue, Spicewalla, Texas Pete, and French Broad Chocolate.



2022

- Hired new Sustainability Coordinator who started in September 2022.
- Hosted events including tabling to promote green boxes, plant-based milk tasting, local charcuterie board, local coffee and ice cream floats, teaching kitchen with “ugly” vegetables to make soup, and local pumpkin decorating.
- Restarted Green To Go box program after COVID pandemic.
- Began “Just Try It” campaign.
- Began “Choose to Reuse” campaign, re-allowing students to use their personal cups and mugs after the COVID pandemic.
- Purchased Fill it Forward stickers for water bottles and restarted the program.
- Registered Clohan Dining Hall with the Green Restaurant Association.
- Sustainability Coordinator became a Green Restaurant Certified Employee.



Percent of Spend Trends: Elon Dining has increased our percentage of local, plant-based, third-party, and diverse spend and plans to steadily continue to increase our spend in these categories.

2023-2024 Goals

1

Increasing local, plant-based, diverse, and third-party certified spend.

In the next year, we hope to increase our local spend to 55%, our plant based spend to 25%, our diverse spend to 10%, and our third-party certified spend to 5%. These four categories are a priority for our purchasing, meaning we will go out of our way to purchase products that match our goals.

2

Upgrading our reusable to-go container program.

We plan to update our green box system by instating a digital check-in and check-out system for our reusable to-go boxes. The system we choose will likely be QR code based so our guests can use their phones to check the boxes in and out. A digital system will also help us to increase accountability for the containers that have been checked out and increase our return rates.

3

Implementing Oscar Sort.

EU Dining will implement our first Oscar Sort device on campus. Oscar Sort is an AI waste diversion system that analyzes waste presented to it and tells the guest which bin to correctly sort the waste into.

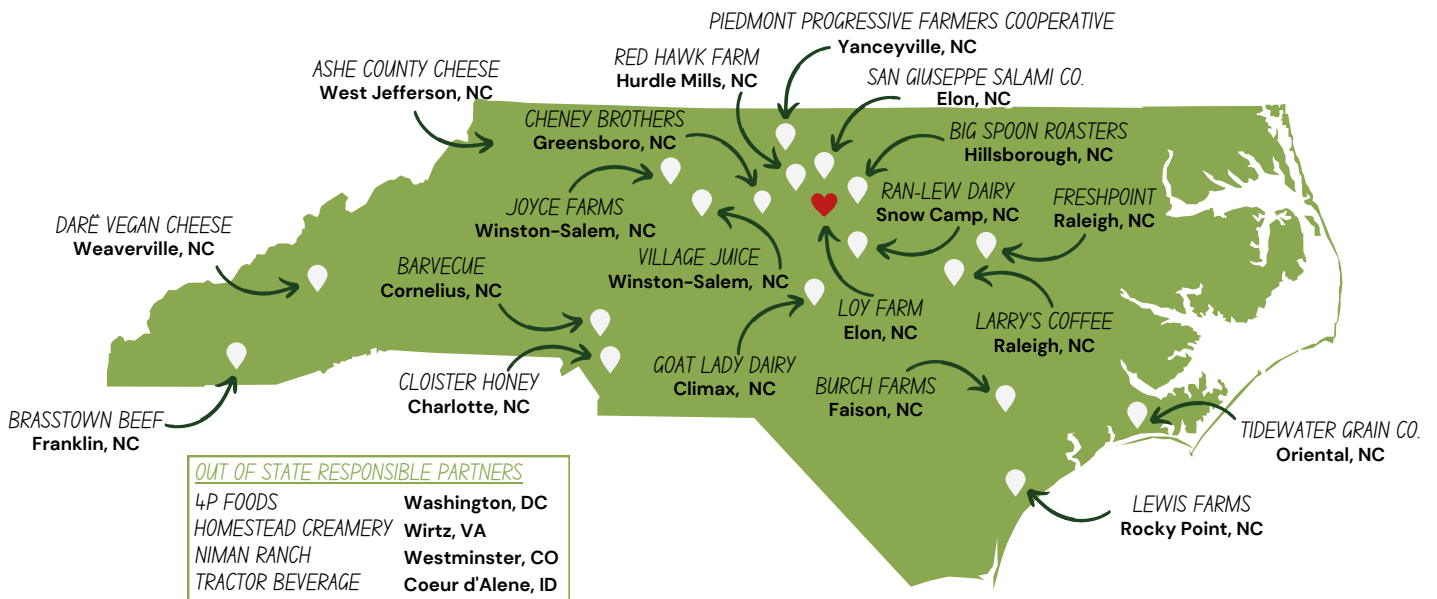
Implementing this system will not only make us a leader in innovative waste sorting technology in collegiate dining but will also educate our students and staff on how to correctly sort their compost, recycling, and trash at other waste bins.

