



**GREEN**

DC RESTAURANTS

ACTION MANUAL



## ABOUT DC DEPARTMENT OF SMALL AND LOCAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT (DSLBD)

### Ana Recio Harvey, Director

The Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD) supports the development, economic growth, and retention of District-based businesses, and promotes economic development throughout the District's commercial corridors.



We understand the challenges facing small businesses, and offer programs to support your growth:

- **Building your business:** Center for Entrepreneurial Education and Development (CEED)—Guides you through the process of running your small business effectively and profitably.
- **Business certification:** Certified Business Enterprise (CBE)—Certify your business to compete for government contract opportunities.
- **ConnecTech:** Connect to the resources needed for R&D, and find funding opportunities to bring new technology ideas to market.
- **Exporting:** ExportDC—How to sell your products and services in other countries.
- **Navigating government procurement:** Procurement Technical Assistance (DC PTAC)—How to navigate the government contracting process.
- **Neighborhood Revitalization:** Programs to improve your commercial property with marketing and technical assistance, storefront improvement grants, clean team services and more.

## ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

### Camille Nixon, Project Manager

DSLBD developed the Green DC Restaurants Action Manual in cooperation with DC Government agencies, partner organizations and local businesses to whom DSLBD is grateful for their assistance and their ongoing efforts and programs to help local, sustainable businesses. The Action Manual supports Sustainable DC, a larger citywide initiative to make DC the most sustainable city in the nation ([sustainabledc.org](http://sustainabledc.org)).



To learn more about operating a sustainable business and publication updates, visit [dslbd.dc.gov/sustainability](http://dslbd.dc.gov/sustainability).

This DSLBD publication is only for informational purposes. While the content was developed in coordination with DC agencies and partners, readers must contact each appropriate agency and entity for accurate, complete and updated statutory, regulatory, compliance, and program details and requirements. Except where noted below and cross-referenced in the publication, business example text was either published by the business on its own website; provided by the business to DSLBD; or listed on a certification entity's web site.

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2. DCSEU, "DCSEU Helps Ben's Chili Bowl, Other DC Businesses Save Energy And Money." Aug. 29, 2012. [dcseu.com/about-dcseu/news/2012/08/29/dc-seu-helps-bens-chili-bowl](http://dcseu.com/about-dcseu/news/2012/08/29/dc-seu-helps-bens-chili-bowl). Web. March 2016.
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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Photo cover credit: DC GIS



District of Columbia  
Office of Planning



# INTRODUCTION

**How would you define a “sustainable” business?** Often restaurateurs consider their businesses sustainable if they can make a profit after meeting payroll and expenses. However, the definition of a sustainable or green restaurant has changed. Increasingly, current dining trends, local regulations and financial incentives focus on the sustainability of the planet, its people as well as a business’ profit.




DC Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD) wrote this Green DC Restaurants Action Manual to help business owners operate a **Green Restaurant** and benefit from the cost savings, increased sales and gentler eco-footprint.



Photo Credit: Michael Browning

This manual is designed for busy business owners to learn about:

- eco-friendly **changes that make strategic and economic sense** for all types of food service businesses;
- the abundance of **free tools, financial assistance** and guidance available for DC businesses;
- new **laws and regulations** that support the District’s sustainability vision and plan; and
- other **DC restaurants that have taken steps** to operate a sustainable, green business.

To download an electronic version of this manual and review updates, visit [dslbd.dc.gov/sustainability](http://dslbd.dc.gov/sustainability) and follow DSLBD on Twitter @smallbizdc. 

Let us know how your DC business is operating sustainably at [dslbd@dc.gov](mailto:dslbd@dc.gov) or [@smallbizdc](https://twitter.com/smallbizdc).

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# WHY GREEN?

How you operate your restaurant impacts your **Profit**, the **Planet** and **People**.  
Make changes and take “green” actions that will support this **TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE**.

## PROFIT

- Increase profits & sales
- Reduce operating costs
- Attract eco-conscious customers
- Offer sustainable products to meet customer demand

### RESTAURANT

**NORA**, the U.S.'s first certified organic restaurant, sources at least 95% of all ingredients from certified organic farmers, growers and suppliers.

[noras.com](http://noras.com)

Photo Credit:  
Faey Szeuw

### ZAYTINYA

saves \$8,250 annually in electric costs after using DCSEU rebates to upgrade lighting to LED fixtures (DCSEU).<sup>1</sup>

[zaytinya.com](http://zaytinya.com)

Photo Credit:  
Brianpirie

## GREEN RESTAURANT

## PLANET

- Conserve natural resources
- Improve air & water quality
- Protect ecosystems & biodiversity
- Reduce waste
- Minimize strain on local infrastructure

## PEOPLE

- Create healthier products & space for staff & customers
- Enhance the social well-being of staff, customers, & community
- Promote comfort & safety of staff and customers

### TAKOREAN

pledges 1% of all gross sales to local nonprofit organizations that support local environmental, food access and youth-based initiatives. [takorean.com](http://takorean.com)

Photo Credit:  
Amanda Mills



# GETTING STARTED

## GREEN YOUR DC RESTAURANT IN 6 STEPS

### 1 ASSESS CURRENT CONDITIONS

To determine which recommended changes—**Green Actions**—will have the biggest impact on the business' triple bottom line (profit, people, planet):

- **collect information** about current equipment, utility usage, building space and operations;
- use **free tools** and **technical assistance** to calculate conditions and plan changes (see page 7); and
- hang on to your notes to use later in *Measuring Impact & Promoting Efforts* section (pages 22–23).






Photo Credit: Lukasz Szmigie

### 2 SET GOALS & PRIORITIES



Photo Credit: freeimages.com

- Start with changes that restaurants must make to **comply with DC Regulations** → Look for Green Actions with this symbol. 
- If **saving money** by reducing operating costs is a priority (profit) → Look for Green Actions with this symbol. 
- If **providing healthier space/products** for customers/staff is a priority (people) → Look for Green Actions with this symbol. 

### 3 SELECT GREEN ACTION (PAGES 8–21)

The **Green Actions** in this manual are grouped by six main principles for operating a sustainable restaurant. Use Goal Symbols listed in Step 2 to narrow down the list.

