



‘TRAY-*Less*’ DINING

BUSINESS CASE AND IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

MARCH 2008



THE CASE FOR “TRAY-*Less*” DINING

WHY TRAY-*LESS*?

As part of our ARAMARK Higher Education **Green Thread** environmental stewardship platform, our Waste Stream Management pillar looks for substantial impacts that minimize waste and conserve natural resources, while also providing a more sustainable solution. “Tray-*Less*”, removing trays from the dining venue, is one such action that promotes an immediate and tangible benefit in support of environmental stewardship.

Environmentally, Tray-*Less* dining reduces our client’s environmental footprint. It decreases waste, conserves natural resources (namely energy and water) and reduces the introduction of polluting detergents, rinse and drying agents into the water table. **Socially**, Tray-*Less* dining provides education and awareness while reinforcing healthy habits. **Economically**, it is a cost control measure, supporting broader client and ARAMARK financial responsibility. Collectively, it is a true Triple Bottom Line initiative, further supporting campus sustainability.

WHERE TO GO TRAY-*LESS*?

Tray-*Less* dining is most effective and impactful in **residential venues** with all you care to eat programs.

BENEFITS:

ENVIRONMENTAL

- 🌱 **Reduces our global impact on the environment**
- 🌱 Increases **awareness** about food waste and the waste stream
- 🌱 **Reduces food waste**, and the associated **environmental footprint** (grow, process, package & transport)
- Studies demonstrate 33 to 66% less food waste on tray-less days
- 🌱 **Conserves energy** by eliminating the need to heat water for trays (*savings vary by location*)
- 🌱 **Conserves water** by eliminating the need to wash trays (*savings range from 1/3 to 1/2 gallon/tray*)
- 🌱 **Reduces chemical** usage (detergents, rinse & drying agents) for washing trays

SOCIAL

- 🌱 Encourages **healthier eating** habits through portion control, elevating health & wellness
- 🌱 **Education & awareness** of food waste
- 🌱 Feels **more comfortable** (like eating at home or at a sit-down restaurant)

ECONOMIC

- 🌱 **Reduces** food waste removal costs (*0.25 to 0.6 lbs/pp/meal*)
- 🌱 **Reduces** cost per meal (*varies from location to location*)
- 🌱 **Saves** on cost of water and energy to heat water (*saves 1.8¢ to 4.4¢ per gallon depending on location*)
- 🌱 **Eliminates** detergent and rinse/drying agent costs for trays

LESSONS LEARNED:

- 🌱 Receive acceptance from the campus for this initiative **prior to starting**
- 🌱 Education is Critical! Incorporating students in the global educational process improves success
- 🌱 Win-win for everyone – offer prizes/gift cards to encourage participation and/or to meet goals
- 🌱 Perform waste audits to confirm a true environmental impact at each campus
- 🌱 **RESULTS VARY:** For example, tray-*less* did not work on multi-level dining halls

FUTURE TRENDS:

- 🌱 State Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) agencies are considering laws requiring organic wastes to be composted vs. landfill/incinerators
- 🌱 “Organics out of Landfills” is a national initiative in progress – and gaining momentum
- 🌱 Competition and self-operated locations are slowly moving toward tray-less (BAM, Sodexo, etc.)



University of Maine at Farmington

Tray-Less Dining



CASE STUDY:

Implemented tray-less dining program to support campus environmental initiatives. Environmental, social and economic advantages were realized, supporting a truly sustainable triple-bottom-line success.

Key Yearly Statistics:

Environmental:

- ✓ Reduced food waste by 5 oz per person (46 lbs per person per year)
- ✓ Overall waste reduction of 65,000 pounds
- ✓ Reduced water consumption by 288,288 gallons
- ✓ Saved energy to heat the water
- ✓ Reduced dish detergent and dish sanitizer introduction into water system
- ✓ Recognized by the Town for reduction of water to waste treatment plant

Social:

- ✓ Created greater awareness about food waste and healthy eating
- ✓ Supports healthy eating habits and portion control
- ✓ Improved image of dining experience

Economic:

- ✓ Total Estimated Economic Impact

\$57,000/ year



Contact: Chris Kinney, Food Service Director
[kinney-chris@aramark.com]

"University of Maine at Farmington is committed to environmental stewardship and to graduating responsible global citizens who care about their carbon footprint. Instituting a tray-less policy in our dining halls, where our students see sustainable practices in action on a daily basis, is a great example. We've quickly seen the benefits as it saves water, energy, time and money. It's the right thing to do."