4

Certifying our locations with the Green Restaurant Association.

While all our residential dining locations have already been certified with the GRA, we plan to certify our retail locations as well. This certification demonstrates that the location has made sustainability efforts in each of the following categories: energy, water, waste, reusables and disposables, chemicals and pollution, food, buildings and furnishings, and education and transparency.

Responsible Sourcing



EU Dining understands the importance of buying local because it supports our local economy, builds the community, and brings fresher products to our table. We source locally whenever possible and responsibly when local isn't available. To us, responsible sourcing means sourcing environmentally friendly and humane products. Our local partners are incredibly integral to our practices and are a fundamental part of our sustainability story.

Want to learn more about our partners?



Piedmont Progressive Farms Cooperative

In 2020, EU Dining began a partnership with PPFC, a group that supports and promotes underserved and small farmers in the Piedmont region. We purchase all of our eggs from PPFC. The partnership was built with a lot of trust from the small, local farmers, and Elon proved trustworthy when we continued to purchase eggs throughout the pandemic rather than dropping the partnership. Since then, PPFC has been able to buy more chickens and increase their stock to continue supporting us, and the partnership has done nothing but bloom.

Joyce Farms

Our chicken comes from Joyce Farms. Based out of Winston-Salem, NC, Joyce Farms practices regenerative farming and is committed to no tilling or pesticide use. All of their livestock are free range or free roam.

Responsible Sourcing

Larry's Coffee

Each of our residential halls serve Larry's Coffee, with Clohan even including their nitro brew and cold brew. EU Dining's Sustainability Coordinator and Health and Wellness Manager took a trip in February 2023 to Larry's in Raleigh to learn about their sustainable facility and practices.

Loy Farm

Elon University has its very own half-acre farm, called Loy Farm, located right next to campus. The farm is used as a teaching and research space that grows produce sustainably and educates the community about the food system. Crops grown at the farm are used by EU Dining and also donated to Campus Kitchens and a local homeless shelter, Allied Churches. The farm includes a high tunnel as well as a teaching barn, and soon will also include tiny homes for student workers to live at and fully immerse themselves in a living-learning experience.

Niman Ranch

Although not local, Niman Ranch is one of our key partners for responsibly sourced products. All of our beef comes from Niman Ranch, where animal welfare protocols are strict, no hormones or antibiotics are ever added, and sustainable and humane agricultural practices are a priority. We grind beef from Niman Ranch in house daily for our hand-pressed burger patties.

4P Foods

4P Foods connects EU Dining with locally and responsibly grown products. They source food by prioritizing local and regional partners, including small and underserved farmers, making sure that the environment, animals, and community are all being respected by the farming practices. Tom McDoughall, the founder and CEO of 4P, visited campus for our Earth Fest celebration to talk with students about supporting local, and also attended one of our Farm Table dinners to have an even more personal conversation with a small group of students about his perspective on the food system and how 4P aims to change it for the better.

As of 2022,

50%
of our
spend is
local.

Plant Forward Eating

Plant forward eating means putting plants at the center of the plate, even when animal products are involved in the dish. EU Dining aims to highlight plant forward dishes to encourage plant-based eating for all diners to enjoy.

Vegan and Vegetarian

Vegan and vegetarian options are a priority in each of our locations. There is a growing community of diners who are looking for these options, and the environmental impact of serving less animal-based products is significant. It is the expectation at every meal service that there are vegan and vegetarian options that are composed dishes comparable to the animal product options. Plant-based eaters should never feel like their options are limited or lesser than at any of our locations. Our menus provide transparency for these options in our dining halls as they are marked with icons on our menu screens to indicate options that are vegan or vegetarian.



20%

of EU Dining's spend was plant-based in 2022.

51%

of consumers say they are more likely to visit a restaurant with environmentally-friendly options.

74%

of incoming students say a college's environmental commitment would affect their attendance decision.