1. Energy Efficiency
2. Water Conservation
3. Food and Beverage
4. Supplies and Containers
5. Waste and Pollution Management
6. Space and Building Systems




# GETTING STARTED: GREEN YOUR DC RESTAURANT IN 6 STEPS (CONTINUED...)



Photo Credit: freeimages.com

## 4 ESTABLISH BUDGET & FIND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

- **Calculate the cost** of each Green Action by collecting quotes from current suppliers and seek out new green vendors. Find vendors using list on page 7.
- **Apply for rebates, grants and tax incentives** to reduce cost of implementing Green Actions. → See list on next page and look for this symbol. 
- **Coordinate with property owner** to share costs and savings of improvements to leased space (lease tips on page 20).

## 5 IMPLEMENT GREEN ACTIONS

- Use **planning tools and calculators** (page 7) to sequence inter-connected Green Actions.
- **Test and try green** products to observe their performance before committing to a full order.
- **Change staff behaviors** through regular training, signage, selecting a staff “Green Champion” to lead efforts, and rewarding behavior changes.



Photo Credit: bchydro.com



Photo Credit: Jenit Jeyakanth

## 6 MEASURE IMPACT & PROMOTE SUSTAINABILITY

Finally, use the *Measuring Impact & Promoting Efforts* chapter (pages 22–23) to:

- determine if you should **continue/expand your efforts**; and
- **promote implemented Green Actions** to attract customers and strengthen the restaurant’s brand as an eco-friendly business.



# TOOLS YOU CAN USE

Here are some free tools, financial resources and tips to help businesses get started with implementing GREEN ACTIONS.

## ASSESSMENT, PLANNING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- **DC Sustainable Energy Utility (DCSEU)** helps identify and plan Green Actions that save energy and water. [info@dcseu.com](mailto:info@dcseu.com), 202-479-2222, [dcseu.com](http://dcseu.com)
- **Smarter DC Challenge** provides online tools, webinars and guidance. [doee.dc.gov/service/smarter-dc-challenge](http://doee.dc.gov/service/smarter-dc-challenge)
- **DC Department of Energy and the Environment (DOEE) Sustainable Business Programs.** 202-535-1939, [doee.dc.gov/service/resources-businesses](http://doee.dc.gov/service/resources-businesses)
- **DC Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD)** helps with planning, locating financial assistance, and marketing. [dslbd@dc.gov](mailto:dslbd@dc.gov), 202-737-3900, [dslbd.dc.gov/sustainability](http://dslbd.dc.gov/sustainability)
- **ConServe by National Restaurant Association** [conserve.restaurant.org/Best-Practices](http://conserve.restaurant.org/Best-Practices)
- **ENERGY STAR® Guide for Small Business: Restaurants** [energystar.gov/buildings/facility-owners-and-managers/small-biz/restaurants](http://energystar.gov/buildings/facility-owners-and-managers/small-biz/restaurants)

For more planning tools, look for this symbol throughout the manual.



## GETTING THE BIGGEST BANG FOR YOUR BUCK

To determine the cost/benefit of Green Actions, ask yourself which actions will:

- **give a return on investment?** Compare the cost of implementation and maintenance to the value of savings over time and the impact on the environment and people. Use **EPA's Cash Flow Opportunity Calculator** and other tools at [energystar.gov](http://energystar.gov) Keyword Search: "return on investments";
- **offer a short payback period?** This is the time it takes the amount saved to equal the cost spent on a Green Action. Payback periods of less than 5-7 years are typically the most viable. Use the **Lifecycle and Energy Cost Calculators** at [fishnick.com/saveenergy/tools/calculators](http://fishnick.com/saveenergy/tools/calculators); and
- **be visible to patrons?** Readily visible changes may attract more eco-focused customers and strengthen the restaurant's brand as a sustainable business.

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

- **DCSEU Small Business Rebates** [dcseu.com/for-my-business](http://dcseu.com/for-my-business)
- DC Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (**DMPED**) **Great Streets Grants** [greatstreets.dc.gov](http://greatstreets.dc.gov)
- **DOEE Financial Incentives** list [doee.dc.gov/service/resources-businesses](http://doee.dc.gov/service/resources-businesses)
- **DC Commercial PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy)** financing for qualifying clean energy and water conservation projects [doee.dc.gov/service/dc-pace-commercial](http://doee.dc.gov/service/dc-pace-commercial)
- **DSLBD Financial Incentives** list, [dslbd.dc.gov/sustainability](http://dslbd.dc.gov/sustainability)
- **Smarter DC Challenge Incentives** list [doee.dc.gov/service/smarter-dc-challenge](http://doee.dc.gov/service/smarter-dc-challenge)
- **US Database of State Incentives for Renewables & Efficiency** [dsireusa.org](http://dsireusa.org)

Look for this symbol next to Green Actions that have financial incentives.



## GREEN SUPPLIERS & VENDORS

- **DSLBD Certified Local/Small vendors (CBEs)** of eco-friendly products and services. [dslbd.dc.gov/service/find-certified-companies](http://dslbd.dc.gov/service/find-certified-companies). Use "Assisted Search" option.
- **DOEE Foam Free Container Suppliers** [doee.dc.gov/foam](http://doee.dc.gov/foam)
- **DOEE Solar Installers and Vendors** [doee.dc.gov/solar](http://doee.dc.gov/solar)
- **DPW-approved Waste Management Vendors** 202-645-8245, [dpw.dc.gov/service/commercial-recycling](http://dpw.dc.gov/service/commercial-recycling)
- **DCSEU participating contractors**, request list at [info@dcseu.com](mailto:info@dcseu.com)
- **DCSEU Lighting retailers** [dcseu.com/for-my-home/lighting/energy-efficient-lighting](http://dcseu.com/for-my-home/lighting/energy-efficient-lighting)

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# ENERGY EFFICIENCY



Photo Credit: Institute of Standards and Technology

Restaurants are one of the biggest consumers of energy, using 5 to 7 times more energy per square foot than other commercial buildings (EPA). With increasing energy prices and diminishing supply of non-renewable fossil fuels (e.g., coal, natural gas), energy efficiency is critical for operating a green restaurant.

Photo Credit: Camille Nixon



When the **Georgia Avenue LEDO PIZZA** first opened, money was going out their leaky windows. After diligently caulking and air-sealing the building's envelope, energy costs are lower and customers and staff are more comfortable. [gaave.ledopizza.com](http://gaave.ledopizza.com)

.....

