



Annual Sustainability Report

**HARVEST
TABLE**
CULINARY GROUP



ELON | Dining

2024-2025

Table of Contents

- 02** Program Highlights
- 03** 2023-2024 Goal Progress
- 04** 2024-2025 Goals
- 05** Responsible Sourcing
- 07** Vegetarian Month Takeover
- 08** 4P Farm Tour
- 09** Coolfood Takeovers
- 10** Community Engagement
- 11** Earth Week
- 13** HTCG Building Community Day
- 14** Waste Diversion and Prevention
- 17** ReusePass
- 18** Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Program Highlights

Sustainability Coordinator

Since 2017, Elon 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 campus or within the state of North Carolina and highlight local products whenever we can on our menus, in our convenience 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 also composted. Retail locations use compostable packaging, and when single-use is necessary, residential locations always use compostables.

Vegan, Vegetarian, and Plant Forward Offerings

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

Coolfood Meals

Low carbon menu options such as Coolfood Meals, which are certified by the World Resources Institute, are noted on our menus with the Coolfood icon for guests looking for eco-friendly options.

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 have Leanpath food waste trackers to monitor 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. Elon 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," "Pick Your Portion," 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 aluminum in our locations. Regular waste sorting training is provided to team members. Additionally, used fryer oil is converted to biodiesel fuel by FiltaFry.

2024-2025 Progress

1

Making reusable containers available in retail operations.

To increase our reduction of single use containers, Elon Dining added the option to check out reusable green box containers through our existing Topanga.io program at Billy D's and Village Juice. Boxes are now available to be checked out in person or via mobile ordering.

2

Increasing campus knowledge of dining purchasing practices.

New methodology for sustainable purchase tracking was developed which allowed more accurate and frequent data to be provided to university stakeholders. Continued social media presence told the story of our local and responsible partners to share with the campus community.

3

Furthering waste diversion on campus with single use products.

Elon Dining worked in conjunction with the university Facilities team to create an effective plan for continuing compost in retail dining locations while the university slowly limited other composting locations on campus to reduce contamination. The plan will continue to be evaluated in the upcoming year for better diversion rates on campus.

4

Utilization of new Galley integration with Leanpath.

Due to technical challenges with the Galley/Leanpath integration, tracking consistently with the integration wasn't possible until late into the spring semester. However, this system should be functioning accurately into Fall 2025 and will allow for clearer data to be analyzed.

2025-2026 Goals

1

Make progress towards goals set by the Elon University 2025 Sustainability Master Plan.

Goals include achieving 35% local spend, 50% plant based spend, and 50% third party certified spend by 2035. Data will be tracked and reported monthly to ensure consistent progress towards goals.

2

Work towards increasing sustainability practices in catering.

To develop more sustainable practices in catering, new solutions for food waste reduction and prevention as well as resource conservation will be evaluated and implemented.

3

Furthering waste diversion on campus with single use products.

