



For more than a century, the Field Museum has been a respected leader of public learning, education, and scientific research in Chicago. As the premier purveyor of natural history in the city, the Museum’s world class exhibits and collections draw more than 1.5 million visitors from all over the world annually.

In 2010, The Field Museum began to more comprehensively address the importance of sustainable practices in its day-to-day operations. Beyond Green Sustainable Food Partners (BGP) provided guidance throughout the program’s development.

WHERE TO START?

BPG worked with Field Museum staff to develop a systematic 46-point Sustainability Program Strategy over a ten-year period that was included in the RFP and part of the contract, and is now the basis for audits to verify compliance.

Each of the 46 strategy points included measurable benchmarks for the 10-year plan.

IDENTIFY PRIORITIES

With the selection of Aramark as the new food operator, (in place of McDonalds and Corner Bakery), BGP worked with the Museum to draft sustainability terms for the new food service contract. We created a ten-year plan focusing on the areas the Museum felt most important. Goal categories included:

- Waste reduction and diversion.
- Conservation of natural resources.
- Inclusion of local purveyors.
- Use of renewable energy.
- Inclusion of vegan/vegetarian options.
- Education of staff and visitors.
- Procurement of sustainable foods and non-food items, (i.e. cleaning products).



ACCOUNTABILITY

BPG created evaluation methods and measuring tools to ensure the Museum's food service provider was following the sustainability terms of food service contract.

BPG audited the Museum's restaurants quarterly for Year 1 and Year 2 and twice a year for Year 3 and Year 4. Audit components included a data analysis and facility walk-through to evaluate compliance with the Museum's Sustainability Program Strategy.

GETTING RESULTS

Surpassed Year 10 post-consumer compostable waste diversion goals in Year 2 with 74% diverted.

Reached Year 2 goal that 22% of all food purchases come from sustainable sources (100% of the tuna and coffee come from sustainable sources); process included a change in produce distributors to ones who supply locally sourced fruit and vegetables.

BGP was able to initiate a change to the vegetable providers to ensure they were utilizing sustainable practices.

Switched to all compostable disposables and provided permanent-ware, reusable containers to staff for carryout.

Recycled all fats, oil, and grease.

Transformed bussers and cashiers to educators.

TRAINING FOR SUCCESS

BGP thus far has conducted five seminars with Field Museum staff to aid in compliance and execution of the Sustainability Program Strategy.

The initial focus of the trainings was to secure buy-in from the staff. Once everyone was on board, the next step was to improve areas outlined in the contract requirements.

During the initial training most staff revealed that they liked shopping at farmer's markets and their families preferred the fresh foods at home, and therefore desired to offer similar foods at the museum.

Further trainings focused on the specific goals that were proving difficult to reach. By listening to staff ideas and recommendations, we were able to overcome potential obstacles and implement solutions to meet the established goals.

BGP continues to serve as a third-party monitor for their Sustainability Program Strategy and help ensure their sustainability goals are being fully implemented.



Is your organization looking to green things up? WE CAN HELP!

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