Restaurant owners can cut utility costs by 10-30% (EPA) by making:

- simple, no-cost changes to **daily operations**, such as turning off lights and weatherizing space;
- upgrading **equipment, lighting and building systems** (heating, cooling, and ventilation) to energy efficient models; and
- using **green power** including installing **solar panels** and buying from a clean energy supplier.

Fortunately, DC offers **financial and technical assistance** to help a business make energy efficient changes.

- DC Sustainable Energy Utility (DCSEU) rebates and consultations with energy specialists, [info@dcseu.com](mailto:info@dcseu.com), 202-479-2222, [dcseu.com](http://dcseu.com).
- DC Department of Energy and the Environment (DOEE) incentives and guidance [green.energy@dc.gov](mailto:green.energy@dc.gov), 202.535.2600 or 202-535-1939, [doee.dc.gov/service/energysmart-dc](http://doee.dc.gov/service/energysmart-dc).
- Smarter DC Challenge provides free online tools, webinars and peer-to-peer guidance [doee.dc.gov/service/smarter-dc-challenge](http://doee.dc.gov/service/smarter-dc-challenge).



## FREE PLANNING TOOLS

ENERGY STAR® Guide for Small Business: Restaurants  
[energystar.gov/buildings/facility-owners-and-managers/small-biz/restaurants](http://energystar.gov/buildings/facility-owners-and-managers/small-biz/restaurants).



ENERGY SMART is a central resource to learn about energy efficiency and renewable energy programs, products, incentives and services in the District.  
[doee.dc.gov/energy](http://doee.dc.gov/energy).



Additional planning tools on page 7.



# GREEN ACTIONS

## DAILY OPERATIONS



Saves  
Money



Healthy  
Space/Food



Available  
Incentives

Turn off **equipment** during off-peak times. Post signs to remind staff. **NO COST**

Fully load the **dishwasher**. **NO COST**

Lower **hot water heater** temperature to minimum allowed by DC Code.

Adjust **window blinds** throughout the day to maximize day lighting and minimize glare and heat gain and create a more comfortable environment.

**NO COST**

Turn off **lights** when not in use. **NO COST**

Adjust **thermostat set points**. Use nighttime setbacks.

## MAINTENANCE & REPAIRS

Seal **air leakages** along doors, windows, equipment, vents and wherever there is piping or electrical penetrations. **LOW COST**

Clean **condenser and evaporator coils**. **LOW COST**

Check **refrigeration units'** charge and fix leaks. **LOW COST**

Clean and change **air filters**. **LOW COST**

Insulate fiberglass lined **electric hot water heater** and hot water lines. **LOW COST**

## LIGHTING

Replace incandescent bulbs with **low-mercury LED bulbs**. Opt for LEDs instead of CFLs bulbs, which are less efficient and hazardous if broken.

Install **occupancy sensors** for lights in break rooms, restrooms, refrigerators, storage and walk-in freezers. DCSEU rebate eligible.

Install **daylight dimming sensors** for exterior. DCSEU rebate eligible. **LOW COST**

### Commercial fryers

spend at least 75% of the day on idle. Turning it off for 4 hours of idle time each day could save \$250-\$350 per year (FSWseason, 2015).



Photo Credit: Camille Nixon



Photo Credit: Mcapdevila



**JOHNNY'S HALF SHELL** used rebates to replace 57 fluorescent light fixtures with high-performance T8 lights and installed LED bulbs in their exit signs, reducing annual lighting costs by 40% and saving more than \$2,800 (DCSEU). ' [johnnyhalfshell.net](http://johnnyhalfshell.net)

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Continued  
on next  
page

## GREEN ACTIONS (CONTINUED...)

### APPLIANCE & EQUIPMENT UPGRADE



Replace **old/damaged appliances and equipment** with ENERGY STAR® certified models and recycle old equipment:




- cooking equipment including steamers, cookers, combination ovens, griddles and fryers;
  - refrigeration equipment including walk-in coolers, display cases; and
  - holding cabinets and warmers.
- DCSEU rebate eligible.  


Install energy efficient **hot water heaters**. DCSEU rebate eligible.  

### HEATING, COOLING & EXHAUST SYSTEMS



Install **demand controls** for exhaust hoods. Increase efficiency by connecting make-up air unit to the exhaust controls. DCSEU rebate eligible.  

Install **programmable thermostat**. During non-business hours, adjust at least 7 degrees down in winter months and up 7 degrees in warm months. DCSEU rebate eligible.   

Retrofit **exhaust hoods** with multi-speed or variable speed fans. 

Install **side panels** on existing exhaust hoods and make sure the panels do not interfere with hood's ability to vent smoke, fumes and gases. 

### ELECTRICAL POWER

Install **solar panels** to generate electricity and heat water. Make money selling surplus electricity (credits) to Pepco. Estimate installation costs and find incentives at [mapdwell.com/en/dc](http://mapdwell.com/en/dc).  

Purchase **green power** (renewable energy) from a clean energy suppliers to offset carbon use. [doee.dc.gov/service/green-power-partnership](http://doee.dc.gov/service/green-power-partnership).



Photo Credit: Camille Nixon

**UNION KITCHEN** worked with DCSEU to create an energy management plan and receive \$2,000 in rebates for installing energy efficient lighting, HVAC units and kitchen equipment, which lowered their utility costs and annual energy use 6,800 kWh. (DCSEU) [unionkitchendc.com](http://unionkitchendc.com)



**AMSTERDAM FALAFEL SHOP** buys green power to reduce the environmental impacts of its business' electricity use. [falafelshop.com](http://falafelshop.com)

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Photo Credit: Camille Nixon



**BEN'S CHILI BOWL** upgraded its flagship location by replacing its outdated florescent lighting with energy efficient alternatives that could save up to \$1,200 annually. LEDs use up to 80% less energy and can last up to 10 times longer (DCSEU)<sup>2</sup>. [benschilibowl.com](http://benschilibowl.com)



# Going Green? Let Us Know



## **BUSBOYS AND POETS**

Promotes green actions on menu and website.

Photo Credit: Busboys Poets



## **OLD ENGINE 12**

Reused an existing structure for its space.

Photo Credit: Farragutful



## **ACACIA BISTRO & WINE BAR**

Buys organic and sustainable produce from local, small businesses and farms.

Photo Credit: Geo Darwin



## **DANGEROUSLY DELICIOUS PIES**

Installed green roof, which captures and cleans rain before it becomes stormwater runoff.