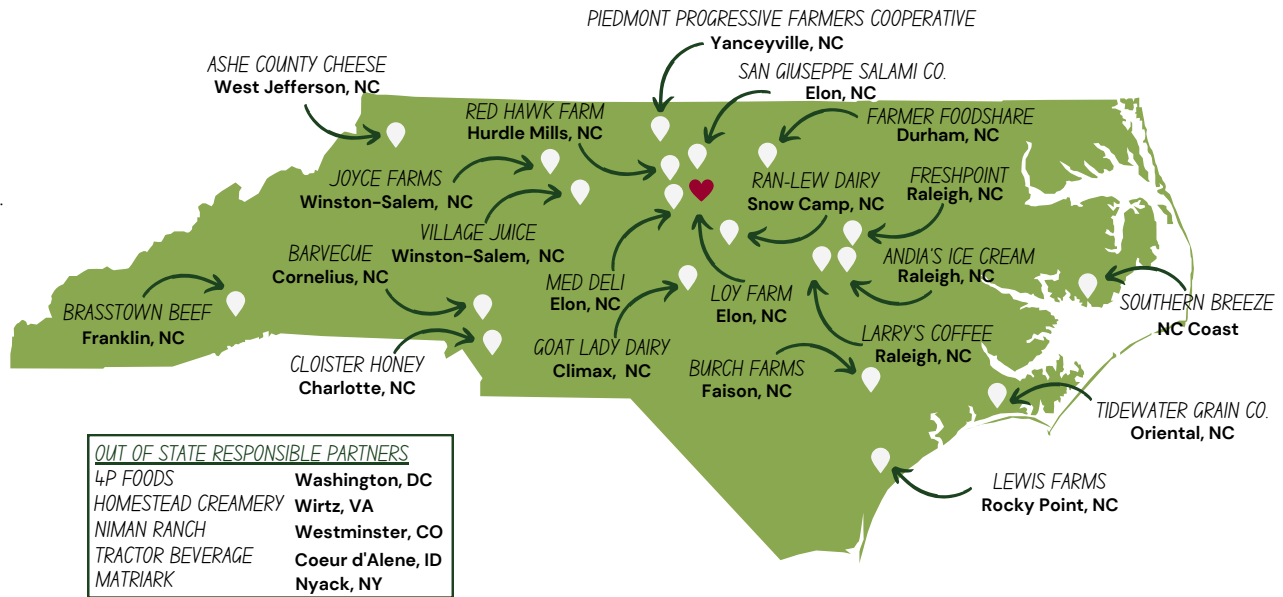
With new university standards for available compost locations, Elon Dining will continue work with the Facilities team to ensure that all retail dining and catered compostable materials are able to be composted successfully.

4

Prevent food waste and create food accessibility through Too Good To Go.

With plans to launch Too Good To Go at retail locations in Fall 2025, Elon Dining will prevent food waste from retail spaces and provide an affordable option to help support food security in the campus community.

Responsible Sourcing



Elon 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 and responsible partners are incredibly integral to our practices and are a fundamental part of our sustainability story.

Want to learn more about our partners?



Matriark

Certified Upcycled and Women Owned, Matriark upcycled vegetable broth helps to prevent food waste by turning vegetable scraps into a flavorful product used in our kitchens. Each carton of Matriark upcycled broth diverts .9 pounds of vegetables from landfill, saves 140 gallons of water and reduces 3.2 pounds of greenhouse gases.



Andia's Ice Cream

Owned and operated by Andia Xouris, Andia's Ice Cream based in Raleigh, NC is ranked one of the best ice cream shops in the United States. Andia, the only female Grand Master Ice Cream Chef in the South and Southeast Regions of the United States, is known for both her creative and classic flavors. These flavors are now featured at Nole Ice Cream Shop which opened Fall 2024 with all local ice cream including seasonal and vegan specials from Andia's. Elon has a special place in the hearts of Andia and her family because both of her children who also work with the family business are Elon graduates!



Bondi's Bakery

Lisa, the owner and talented baker at Bondi's Bakery, brings joy to all students with her delicious baked goods made right in Alamance County. Her treats, including her famously giant cookies, seasonal specials, and incredible cinnamon buns are a favorite sold in Fountain Market and Winter Garden. She always says that she knows Elon students are missing home, so she works to create comfort and happiness for them through her desserts made with love.



Southern Breeze Seafood

In January 2025, Elon Dining started a new partnership with Captain John, head of Southern Breeze Seafood, to source all of the catfish and shrimp served in our residential dining halls off the North Carolina coast with sustainable fishing practices. Due to the successful partnership, Captain John's shrimp was added to the menu at Billy D's in the form of fried shrimp wraps. Captain John also produces a rice flour based seafood breader in partnership with Tidewater Grain, a local rice producer. This breader is currently being served in the dining halls regularly and is in the process of being approved for use at Allgood since it is free of the top 9 allergens.