Theodora J. Kalikow, President, University of Maine at Farmington



CASE STUDY:

Implemented tray-less dining in Spring 2007 to support campus environmental initiatives. Environmental, social and economic advantages demonstrate a triple-bottom-line success.

Key Yearly Statistics:

Environmental:

- ✓ Reduced food waste by 6 oz per person (56 lbs per person per year)
- ✓ Overall waste reduction of approximately 960 lbs per week/ 14 tons per year)
- ✓ Reduced water consumption approximately 31,000 gallons per year
- ✓ Saved energy to heat the water
- ✓ Reduced dish detergent and dish sanitizer by 15 pounds per week

Social:

- ✓ Created greater awareness about food waste and healthy eating
- ✓ Supports healthy eating habits and portion control
- ✓ Improved image of dining experience

Economic:

- ✓ Total Estimated Economic Impact
\$79,000/ year



Contact: Julie Archer, Director of Operations
[archer-julie@aramark.com]

“When I was first approached by our RDM about eliminating trays in our Fresh Food Company, my initial reaction was “Are you crazy?! Our customers will never go for it!” But when I heard what the resulting savings in water usage and energy could be, PLUS minimizing the impact on the water shed by releasing fewer chemicals, I stepped back and re-thought my position. I agreed to a trial period as long as the sustainability story was marketed heavily.”

“Sometimes the “craziest” ideas are the ones that lead to the greatest savings and impact. The best part is that when our customers heard the sustainability impact, they bought in and adapted in quick order to the absence of trays.”




Mick Doxey, Director of Business Services, Grand Valley State University

“TRAY-*Less*” DINING

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDED STEPS



STEP 1: CLIENT DISCUSSION (see “The Case for Tray-Less Dining” for key talking points)

Discuss purpose of going tray-less, including

-  Environmental Benefits
-  Social Benefits
-  Economic Benefits

STEP 2: COMPLETE A FOOD WASTE ASSESSMENT (USE PROVIDED FOOD WASTE ASSESSMENT SPREADSHEET)


There are two kind of food waste in the operation:

-  **Pre-Consumer Waste:** preparation and staging food waste
-  **Post-Consumer Waste:** food waste returned to the dish room from the customer


Weigh the post consumer food waste returned to the dish room without student awareness for breakfast, lunch, and dinner for at least two days. The preferred method is to complete a week long study, including weekend meal service. Project the savings over time. *Example:*


Meals	PRE-Consumer Waste in lbs.	POST-Consumer Waste in lbs.	Total Food Waste in lbs. Convert to Ounces- lbs x 16 = oz	Customer Count	Ave. waste per customer OZ/ C.C. = oz per customer
Breakfast					
Lunch					
Dinner	40lbs	80lbs	1,920	320	6 oz.
Totals					

Ex. Above: Total food waste 120 lbs of waste was gathered at Dinner, while we served 320 customers.


 $120\text{lbs} \times 16 = 1920 / 320 = 6 \text{ ounces per customer per day}$

For global calculations, assume two meals eaten per person over five days






 $6 \text{ oz} \times 5 \text{ days} = 30$

 $30 \text{ oz} \times 15 \text{ weeks} = 450 / 16 = 28.13 \text{ lbs / per semester or } 56 \text{ lbs per year}$




STEP 3: GATHER WATER CONSUMPTION DATA

-  Gather data of how much water used to wash trays in dining halls each week.
For additional assistance, consult your Ecolab Technician.

STEP 4: GO TRAY-LESS

-  Begin advertising tray-less campaign with data
-  Display posters throughout locations to inform why trays are being removed
-  Go tray-less in the residential dining facility, promoting why it is important
-  Complete Food Waste Assessment
-  Weigh the waste to determine difference between food waste with trays and tray less to determine true reduction and savings

STEP 5: COMMUNICATE THE RESULTS!

-  Document the environmental savings (food waste diversion and water savings)
-  Post the results in a very visible area for students and customers to see
-  For all media inquiries, contact Corporate Communications. See contact info below.



MEDIA INQUIRIES

ARAMARK supervisors and managers may occasionally receive requests from the media to participate in a variety of stories. If you receive a request from the media, please contact the following individuals in Corporate Communications.

Karen Cutler
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