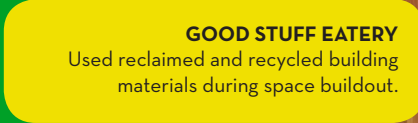
Photo Credit: Lamiot



## **FLORIDA AVENUE GRILL**

Installed energy efficient lighting to save costs and maintenance.

Photo Credit: Creative Vix



## **GOOD STUFF EATERY**

Used reclaimed and recycled building materials during space buildout.

Photo Credit: AJ Montpetit



## **THAI ORCHID'S KITCHEN**

Uses eco-friendly cleaning solutions that reduce toxins entering DC's rivers.

Photo Credit: Shari Weinsheimer

Restaurants across the District of Columbia have made big and small changes to become sustainable businesses.

What steps has your business taken to green its operations, products, services and space?

Let DSLBD know at  
[dslbd@dc.gov](mailto:dslbd@dc.gov) • 202.727.3900  
[@smallbizdc](https://www.facebook.com/smallbizdc)



Photo Credit: Hobbes Yeo

## **BIG CHAIR CAFE**

Refills reusable bottles to reduce plastic waste and fossil fuel use.

# WATER CONSERVATION



Photo Credit: Ross Brown

The amount of drinkable water on Earth (less than 3%) is ever decreasing due to pollution and environmental factors (EPA). Restaurants are intensive water consumers—typically 300,000 gallons a year (dinegreen.com) for dishwashing, food preparation, hygiene, and sewage conveyance.



Photo Credit: Sarah Murphy

**TABARD INN** installed green roofs to capture and clean rain before it becomes stormwater runoff that may enter local rivers. The green roofs create a visibly pleasing urban oasis for dining patrons. [tabardinn.com](http://tabardinn.com)

Restaurants can help the planet, reduce their water bills and lower the cost of electric/gas to heat water by:

- **instructing staff** to change their daily operating procedures for dishwashing, food preparation and serving;
- **upgrading kitchen equipment**, in particular pre-rinse spray valves that account for nearly 1/3 water used in the typical commercial kitchen;
- **upgrading restroom equipment**; and
- changing **exterior cleaning & landscaping** practices and water sources.

- Implementing water-efficient practices in commercial facilities can decrease operating costs by approximately 11 percent; and reduce energy and water use by 10 and 15 percent, respectively (EPA Water Use in Buildings).



Photo Credit: Artaxerxes



## FREE PLANNING TOOLS

EPA WaterSense®

[epa.gov/WaterSense/commercial/tools.html](http://epa.gov/WaterSense/commercial/tools.html)

To find WaterSense® certified equipment, use Keyword: *Product Search*



DC Department of Energy and the Environment (DOEE)'s **RiverSmart Communities** program offers financial and technical assistance for property owners to install stormwater control projects, including green roofs, rain barrels, pervious (porous) pavers and more. [doee.dc.gov/service/riversmart-communities](http://doee.dc.gov/service/riversmart-communities).

*Additional planning tools on page 7.*



# GREEN ACTIONS

## DAILY OPERATIONS



Saves Money





Available Incentives



Serve **water only upon request**. **NO COST**



Reduce **flow to dipper wells** but maintain at sufficient velocity to flush particulates. **NO COST** 


Use refrigeration instead of running water to **thaw foods**. **NO COST**

## KITCHEN EQUIPMENT


Install WaterSense® labeled **pre-rinse spray valve**, valve that can meet DC code temperature requirements. Payback period is 4-8 months. Reduces annual utility costs by \$115-\$240 (EPA). DCSEU rebate eligible. **LOW COST**  

Install ENERGY STAR® certified and WaterSense® labeled **dishwashers**. Retain a three-part sink for manual washing to meet DC code. DCSEU rebate eligible.  

Replace **faucet aerators** with low-flow models (look for WaterSense® label) between 0.5 and 1.5 gallons per minute. DCSEU rebate eligible. **LOW COST**  

Install **automatic faucet controls** that run for 15 seconds without the need to reactivate the faucet, and can reach 100°F (DC code minimum). 

Fix leaky **faucets, pipes and seals**. 


Select ENERGY STAR® certified **connectionless/boilerless steamers**. DCSEU rebate eligible. 


## RESTROOMS

Install low-flow, WaterSense® labeled **toilet tanks and urinals**.

Install WaterSense® labeled **bathroom sink faucets**. Water temperature must reach 100°F per DC Code.

## EXTERIOR

**Clean sidewalks** with a broom instead of spraying water. 

Install **green barrels** to collect stormwater to water plants. Rebates and other incentives at [doee.dc.gov/service/get-riversmart](https://doee.dc.gov/service/get-riversmart). 

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Photo Credit: Camille Nixon

Replacing one **sprayer valve** saves \$115 in energy and water costs and 7,000 gallons of water annually (equivalent to water needed to wash 5,000 racks of dishes). (EPA WaterSense®)



Fixing a **leaky faucet** at 20 drips a minute can save up to 700 gallons of water a year. (US Geological Survey).

Photo Credit: Renee Cho, Columbia University



Photo Credit: restaurantsteamer.com

To support its goal to emulate how family farms protect water and natural resources, **FOUNDING FARMERS** installed an ENERGY STAR® steam cooker, which uses 37 gallons of water/hour less than a conventional model (EPA WaterSense®).<sup>3</sup> [wearefoundfarmers.com](https://wearefoundfarmers.com).

# FOOD & BEVERAGE



Photo Credit: Mantra Media

A record 43 percent of Americans now say they make their food and beverage purchases using the criteria of human and environmental health (Triple Pundit). Offering sustainably produced food and beverages directly impacts a restaurant's triple bottom line:

- the **environment benefits** from the less toxic, less resource-intensive production methods;
- **customers benefit** from eating healthier products; and
- **sales increase** as customer demands are met for fresher and healthier meals.

## GETTING STARTED

- Start with most **frequently-used products** to get reduced wholesale rates.
- Focus on **products that support restaurant's signature brand**. For example: a restaurant known for its salads, should consider organic/naturally grown greens.