Farmer Foodshare

In Spring 2025, partnership with Farmer Foodshare, a North Carolina based food hub, was renewed to work towards goals for local and third party certified produce procurement. This partnership has opened up new opportunities so source produce from farms that are within the state of North Carolina that also have Certified Organic, GAP, or other sustainability certifications.



Vegetarian Month Instagram Takeover

To highlight vegetarian dining options in October for World Vegetarian Month, the Sustainability Coordinator and Registered Dietitian teamed up to take over the Elon Dining social media to share tips and tricks for eating a plant-forward diet on campus. They ate breakfast, lunch, and dinner, visiting one of the three dining halls for each meal, and each eating a completely different meal, to show how easy it is to eat plant-forward at Elon. While the Registered Dietitian focused on the nutritional benefits, the Sustainability Coordinator shared the environmental benefits of following this way of eating.

If viewing digitally, click [here](#) to view the stories.



Meals Highlighted:

- Breakfast
 - Omelet featuring local eggs and local tofu
 - Oatmeal bowl with fresh fruit
- Lunch
 - Grain bowl with veggies, quinoa, and cheese
 - Veggie lo mein with sweet and sour tofu
- Dinner
 - Tomato basil soup with a side salad and hushpuppies
 - Veggie and cheese panini

The Vegetarian Month Takeover had

12,348
total
combined
views.

4P Farm Tour

In Summer 2024, Elon Dining in conjunction with 4P Foods had the privilege of touring three local NC farms that produce many of the eggs and produce that are served on our campus every single day. These farms, all part of Piedmont Progressive Farmers Cooperative (PPFC), a group of small NC farmers, all individually produce smaller quantities of produce but combined as a group can supply our campus and more.

At the tours, we were able to truly connect with the ingredients that are supplied to us daily, where they come from, and the people that make it all happen, shining new light on our already central commitment to supporting local businesses.

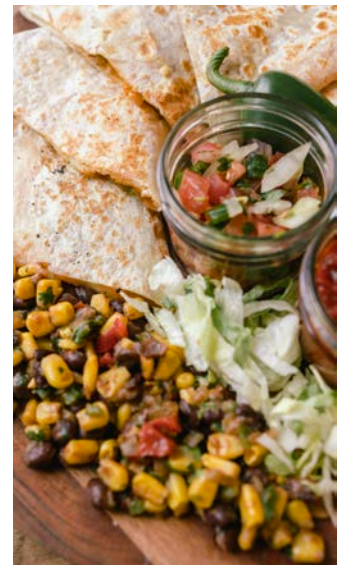
At the end of the tours, Elon Dining worked in collaboration with farmers and members of 4P Foods to prepare a dinner for everyone highlighting all local ingredients, especially items from the farms that were visited on the tours. It was an evening of partnership, collaboration, and comradery that helped to reinvigorate our passion for local purchasing.



Coolfood Takeovers

Coolfood Meals, a program of the World Resources Institute, certifies low carbon footprint and nutritional balanced recipes that are featured in all three residential dining halls dispersed throughout our menus. This year, we also highlighted these environmentally friendly recipes with Coolfood Takeover one a week where one station at one of the dining halls featured exclusively certified recipes.

To increase awareness of the purpose for Coolfood Meals, the menus were advertised via Instagram stories with the menu, a description of what Coolfoods are, a photo of the dish, and a trivia question relating to the carbon emissions of food.



Community Engagement

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

2024-2025 Pop Up Highlights:

- Scrappy Smoothie Acai Bowls
- National Apple Day Highlight
- Bee Sustainable- Local Tea & Honey
- Local Charcuterie Skewers
- Sip Sustainably with the Eco Reps
- Be Sweet to the Planet Valentine's Day Cookies
- Shrimp Toast featuring Captain John's Local Shrimp
- Scrappy Crepes
- Wipe Out Waste
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions Sorting Tabling

Elon Dining Sustainability also partners with several organizations on campus and in the local community for sustainability projects.

