

TOP 10

Ways to Introduce Sustainability and Food Sourcing

Compiled by: James Thoma, CDM, CFPP

This Top 10 resource list offers examples of how to best introduce sustainability and food sourcing. This list will utilize **sustainable seafood** as an example. It's important to understand the concepts of sustainability, so let's start with definitions. *Please note, these tactics may be applied to various sustainable food groups.*

Sustainability

To preserve and to prevent further harm to the existing eco-systems and the earth's natural resources. Participation in alternate methods or systems to meet today's needs so that future generations will be able to function and meet their needs.

Sustainable Food Sourcing

Acquiring food from purveyors that support local economies within 100 miles of your facility and conducting business with companies within the food industry that have made specific commitments to preservation of the planet's resources or eco-systems.

- 1. Educate Yourself** - There are numerous websites and organizations that are focused on preserving various fish species and those that are endangered are labeled. Dig deep to learn about the fishing industry and gain factual information.
- 2. Educate Your Staff** - Pass along your findings to your staff so they understand and buy into the goals you wish to attain. This could be included in a staff in-service.
- 3. Get Staff "on Board"** - You will need all the help and support to make any new initiative "stick" and have staying power to sustain itself. Be very specific with production and service staff with the "catch of the day," where it comes from, and where it is sourced? (wild or line-caught). whether it is wild caught or line caught.
- 4. "Go to the Top" and Educate your Administrators** - Prepare a presentation and be prepared to "sell" your initiative and answer tough questions. Provide factual information and a cost/benefit analysis. How does this sustainable initiative benefit the ecological/carbon footprint of the facility? It may cost more money to support this type of program, so be prepared to find savings in your budget to offset any cost increases.
- 5. Start a Marketing Campaign** - Provide posters, handouts, other informative collateral throughout your department and facility. Chances are, staff, residents, guests, and others may already support sustainability in their personal lives.
- 6. Pick One Initiative at a Time** - Set achievable and measurable goals that are quantifiable. Speak to your residents, patients, clients, or stakeholders. Ensure that they are aware of your goals. Do they approve? Do they like the new choices you are making? Get buy-in!
- 7. Walk the Talk** - It is your project; be the leader and follow the rules. Set the example for all others to follow. You are the spokesperson and expert at your facility for sustainable fishing. Talk to your production team, service staff, and residents about what fish is available on the menu every day that you have the items.
- 8. Evaluate this Initiative After 30, 60, and 90 Days** - Report your numbers back to your clients, administrators and stakeholders. Prepare a report, posters, or market your results. Make weekly notes if your "catch of the day" is growing in popularity with acceptance among your guests and patients.
- 9. Reward Staff and Your Facility** - Celebrate Your Accomplishments. Create a thank you poster and keep track of future thresholds. Enthusiasm will keep your sustainability initiative active and ongoing.
- 10. Repeat** - Return to step one and pick another sustainable item!