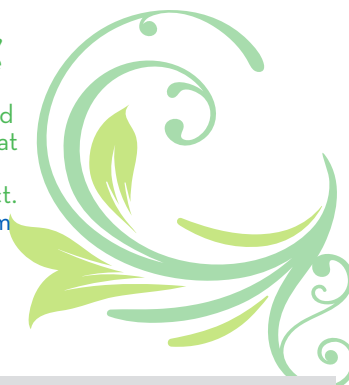
Photo Credit: Bill Davenport

When **BUSBOYS AND POETS** was considering the initial sustainable products to procure, it focused on organic eggs from cage-free chickens since breakfast was a big seller. [busboysandpoets.com](http://busboysandpoets.com)



Photo Credit: Eat Well DC

**EAT WELL DC's Commissary, Grillfish, Logan Tavern and The Pig** locations source their produce, eggs and poultry from a farm that it owns and operates just outside the District. [eatwellnaturalfarm.com](http://eatwellnaturalfarm.com)



## The top 5 food trends for 2015 are focused on sustainability.

1. Locally-sourced meats & seafood
2. Locally-grown produce
3. Environmental sustainability
4. Healthful kids' meals
5. Natural ingredients/ minimally processed food

Source: 2015 National Restaurant Association Culinary Forecast



## FREE PLANNING TOOLS

**Greener Choice Search** tool can help a business navigate the sea of "green" labels and third-party certification programs. Search by product type or label name. [greenerchoices.org/eco-labels/eco-home.cfm](http://greenerchoices.org/eco-labels/eco-home.cfm).

Additional planning tools on page 7.





# GREEN ACTIONS



Saves Money



Healthy Space/Food

Buy **locally-grown and produced** food and beverages that are produced within 100-mile radius of the restaurant.

Look for food and beverages labeled USDA **Certified Organic** ([ams.usda.gov](https://ams.usda.gov)) or **Certified Naturally-Grown** ([cngfarming.org](https://cngfarming.org)).

Buy **seasonal produce**, which is harvested during its regional growing season. Search by month and produce type at [sustainabletable.org/seasonalfoodguide](https://sustainabletable.org/seasonalfoodguide).

Buy **sustainable seafood** products that are abundant, well managed and fished or farmed in [fishchoice.com](https://fishchoice.com) and [seafoodwatch.org](https://seafoodwatch.org).

Buy **fair trade** food and beverages produced in a socially-responsible manner and by farmers and workers who receive fair wages. Search “Fair Trade Certified Partners” at [fairtradeusa.org](https://fairtradeusa.org). Ask vendors for fair trade products.

Buy **eggs, poultry, and meat** that are certified antibiotic free and are from animals that have meaningful outdoor access (not all “cage free” poultry have outdoor access). Look for products labeled:

- Certified Humane + Free Range
- Certified Humane + Pastured
- Animal Welfare Approved

## BENEFITS

- Lower costs due to reduced transportation
- Fresher tasting meals from reduced travel time
- Reduced fossil fuel use from shorter transportation route



- Healthier, less toxic products
- Reduced soil and water contamination



- Reduced costs since these products are generally cheapest when in season
- Minimize transportation impacts since out-of-season food often is shipped from another region or country



- Ensure variety of seafood options are available for time to come
- Avoid supporting fishing practices that harm marine life and the environment

- More equity and profits for people producing product



- Richer flavor
- Improved public health
- More humane conditions



*This publication is only for informational purposes. Readers must contact the appropriate entity for complete and current compliance and program requirements.*

Photo Credit: aul Joseph



**THE DUBLINER**, known for their Irish beers, also buys locally brewed beers to: reduce fossil fuels and product costs from long distance transportation of non-local products; and to strengthen the local manufacturing economy. [dublinerdc.com](https://dublinerdc.com)



Photo Credit: Mike Kenneally



**ZEKE'S COFFEE DC** makes buying organic, fair trade, and sustainable beans a priority. [zekescoffeedc.com](https://zekescoffeedc.com)



Photo Credit: Scott Suchman



**GARRISON** built its restaurant brand around seasonal cuisine and embraces smoking, canning, preserving and other food traditions that allows cooking across the four seasons. [garrisondc.com](https://garrisondc.com)



# SUPPLIES & CONTAINERS



Photo Credit: Camille Nixon



Photo Credit: Tono Sushi

**TONO SUSHI** switched from disposable wooden chopsticks to reusable dishwasher-safe chopsticks, which saves over \$200/month, reduces waste going to landfills and helps preserve forests. [tonosushi.com](http://tonosushi.com)

Restaurants use a variety of products, many of which can negatively affect customers and the environment for years beyond their last use. For example:

- Carryout containers made with foam will likely take decades to decompose in landfills. Once in waterways, foam is toxic to wildlife, fish and people who catch and consume the fish; and
- Conventional cleaning and extermination products, when washed into sewer drains, will contaminate the local rivers.

Each supply order placed is an opportunity for a business owner to choose more eco-friendly alternatives that:

- are less toxic to customers, staff and wildlife;
- minimize pollution; and
- can strengthen the restaurant's brand as a sustainable business.

## SUSTAINABILITY REGULATIONS

Additionally, restaurants and other entities must comply with the DC regulations, which are designed to change consumer habits and reduce pollution of DC waterways.

- Charge \$0.05 fee for each paper or plastic **disposable carryout bag**. Read more at [doee.dc.gov/bags](http://doee.dc.gov/bags).
- Tell suppliers to adhere to DC's material and labeling requirements for **disposable bags**. For details and examples, visit [doee.dc.gov/bags](http://doee.dc.gov/bags).
- **Do not use foam products** for food or beverage service or carryout (expanded polystyrene products a.k.a. Styrofoam™). For a list of affected product types and suppliers that sell alternative products, visit [doee.dc.gov/foam](http://doee.dc.gov/foam). Starting January 1, 2017, only use **recyclable or compostable serviceware** products.

For assistance complying with these regulations, contact [christopher.kibler@dc.gov](mailto:christopher.kibler@dc.gov) or 202-535-2600.



A **foam carryout container** only used for 10 minutes by a customer may take more than 500 years to breakdown in landfills and waterways. (Washington University study)



Photo Credit: Anacostia River DOEE

# GREEN ACTIONS



DC regulation



Saves Money



Healthy Space/Food

Write **green procurement guidelines** for staff to follow and to share with suppliers. Examples at [epa.gov/greenerproducts](http://epa.gov/greenerproducts). Benchmark DC focused guidelines from OCP (see *Free Planning Tools* below). **NO COST**

Use carryout **containers and other disposable products** made with recycled-content or recyclable materials. Do not use foam products. Find vendors that offer alternative and compliant products at [doee.dc.gov/foam](http://doee.dc.gov/foam). Avoid products labeled bio-based and biodegradable. The conditions for these products to break down may not be attainable.