Our Partner Organizations:

- Elon Office of Sustainability
- Elon Facilities Management
- Kernodle Center for Civic Life
- Campus Kitchens
- Allied Churches of Alamance County
- Center for Race, Ethnicity, and Diversity Education
- Alamance Community College



Earth Week

Earth Week Events

Earth Week is a very important week for Elon Dining. In 2025, we hosted numerous sustainability themed events during Earth Week, including Earth Fest, one of our biggest events of the year!

Mon 4/21 Live, Laugh, Legume

- To celebrate plant-forward dining, our Sustainability Coordinator offered tastings of three different legume salads. Legumes are a great source of plant-based protein, as well as being environmentally friendly due to their low greenhouse gas emissions, low water usage, and their nitrogen-fixing capabilities which benefit the soil and allows them to require less fertilizer. The salads highlighted lentils, spring peas, and chickpeas, demonstrating the versatility of legumes.



Tues 4/22 Garden Party Dining Hall Takeover @ McEwen

- McEwen Dining hall was decked out with garden themed décor including fresh flowers and “scrappy” vases made with saved tomato sauce cans with a specialty garden menu featuring:
 - Fruity and floral mini desserts
 - Local focused asparagus and pea tortellini with herb salad
 - Spring vegetarian sides including caprese skewers, roasted grape and balsamic crostini, and an assortment of dips and spreads



Wed 4/23 Scrappy Popsicles

- Our Sustainability Coordinator prevented food waste with scrappy popsicles in two different flavors highlighting both utilizing fruit scraps and a campus favorite beverage, Certified Organic Tractor Beverage. The flavors were:
 - Pineapple Mint with pineapple cores, mint with the stem, and Tractor Mango
 - Strawberry Basil with strawberry tops, basil with the stem, and Tractor Dragonfruit



“Leave Your Mark, Sustain the World”

The fifth annual Earth Fest celebration was another huge hit, highlighting over 30 local partners. From a local tuna breakdown done by local fisherman Captain John to getting to meet two of Ran-Lew Dairy’s cows, Elon students had a blast sampling locally sourced dishes crafted to have a lower carbon footprint than previous years with less of a focus on meat on the menu.

The Earth Fest menu featured

32
local partners.

1,346

Earth Fest wristbands were sold.

Local Partners List:

- Andia’s Ice Cream
- Accidental Baker Crackers
- Ashe County Cheese
- Bondi’s Bakery
- Carolina Mushroom Farm
- Cheerwine
- Cottle Organics
- Farmer D’s
- Fresh Pik Produce
- Goat Lady Dairy
- Green Town Farm
- Hungry Hill Farm
- Joyce Farms
- King Cobra Apiary
- Lee’s Produce
- Lewis Farms
- Loy Farm
- Lusty Monk Mustard
- Mediterranean Deli
- Moore’s Produce Family Farm
- Mountain View Farm
- Pine Knot Farms
- Ran-Lew Dairy
- Red Hawk Farm
- Roger Lane Farm
- San Giuseppe
- Southern Breeze Seafood
- Sugar Tree Country Store
- Sunny Creek Farm
- Tidewater Grains
- Virginia Vinegar Works
- Yah’s Best

This year, we included a hand-painted banner featuring the Earth Fest logo. Students were encouraged to place their fingerprints on the banner to “leave their mark.”



HTCG Building Community Day 2025

Elon Dining partnered with Alamance Community College (ACC) to collaborate with the Food Pathway Class, part of the ABE program, a program designed for adult students with intellectual and developmental disabilities, for our annual Harvest Table Building Community Day. ABE Students already partner with the Elon Buddies program who we also partnered with for this event.