Community Engagement

Sustainability Coordinator Leslie Bosse hosts pop-ups throughout the school year highlighting sustainability initiatives across campus.

EU Dining Sustainability also works with a number of partner organizations on campus and in the local community for sustainability projects.

2022-2023 Pop Up Highlights:

- Local Charcuterie Table
- Fill it Forward/Tractor Beverage Juice Bar
- Beeswax Wrap Teaching Kitchen
- Local Farmer's Market
- Plant-Based Chef Cookoffs
- Local Coffee and Ice Cream Floats
- Waste Sorting Game Table

Our Partner Organizations:

- Elon Office of Sustainability
- Elon Facilities Management
- Kernodle Center for Civic Life
- Campus Kitchens
- Allied Churches of Alamance County

SUSTAINABILITY PROJECT SPOTLIGHTS

Sustainable Cookie Decorating

Our bake shop baked 25 dozen vegan cookies along with vegan icing and sprinkles that student volunteers decorated for Valentine's Day that were donated to Allied Churches Homeless Shelter.

ABC Day

For Aramark Building Community Day 2023, we partnered with a local Eagle Scout candidate to build a community garden for Allied Churches as well as provide a dinner service for them.

Chef Njathi Kabui Visit

EU Dining partnered with the Office of Sustainability to bring Kenyan chef and speaker Chef Kabui to campus for a series of four events highlighting food justice and sustainability.

Community Engagement

Earth Week Events

Earth Week is a very important week for EU Dining. In 2023, we hosted a sustainability themed event every day of Earth Week, including Earth Fest, one of our biggest events of the year!

Mon 4/17 Plant-Based Protein Chef Challenge

Tues 4/18 Veggie Grill Out- All Vegan BBQ

Wed 4/19 Herb Planting & Pesto Tasting

Thurs 4/20 Earth Fest

We celebrated Earth Day by inviting our local partners to promote their products and brands within 11 outdoor tents spread out along Lake Mary Nell. Each tent was filled with a delicious, elaborate dish featuring local ingredients.

Local Partners- Larry's Coffee, Ran-Lew Dairy, Cheerwine, Joyce Farms, Cheney Brothers, Niman Ranch, Colfax Creek Farms, Barbecue, San Giuseppe Salami Co., Cloister Honey, Lusty Monk, Firehook, Ashe County Cheese, Piedmont Progressive Farmers Cooperative, Homestead Creamery, Texas Pete, 4P Foods

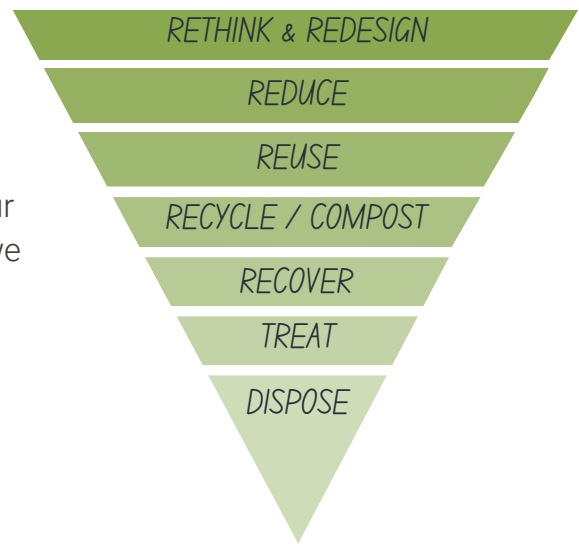
Fri 4/21 Plant Power Smoothie Bowls
Sustainability Farm Table Dinner with 4P Foods



Waste Diversion & Prevention

Around 1/3 of our food around the world goes to waste. EU Dining is committed to reducing our waste including food waste and single-use products.

We aim to follow the zero waste hierarchy in our initiatives to prevent waste first, reduce when we can, divert it when we have to use something, and do our best to find another alternative if it can't be diverted.



Waste Diversion Initiatives

- Pre and post-consumer food waste from all kitchens are composted, which decreases our landfill footprint.
 - Since January 2021, EU Dining has diverted 231.5 tons of organic material from the landfill and created 23 tons of compost.
- Pre-consumer plastic, paper, cardboard, and aluminum are recycled and in partnership with Elon University, post-consumer recycling is also made available.
- New composting, recycling, and landfill sorting signage was implemented in one location in April 2023 to help aid accurate sorting of waste.
 - Compostable items attached to the signage are specific to that location to make it as simple and clear as possible to sort waste when guests are in that particular space.
- 100% of cooking oil that is no longer food safe is recycled into biodiesel.