Serve food using non-disposable, **reusable dishware** for dine-in customers.

Opt for **chlorine-free products** that do not leach toxic water into waterways during manufacturing.

Encourage customers to bring **reusable bags** by offering them reusable bag credit (e.g., 10 cents off). Charge \$0.05 fee for each disposable carryout bag given to a customer. [doee.dc.gov/bags](http://doee.dc.gov/bags).

Implement a **green cleaning program** including purchasing sustainable cleaning solutions. Example at [frcog.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/GreenCleaningGuide.pdf](http://frcog.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/GreenCleaningGuide.pdf).

Use less toxic **pest management** products and eco-friendly exterminators.

Give preference to **vendors** who implement green practices in their businesses, including cleaning companies for linens, uniforms and custodial services.

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Photo Credit: Crystal Rayne



## THAI ORCHID'S KITCHEN

worked with its vendor to use eco-friendly dishwasher cleaning solutions, which reduce toxins entering the sewer systems that lead to DC waterways. [thaiorchidskitchen.com](http://thaiorchidskitchen.com)



Photo Credit: Thomas Bush



**CULTURE COFFEE** listened to their eco-focused customers and switched to reusable coffee cups for in-house diners and foam-free containers for carry-out customers. (DOEE)<sup>4</sup> [culturecoffeedc.com](http://culturecoffeedc.com)

For carryout customers, **DOS GRINGOS** offers containers made from recycled content, which complies with Foam Free DC. [dosgringosdc.com](http://dosgringosdc.com)

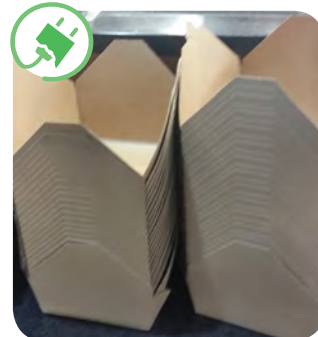


Photo Credit: Camille Nixon



## FREE PLANNING TOOLS

To find best practices for a **sustainable purchasing program** that supports DC goals and regulations, review DC's Office of Contracting and Procurement (OCP)'s sustainable purchasing guidelines for food services [ocp.dc.gov/page/district-columbia-sustainable-specifications](http://ocp.dc.gov/page/district-columbia-sustainable-specifications). Additional planning tools on page 7.



# WASTE & POLLUTION MANAGEMENT



Photo Credit: Enlightenme, Dexmedia

Restaurants are a major contributor to the global stream of waste, on average producing 150,000 pounds of garbage a year (Green Restaurant Association). More than 84 percent of their food waste ends up in landfills (BRS, Food Waste Reduction Alliance).

By reducing, reusing and recycling waste, DC restaurants can help their triple bottom line by:

- **lowering expenses** for food, supplies and waste disposal fees;
- preserving **green space** that otherwise may become landfills;
- conserving **natural resources and raw materials** to create products e.g., oil for plastic containers;
- decreasing landfill **greenhouse gases** produced by food waste; and
- reducing **air and water pollution** caused by loose trash and vehicle emissions.

Annually, businesses account for the 70% of the over 1,000,000 tons of trash in the District (DPW). To minimize the impact of this waste, the Department of Public Works (DPW) works with business and property owners to comply with the **DC Commercial Recycling requirements** [recycle@dc.gov](mailto:recycle@dc.gov), 202-645-8245, [dpw.dc.gov/service/commercial-recycling](http://dpw.dc.gov/service/commercial-recycling).



Photo Credit: Camille Nixon

**BUSBOYS AND POETS** recycles its cooking oil to create biofuel, which emits less carbon dioxide than conventional diesel. [busboysandpoets.com](http://busboysandpoets.com)



## FREE PLANNING TOOLS

DPW's Commercial Recycling specialists provide onsite **waste assessment and tips** to create a recycling program. 202-645-8245 [recycle@dc.gov](mailto:recycle@dc.gov)

**Food waste reduction** and diversion tools and tips from:

- EPA [epa.gov/sustainable-management-food](http://epa.gov/sustainable-management-food)
- Conserve [conserve.restaurant.org/Best-Practices/Reducing-Food-Waste](http://conserve.restaurant.org/Best-Practices/Reducing-Food-Waste)
- Food Waste Reduction Alliance [foodwastealliance.org/about-our-work/solutions-best-practices](http://foodwastealliance.org/about-our-work/solutions-best-practices).

*Additional planning tools on page 7.*



Photo Credit: Foerster

**MERIDIAN PINT** composts the bulk of its waste, reducing its impact on landfills to less than 10%. [meridianpint.com](http://meridianpint.com)

# GREEN ACTIONS



DC regulation



Saves Money




Healthy Space/Food




Available Incentives


## REDUCING INITIAL CONSUMPTION

Install auto **towel dispensers** or electric **hand dryers** in kitchen and restrooms as a supplement to towel dispensers. 

Use reusable **utensils, dishes, napkins** for dine-in service.

Provide **water/drinks** from taps instead of bottled-water. Add **on-faucet purification** system. Join TapIt to become a refill destination for reusable water bottles. [freetapwater.wordpress.com](http://freetapwater.wordpress.com) **NO/LOW COST** 

**Ask customers** if they need an item before automatically providing, e.g., straws, bread, carryout utensils and condiment packets. **NO COST**

Buy products in **bulk packaging** to reduce materials that need to be recycled. 

## REUSING & REPURPOSING

Donate **extra food** to food banks. [capitalareafoodbank.org](http://capitalareafoodbank.org) or [foodpantries.org](http://foodpantries.org). 

Donate used **appliances and equipment** for resale or parts.

## RECYCLING & COMPOSTING

Separate **recyclable materials** from trash into labeled containers. **Educate staff** about commingling. **Sign examples** from DC Department of General Services, (DGS) at [dgs.dc.gov/publication/dcps-recycles-signs-and-labels](http://dgs.dc.gov/publication/dcps-recycles-signs-and-labels). **NO COST** 

Recycle **cooking oil** with vendor that converts it to bio-fuel, which produces 87% less emissions than regular diesel. Properly maintain grease traps.