Bagel Making

The Elon Dining team worked together to practice bagel making skills before assisting ACC ABE students at a bagel making teaching kitchen the following day. From the bagel practice process, we were able to take 12 dozen bagels and donate them along with a variety of cream cheeses to a local homeless shelter, Allied Churches of Alamance County.



Teaching Kitchen

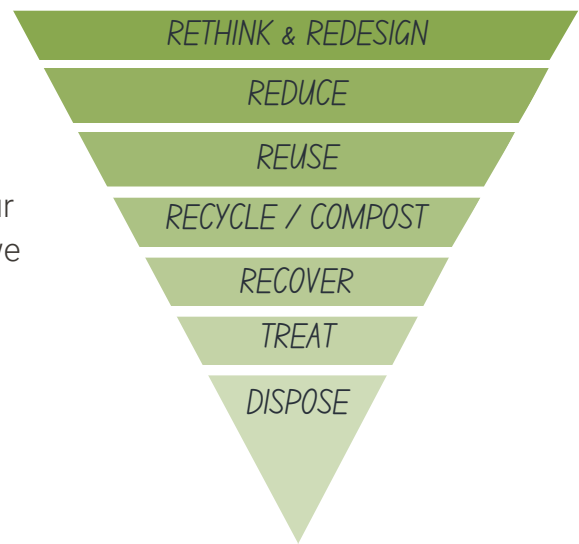
In collaboration with Elon Buddies, the Elon Dining team led a teaching kitchen for the ACC ABE students about bagel making from prepping the dough to baking. Each student got to shape, boil, and top their own bagels before baking. Once baked, students were able to mix their own flavored cream cheeses for their bagels. These skills will help support their learning in their Food Pathway class which helps prepare them for jobs in the food service industry.



Waste Diversion & Prevention

Around 1/3 of our food around the world goes to waste. Elon 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.

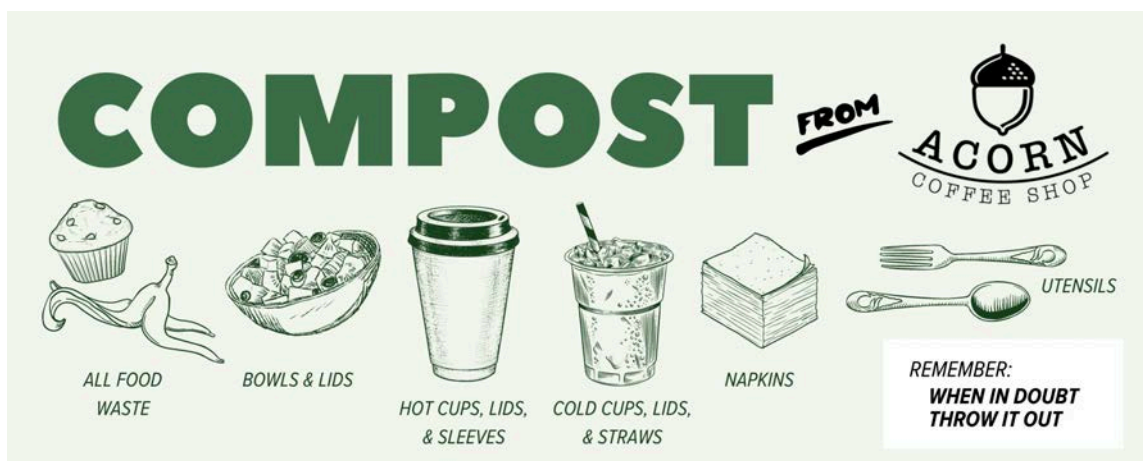


Waste Diversion Initiatives

- Pre and post-consumer food waste from all kitchens are composted, which decreases our landfill footprint.
 - In the 2024-2025 school year, Elon Dining diverted 336,413 pounds of organic material from the landfill to be composted.
- Pre-consumer plastic, paper, cardboard, and aluminum are recycled and in partnership with Elon University, post-consumer recycling is also made available.