Waste Prevention & Diversion

Waste Prevention Initiatives

- Reusable dishware for dine-in guests used in all of our dining halls including plates, bowls, silverware, cups, and mugs.
- Reusable green to-go boxes used at the dining halls for take-out meals.
- Campaign called “Choose to Reuse” that encourages guests to bring in their own bottles or mugs for to-go beverages promoted at all residential and retail locations.
- No straws offered at any location on campus.
- No trays used in the dining halls, which conserves water and energy that would be used for dishwashing and also helps to prevent consumer food waste.
- Partnership with Fill It Forward, an organization that has provided us with stickers for students to put on their reusable water bottles and every time they refill, they scan the QR code and it will donate money to water accessibility around the world.
 - Since restarting the program in Fall 2022, we logged 889 reuses, which saved 862.33 lbs of emissions from entering the environment.

Food Waste Prevention & Diversion

- Pre-consumer waste including trim waste, expired products, and overproduction are tracked then composted in our residential kitchens. We utilize the data to set goals to reduce our food waste targeting which products, meals, and reasons for waste that the data points out as areas of opportunity for reduction.
 - In the 22-23 school year, we have logged 19,269.9 lbs of waste and gained valuable insight on target areas for reducing waste in the upcoming year.
- Initiative to reduce consumer plate waste called “Just Try It” that encourages consumers to ask for a smaller portion when they are unsure if they will like something or if they don’t know if they will eat an entire serving.

Important Waste Definitions:

pre-consumer: before it has been to a guest (ex: scraps from peeling veggies in the kitchen, cooked food that wasn't taken at service, etc.)

post-consumer: waste after if has been to the guest (leftovers on someone's plate, a single-use container that was used to serve a guest food)

Conservation

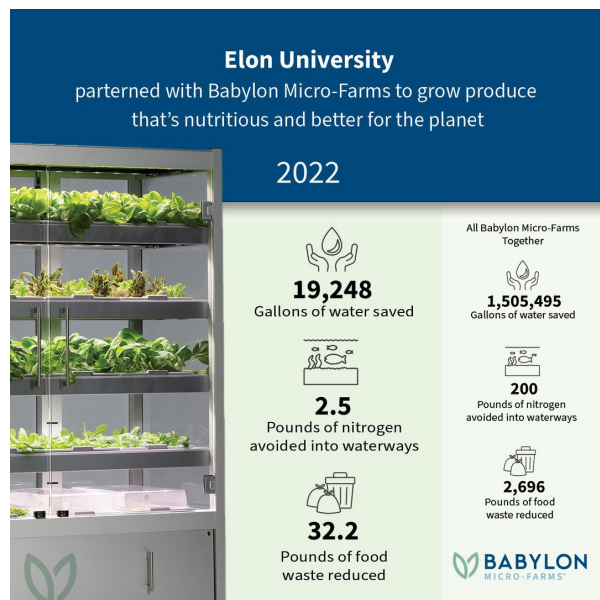


We know that conservation of resources is an essential part of reducing our environmental impact. We strive to conserve resources including water and energy by implementing technologies and striving for certifications that help us to achieve these goals.

Babylon Farms

Elon Dining has two Babylon Farms units housed in McEwen Food Hall. They are hydroponic farms that we have been using to grow basil that is used in the house-made pesto at our made-to-order pasta bar. Hydroponic farming on campus is hyperlocal and reduces the amount of water usage, carbon emissions, pesticides, and chemical runoff that can be caused by traditional farming.

Check out our impact!



Green Restaurant Association

All of our residential dining halls are registered with the Green Restaurant Association. This certification demonstrates that the location has made sustainability efforts in each of the following categories: energy, water, waste, reusables and disposables, chemicals and pollution, food, buildings and furnishings, and education and transparency. Lakeside and Clohan are Level One Certified, and McEwen has a 3-Star certification. Boar's Head Deli is our first retail location certified with the GRA and is a Level 1 Green Restaurant. Our Sustainability Coordinator, Leslie, is also a Green Restaurant Certified Employee.





We welcome your comments and ideas!

eudining.com

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