Compost **food waste** using a commercial hauler and adequate holding containers. Call DPW 202-645-8245 to locate haulers.


Recycle used **oyster shells** to raise new oysters and restore oyster reefs. [oysterrecovery.org/sra](http://oysterrecovery.org/sra). **NO COST**

## REDUCING POLLUTION & POOR AIR QUALITY

Responsibly dispose of **hazardous waste**, including pesticides, florescent and CFL lamps, batteries, appliances. [doee.dc.gov/service/hazardous-waste](http://doee.dc.gov/service/hazardous-waste) 

Provide **bicycle racks** for customers/staff. Call 311 or DDOT 202-671-0534 for installation options. **NO/LOW COST**  

Offer **transit benefits** to encourage staff to use public transportation (required if 20 or more employees, DOES 202-671-1880). For business transit programs options, DDOT, 202-299-2186, [goDCgo.com/employer](http://goDCgo.com/employer).  

Install a **green roof** and other **green infrastructure** that reduce stormwater runoff into waterways, can lower stormwater fees and generate revenue (Stormwater Retention Credit Trading). [doee.dc.gov/service/get-riversmart](http://doee.dc.gov/service/get-riversmart) 

*This publication is only for informational purposes. Readers must contact the appropriate entity for complete and current compliance and program requirements.*



Photo Credit: Renee Cho, Columbia University



As a TapIt destination, **OPEN CITY** and **BIG CHAIR CAFÉ** attract customers and reduce plastic waste by refilling reusable water bottles with tap water. [opencitydc.com](http://opencitydc.com) and [facebook.com/bigchaircafe](http://facebook.com/bigchaircafe)

**HARRAR COFFEE & ROASTERY's** custom bike rack attracts cyclist customers and commuters. Its visible location on busy corridor helps to brand them as an eco-friendly business. [harrarcoffeeroastery.com](http://harrarcoffeeroastery.com)



Photo Credit: C. Nixon



Photo Credit: Camille Nixon



**THE DABNEY** recycles their spent oyster shells with the Shell Recycling Alliance. [thedabney.com](http://thedabney.com).

# SPACE & BUILDING SYSTEMS



Photo Credit: Jean Scheijen



Photo Credit: Hotspot Energy

During build out of its H Street space, **BEN'S CHILI BOWL** used DCSEU rebates for energy efficient lighting to utility offset costs; and became a EPA Green Power Partner to reduce its carbon footprint. [benschilibowl.com](http://benschilibowl.com)

When planning a restaurant project—whether a system upgrade, space renovation or full build out—business owners have an opportunity to make green building choices that:

- **lower operating and maintenance costs** by installing more efficient systems and equipment;
- create **healthier spaces** that are more comfortable for staff and customers;
- reduce **natural resource** depletion (energy, water, and raw materials);
- divert **construction material waste** from landfills through material and building reuse; and
- comply with DC's **green building regulations**.

## DC GREEN BUILDING CODES & BEST PRACTICES

DC is a national leader in green building, in part due to issuance of several codes to support sustainable construction. The DC Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (**DCRA**)'s **Green Building Program** administers these codes ([buildgreendc.org](http://buildgreendc.org)).

- Projects of any size (addition, alteration, repair or new) must comply with the **DC Energy Conservation Code** in addition to the standard DC Building Code.
- Best practices for sustainable equipment, materials, systems and operations can be found in the **DC Green Construction Code** and the **DC Green Building Act**, which are required codes for projects greater than 10,000 and 50,000 square feet respectively.

## ENGAGING THE PROPERTY OWNER

If leasing a space, meet with the property owner to:

- Confirm landlord will allow changes;
- Discuss Green Construction code, which is applicable to project regardless if managed by landlord or tenant; and
- **Negotiate/Renegotiate lease agreements** to equitably share project costs and savings gained since the changes may improve the landlord's property value. Tips at Review Green Lease Library [greenleaselibrary.com](http://greenleaselibrary.com). For free brief legal advice, attend a DC Pro Bono Bar Association Small Business Legal Clinic ([dcbar.org/for-the-public/help-for-small-businesses](http://dcbar.org/for-the-public/help-for-small-businesses)).

*Additional planning tools on page 7.*

## FREE PLANNING TOOLS



DCRA's Green Building Program offers:

- **Green Building Roadmap** determines applicable codes based on project location and type [roadmap.buildgreendc.org](http://roadmap.buildgreendc.org)
- **Green and Energy Compliance System** (GECS) provides compliance checks throughout a project and document sharing [buildgreendc.org](http://buildgreendc.org), click *Compliance*
- **Project consultations** [building@dc.gov](mailto:building@dc.gov), 202-442-4400





# GREEN ACTIONS



DC regulation



Saves Money







Healthy Space/Food






Available Incentives

## SYSTEM UPGRADES

Install **solar panels** to generate electricity. Make money selling surplus electricity/credits. Estimate installation costs at [mapdwell.com/en/dc](http://mapdwell.com/en/dc). Obtain solar guidance and financial assistance [doee.dc.gov/solar](http://doee.dc.gov/solar) or contact DOEE 202-535-2600, [green.energy@dc.gov](mailto:green.energy@dc.gov).  

Install energy-efficient **HVAC systems**, controls and pumps to reduce costs. DCSEU rebate eligible.  


Comply with DC's **Energy Conservation Code**. 

Install **thermal solar system** to heat water. Make money selling surplus energy/credits. Guidance at [doee.dc.gov/solar](http://doee.dc.gov/solar).  

Buy **green power** to offset a business' carbon footprint/electricity use. Become a DC Green Power Partner [doee.dc.gov/service/green-power-partnership](http://doee.dc.gov/service/green-power-partnership).

Follow the GREEN ACTIONS in the *Energy Efficiency* and *Water Conservation* chapters (pages 8–13).

## SPACE SELECTION & BUILDING MATERIALS


During space selection, consider reusing an **existing building** which may generate environmental savings of 4-46 percent over new construction. [savingplaces.org/preservation-green-lab](http://savingplaces.org/preservation-green-lab). 



Consider using **sustainable building practices** outlined in USGBC's LEED for Interior Design and Construction certification standard. [usgbc.org/guide/idc](http://usgbc.org/guide/idc)

Use eco-friendly **building materials**, including those that are made from:

- Recycled-Content
- Re-purposed materials
- Salvaged/Reclaimed materials
- Renewable materials

Purchase **materials from regional manufacturers** to reduce transportation costs and depletion of fossil fuels. 