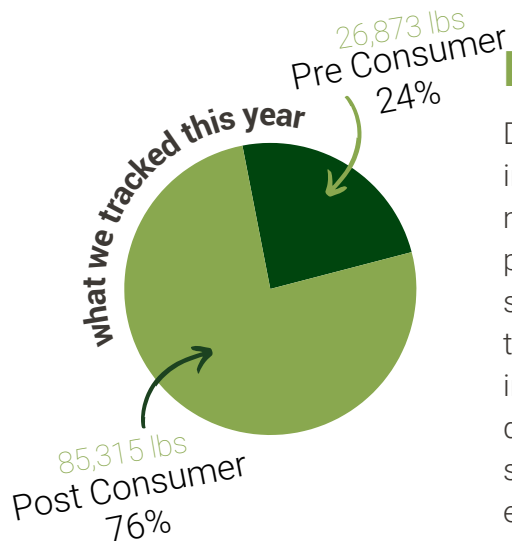
Signage

- Signage in Fountain Market, Winter Garden Cafe, and Acorn Coffee Shop are posted around waste bins to better identify for guests which items go in the compost, recycling, and trash.



Choose to Reuse

As part of the promotion for Choose to Reuse at Acorn, stickers were introduced for specialty drinks each month which students were encouraged to add to their reusable cup that they refill when they visit Acorn. We continued to offer a \$0.30 discount for reusing an Acorn branded reusable cup as well.



Leanpath

Due to challenges with the function of the Galley integration, only 17% of items were tracked by exact menu item. However, valuable insights into waste patterns were still identified. On the pre-consumer side, it was identified that vegetable trim waste was the highest waste contributor, which has been the inspiration for a series of “scrappy” events demonstrating the utilization of what is typically food scraps. To tackle plate waste, a “Wipe Out Waste” event was hosted in addition to promoting Just Try It and Pick Your Portion initiatives.

This year, our prevention impact with Leanpath was equivalent to:



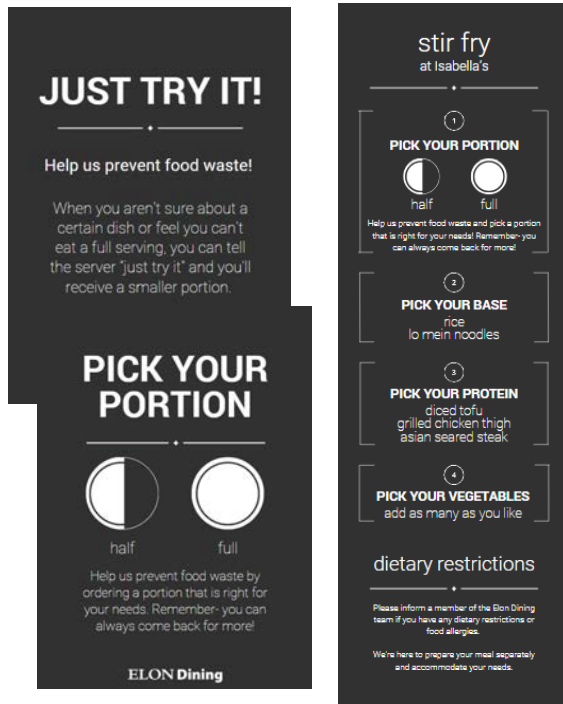


Plate Waste Reduction

This year, Just Try It and Pick Your Portion were rebranded to increase visibility and participation in the program. This rebrand included a new style of cling for the stir fry station at Isabella's which incorporated "Pick Your Portion" into the steps to order stir fry to encourage use of the program. When running the Wipe Out Waste event to celebrate Food Waste Prevention week, students were asked if they were aware of Just Try It and Pick Your Portion. Majority of the students asked said that they were aware and that they use the programs on a regular basis. These two initiatives have become popular strategies for food waste reduction and have even spread to other universities.

