

2016 DISTRICT SUSTAINABILITY AWARD WINNER
CASE STUDY: SUPERFD CATERING AND ECO CATERS



SUPERFD CATERING AND ECO CATERS DC

SuperFd Catering and Eco Caters take a triple bottom line approach to their business, meaning that they hold their selves accountable in three regards: socially, environmentally and financially; or the three P's – People, Planet and Profit.

Setting more than just financial goals alone gives them a way to value their business in a broader scope. Their company understands that sustainability goes far beyond recycling these days. They have been developing an integrated approach to how they manage and grow their business that enables us to make meaningful strides toward their long-term goals.

In the first few years of business, they utilized a shared/community kitchen space at Union Kitchen in order to minimize their footprint. As they grew, they continued to create economic efficiencies that enabled us to focus on sustainable growth. In the process, they have established complementary relationships with local farmers, businesses and waste management companies.

At SuperFd and Eco Caters, they strive to look at the true cost of the products and practices they use, not just the ticket price. They grasp the importance of limiting the items destined for the landfill through recycling, reusing, upcycling, and composting measures.

FULL CIRCLE SUSTAINABILITY:

Supporting Local Farms and the Local Economy: Sourcing from local and organic farms to provide the highest quality foods to their clients while reducing their carbon footprint. This allows direct engagement in local commerce and support those producers that share in their sustainable mission.

Composting at Events and Production Kitchen: Product is never wasted. Items such as food scraps, paper goods, and compostable dinnerware and drinkware are taken back to their kitchen for composting through Veterans Compost, LLC. The compost is processed at their facility and used for their portable herb garden. Usable leftover food is donated to DC Central Kitchen. If the product is not usable, then they compost it.

Food Waste and Invasive Species Menus: Designing menus that use the invasive species of the Chesapeake Bay as they'll as offering a Food Waste Menu that serves to better educate clients about the true nature of food waste.

Eco-Friendly Paper and Plastics: Making conscious decisions in every aspect of their purchasing by choosing natural paper products with minimal chemical processing, compostable plastics made from corn, and post-consumer recycled products at a minimum.

Use of Green Plates: Green Plates are biodegradable and compostable dinnerware made from fallen palm leaves that are sterilized and heat pressed to form elegant dinnerware for all of their events. From corporate networking receptions to theyddings, they can make any of their catered events eco-friendly.

Recycling at the Office and at Home: Reuse of scrap paper to make a conscious effort in minimizing printed materials as they'll as recycling of ink and toner cartridges. They also utilize reusable cups, eating utensils, and dinnerware for staff meals.

Focusing on the Fine Details: Identified and remedied a major water usage concern within their own operations. Their team of chefs saw the wasteful practice of using loose, wet ice to keep products cool during transport. They have since implemented a bagged ice system where they make their own smaller vacuum-sealed bags of ice to use in transport without the use of toxic chemicals.

These smaller bags enable us to use them interspersed throughout the insulated coolers, giving us the level of cooling needed to keep product at a safe temperature. When their coolers come back to the facility, the ice packs are sanitized and returned to the freezer to be used again on the next trip. This practice has led to a 75% reduction in ice usage.

Upcycling: Upcycling their kitchen grease into biodiesel in partnership with Storm Oil, Inc.

DC Central Kitchen: Partnered with DCCK to donate excess food to their Food Recycling program, which is converted into delicious meals to their partner agencies that include homeless shelters, rehabilitation clinics and after-school programs. They will release a cookbook in conjunction with The Washington Capitals & Monumental Sports Foundation benefitting DCCK and all the great work they do in their community.

Kid Power DC: Their work with Kid Power helps replenish their community through engaging youth to cook and grow their own food. They have worked with them on multiple levels. Their Chef sits on their Board of Directors, they sponsor their largest annual fundraising gala and they provide their kitchen as a functional classroom for the kids. Over the summer of 2016, they lead a class of 25 students in a "Pickle Power" project showing them how to utilize proper food preservation methods to extend the life of vegetables.



MicroGreens Project DC: Working with MicroGreens provides us an opportunity to extend their interaction with kids ages 8-10 years old on an individual level. The cooking classes are part of an eight-week curriculum based on the SNAP program spending guidelines and the small class size of ten students provides a lot of personal interaction. They see this contributing to sustainability through shaping better dietary and purchasing habits for the next generation of consumers.

The Washington Nationals Youth Baseball Academy: The Academy provides a forum to cultivate and feed young minds. They are currently assisting them in curriculum development and community outreach. Part of the message and curriculum they preach is always focused on the importance of environmental impact and relating to kids the importance of their actions today on the health of the planet tomorrow.



ABOUT THE DISTRICT SUSTAINABILITY AWARDS

The District Sustainability Awards recognize businesses, individuals and organizations for outstanding achievements and leadership in sustainability. The honorees support the goals of the District's sustainability plan, Sustainable DC, in areas such as energy and water conservation, renewable energy production, healthy food access, stormwater management, green jobs development, and sustainable waste management.



Left to right from back (clockwise): Eric Holloway, Robert Wood (Co-Owner & Executive Chef), John Cosgrove (Co-Owner & Chief Operating Officer), DaMonte Robinson, Eldridge Betts, Rashidah Denton, Ingrid Arana, Laura Garcia, Santos Bonilla. *Not shown – Yanira Avila, Mary Gorman, Shelton Nash, Antwon Harris, Doug Singer, Antonio Pearce*