Use **low-VOC or no-VOC** and **formaldehyde-free products** that provide healthier air quality for staff and customers (e.g., paints, floors, upholstery). 

Install green infrastructure projects, e.g., **green roofs** and **pervious (porous) pavers**, to reduce stormwater runoff into DC waterways, lower stormwater fees and generate revenue (Stormwater Retention Credit Trading). [doee.dc.gov/service/get-riversmart](http://doee.dc.gov/service/get-riversmart).  

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Photo Credit: Carlos Kobischek

**1905 BISTRO & BAR** was one of the first DC restaurants to buy green power. [1905dc.com](http://1905dc.com)

### TAYLOR GOURMET

salvages and re-purposes materials (e.g., palette wood, buckets for lighting fixtures), to reduce landfill waste. [taylorgourmet.com](http://taylorgourmet.com)



Photo Credit: Camille Nixon



Photo Credit: Camille Nixon

Instead of new construction, **LA COLOMBE** opted to reuse and rehab an existing, historic building, which offers environmental savings over new construction. [lacolombe.com](http://lacolombe.com)

# MEASURING IMPACT & PROMOTING EFFORTS



Photo Credit: Energy Efficient Behavior Blog

## TRACKING & IMPACT MEASURING EXAMPLES

Tracking progress of Green Actions implementation and measuring their impact on a restaurant's Triple Bottom Line go hand in hand. To get started:

1. **collect baseline information** about the restaurant's condition before implementing changes;
2. track both **quantitative indicators** (e.g., utility costs and energy usage) and **qualitative indicators** (e.g., customer reviews, recognition receives). Free tracking/assessment tools listed on page 7;
3. select **similar time periods** to compare during tracking (e.g. July 2015 and July 2016); and
4. measure both **financial savings** after implementation costs as well as positive **impact on the environment and people** (e.g., percentage of waste not sent to landfill because of composting, or reduced emissions from buying locally-produced products).



Photo Credit: EPA, ENERGY STAR®



The online **ENERGY STAR® Portfolio Manager™** tool ([portfoliomanager.energystar.gov](http://portfoliomanager.energystar.gov)) measures and tracks energy and water consumption, greenhouse gas emissions; and syncs with the **Smarter DC Challenge**, which provides recognition points for completed Green Actions and tracking tools ([greenpsf.com/go/community/index/washdc](http://greenpsf.com/go/community/index/washdc), in Knowledge Center search "tracking").

## Measuring Energy Costs & Savings of Lighting & Appliance Upgrades

GREEN ACTION			NET IMPLEMENTATION COST			ENERGY SAVINGS & PAYBACK	
	Old Equipment	New Equipment	Cost	DCSEU Incentive	Cost after Incentive	Savings* kWh/Yr	Payback (Years)
LIGHTING	T12 Lamp	LED Lamp	\$40	— \$5	= \$35	114	2.7
	2x4 T8 Fixture	Restroom Occupancy Sensors	\$100	— \$20	= \$80	109	2.1
APPLIANCES	ENERGY STAR® Refrigerator		\$800**	—\$200	= \$600	1179	5.1
	ENERGY STAR® Steam Cooker		\$650**	—\$400	= \$250	9,967	0.3

Source: DC Sustainable Energy Utility (DCSEU)

\*Based on assumption that lights are on for 9hr/day 7 days a week.

\*\* Additional Cost for purchase of ENERGY STAR® model vs purchase of regular model.

## PROMOTING YOUR EFFORTS & ATTRACTING CUSTOMERS

Here are a few no cost and low cost ways to promote implemented Green Actions, which can help:

- strengthen the **restaurant's brand** as a sustainable business;
- **attract customers** that are more eco- and health-focused; and
- **increase sales**.

Don't be shy about including statistics that were collected when measuring implemented Green Actions – such as “Reduced water usage by 20%” or “Saved \$1000 in electrical costs using solar.”

**Web Site and Social Media**—Prominently post the business' sustainability vision and efforts. Use Twitter, Facebook and Instagram to announce the start and completion of a Green Action.

**Menu and Table tents**—Highlight Green Actions on menus and table tents. Place a “green” symbol next to sustainable food items.

**Signage**—Place window decals and interior signs to illustrate the restaurant's sustainable practices.

**Talking Points**—Prepare talking points for staff to communicate green actions to dining patrons.

### Awards/Recognition

- Nominate the business restaurant for DC's annual **Sustainability Awards** ([doee.dc.gov/sustainabilityawards](http://doee.dc.gov/sustainabilityawards)).
- Join the **Smarter DC Challenge**. Earn points and recognition for Green Actions ([doee.dc.gov/service/smarter-dc-challenge](http://doee.dc.gov/service/smarter-dc-challenge)).
- **Email DSLBD** your sustainability activities to highlight [dslbd@dc.gov](mailto:dslbd@dc.gov).

**Certification**—Third-party, fee-based certification (weigh benefits of increased exposure against amount of program fees).

- Green Restaurant Association Certification [dinegreen.com](http://dinegreen.com)
- Real Certified [eatreal.org](http://eatreal.org)
- Green America Certified Business [greenamerica.org](http://greenamerica.org)
- Green Seal Green Business [greenseal.org](http://greenseal.org)

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Photo Credit: Normanack



**URBANA DINING & DRINKS** received a DC Sustainability Award for its sustainable practices including building a roof-top farm to supply most of its produce. [urbanadc.com](http://urbanadc.com)



Photo Credit: Souper Girl

**SOUPERGIRL** prominently shares on its web site why and how it operates a sustainable restaurant. [thesoupergirl.com](http://thesoupergirl.com)

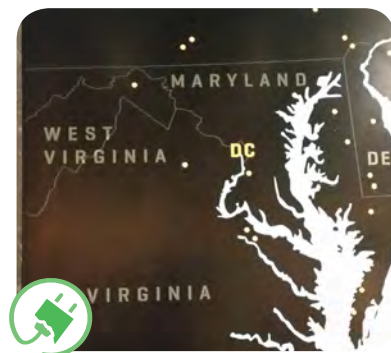


Photo Credit: Camille Nixon

As **CAVA MEZZE GRILL's** customers wait in line, they can read a list and map that shows the local farmers and producers of their ingredients. [cavagrill.com](http://cavagrill.com)





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