Babylon Farms

Elon Dining has two Babylon Farms units housed in McEwen Food Hall. We harvested kale and varieties of herbs this year that were utilized in pesto and at the Chef's Counter as garnishes.



Check out our impact!



Green Restaurant Association

Many of our locations are registered with the Green Restaurant Association, demonstrating 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. This year, Lakeside, Clohan, Fountain market, Winter Garden, Mill Point Catering, and Boar's Head maintained Level One certification while McEwen maintained a 3-Star certification. Our Sustainability Coordinator, Leslie, is also a Green Restaurant Certified Employee.

ReusePass with Topanga.io

Since its launch in Fall 2023, ReusePass has increased return accountability for green boxes and prevented the purchase of hundreds of additional reusable containers to support lost assets. In Fall 2024, ReusePass was launched in retail dining at Billy D's and Village Juice as an option for to-go food. By the end of the Spring 2025 semester, here is what Elon Dining has accomplished with ReusePass.

Here's what we've
accomplished with
ReusePass!



return rate



over 3,000
users enrolled



8 day
cycle rate



~500
average loops
per week



14,851
lbs of GHG and
CO2 emissions
avoided



14,217
gallons of
water saved



1,948
lbs of waste
avoided



22,662
containers
diverted from
landfill

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

In Fall 2024, Elon Dining nominated our Sustainability Coordinator, Leslie Bosse, to be the DEI Champion at Elon University for Harvest Table to increase awareness of diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts and resources for the dining team.

Snack & Share was started in December 2024 in as an active learning experience and opportunity for building campus community and visibility with DEI topics. The DEI Champion partnered with Elon's Center for Race, Ethnicity, and Diversity Education (CREDE) to select topics and bring in subject matter experts from CREDE or student organizations to work with the Dining team and share about what they do to support the Elon community. Ten Dining employees, each representing a different location, were invited to each event to keep the setting intimate but still capture a wide audience.

November 2024 December Holidays

In partnership with CREDE, the DEI champion led a session on December holidays to bring understanding to the team about religious and cultural holidays in December to remind the team to be inclusive leading up to Winter Break. Chef Liz baked an apricot rugelach for Hanukkah and sweet potato tarts for Kwanzaa for the team to try.

February 2025 Black History Month

Working with CREDE and the Black Student Union, the Dining team learned about Black History Month and initiatives on campus to support the BIPOC community. Chef Brandon served up a sweet potato hash with braised collard greens and a fried egg featuring ingredients from BIPOC farmers.

March 2025 Halal Dining and Ramadan

Students from Muslim Life, along with Shane Atkinson, the Associate Chaplain for Muslim Life, joined the us to teach the team about halal dining and Ramadan so the team could better understand and support the experience of Muslim students. Chef Danny served up beef "bacon" sliders and a wild mushroom and potato samosas.

April 2025 AAPI Heritage Month

George Dou, the Assistant Director for CREDE, brought together students from CREDE, the Asian-Pacific Student Organization, and Kappa Phi Lambda (an Asian interest sorority) to talk about Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage month. Chef Danny made mango sticky rice, pineapple buns, and taro buns.

Alamance Community College x Acorn Coffee Shop

Over Spring Break, Elon Dining hosted adult students with intellectual and developmental disabilities from the Alamance Community College (ACC) culinary program at Acorn for a hands-on experience running a coffee shop.

ACC students arrived at Acorn excited for work and were each given a black hat for food safety and uniform standards. The students then spent an hour training and practicing running the register, making beverages, and completing orders with two Elon Dining managers and one supervisor to get a feel for the space. Since students were off campus for the break, select faculty and staff groups were invited to Acorn for the next hour to order a beverage on us to give the students real life experience. Then at the end of service, students worked with managers to clean and close the location. Overall, this was a treasured experience and will lead to other collaborations in the future.





We welcome your comments and ideas!

elondining.com