

# Carolina Green Events Criteria



## What is a green event?

Certified Carolina Green Events meet zero waste standards, support local businesses (including local agriculture), become more energy and water efficient, stay within budget, and demonstrate UNC's commitment to sustainability. Every time a student organizations or department hosts an event--a meeting, lecture, fundraiser, or conference --the environmental impact can be immense. To help event planners minimize these impacts, the Office of Waste Reduction and Recycling (OWRR) and the Sustainability Office created the Carolina Green Events program.

### **Before**

- Appoint a Sustainability Coordinator
- Submit Carolina Green Event checklist ([go.unc.edu/greenevents](http://go.unc.edu/greenevents))
- Choose sustainable supplies & food options
- Promote your event as Carolina Green

### **During**

- Spread the word – tell your attendees about your sustainable initiatives!
- Save energy, watch your water, and reduce event waste
- Keep an eye on compost and recycling stations to minimize contamination

### **After**

- Wrap up waste reduction efforts & donate extra food
- Share your success with others
- Thank volunteers and get feedback

## Carolina Green Event Guidelines

### Venue

- ✓ Choose a destination that **minimizes travel** for attendees
- ✓ **Reduce energy** usage by:
  - Turning off equipment when not in use (including lights)
  - Setting thermostat to appropriate temperature
  - Hosting outside event in natural lighting
- ✓ Monitor and **reduce water use** whenever possible

- ✓ Promote environmentally features of venue, such as low-flush toilets, bike parking, solar panels, etc.
- ✓ Use non-toxic cleaning supplies
- ✓ For outdoor events: Monitor litter and liquid spills

## **Transportation**

- ✓ Display public transit links prominently on the event's website and other publicity materials
- ✓ Choose a venue that has access to safe, secure, and visible bicycle parking
- ✓ Offer [incentives](#) or encourage attendees to travel via bicycle, public transit, or carpool
- ✓ Teleconference when possible to reduce travel impacts

## **Communication**

- ✓ Use **electronic advertising**, promotion, ticketing, and registration whenever possible
- ✓ Use **reusable** signs or banners for recurring events
- ✓ Use **public** signage to minimize individual printing
- ✓ Print Smart:
  - Print on at least 30% [post-consumer recycled content paper](#)
  - List the amount of recycled content on all printed materials
  - Advertise via newspaper, organizational newsletters or radio rather than direct mail
  - Use double-sided copying and printing when possible
  - **Reuse** one-sided printed materials for internal printing
- ✓ Share your **Green Event** status
  - Include Carolina Green Events logo on promotional material
  - Tell everyone involved that this is a Green Event!

## **Food & Beverage**

- ✓ Provide [healthy options](#)
- ✓ Ensure that **at least 25%** of food options are one of the following:
  - [Locally grown](#) and [seasonal](#)
  - [Organic](#)
  - [Fair trade](#)
- ✓ Provide a **vegetarian option** and account for other dietary needs
- ✓ Clearly label local, organic, fair trade, or vegetarian dishes
- ✓ If seafood is served, ensure that at least 25% of seafood items are listed on the Monterey Bay Aquarium ["Super Green List"](#)

## Waste Reduction & Purchasing

- ✓ Ensure all event materials are reusable, [recyclable](#), or [compostable](#) – including decorations, flatware, napkins, and utensils.
- ✓ Purchase items with recycled content
- ✓ Serve meals, snacks, and condiments in bulk and **avoid individually wrapped items**
- ✓ Work with caterers and vendors to correctly portion meal size and quantity
- ✓ **Announce** waste disposal methods and directions to attendees at the beginning of the event
- ✓ Place trash, recycling, and compost containers in stations staffed with volunteers if possible
- ✓ **Donate leftover food**
- ✓ Borrow or buy used materials instead of buying new
- ✓ Include purchasing and waste disposal guidelines in vendor contracts

## Definitions

**Captured Rainwater** -- Rainwater harvesting is the collection of rainwater directly from the surface it falls on. This collected water can be used for nonpotable purposes such as toilet flushing, irrigation, etc.

**Compostable** -- A product that is compostable is one that can be placed into a composition of decaying biodegradable materials, and eventually turns into a nutrient-rich material.

**Fair Trade** – Fair trade labeling is a certification system overseen by FLO International designed to allow consumers to identify goods which meet agreed standards. For a product to carry the Fair Trade Certification Mark, it must come from inspected and certified producer organizations. Look for the Fair Trade label when purchasing fair trade goods.



**Healthy Food Options** -- While no explicit definition of “healthy food options” exists, foods such as whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and lean proteins are certainly healthy choices.

**Incentives** -- Examples of incentives to encourage attendees to travel via bicycle, public transit, or carpool include a bike valet, coupons for bike-riders, and de-incentivizing parking by using pay-to-park.

**Locally Grown** -- The recently amended “Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act,” defines a product as local if the total distance that it is transported is less than 400 miles from the origin of the product.

**Low Emission Vehicle** -- Low Emission Vehicles are motor vehicles that emit relatively low levels of motor vehicle emissions. The term may be used in a general sense, but in some countries it is defined in air quality statutes.

**Low-flush Toilets** -- Low-flow toilets use 1.6 gallons or less per flush as opposed to about 3.5 gallons which was the norm years ago. They can be single-flush models or dual-flush toilets, which typically use 1.6 gallons per flush for the full flush and 1.1 gallons per flush for a reduced flush.

**Organic** -- Organic foods are foods that are produced using methods of organic farming that do not involve modern synthetic inputs such as synthetic pesticides and chemical fertilizers. They are also not processed using any chemical food additives. Foods that are composed of at least 95% organic ingredients may display this label:



**Post-Consumer Recycled Content** -- A product made from post-consumer content is made from waste that has been used by a consumer, disposed of, and diverted from landfills.

**Recyclable** -- Recycling is a process that changes waste materials into new products to prevent the waste of potentially useful materials and to reduce the consumption of fresh raw materials and energy. Recycling also reduces pollution associated with waste disposal (landfilling, incineration, etc.) and with the production of goods from raw materials. Recyclable materials include many kinds of glass, metal, plastic, textiles, and electronics.

**Renewable Energy** -- Renewable energy is generally defined as energy that comes from resources which are continually replenished on a human timescale such as sunlight, wind, rain, tides, waves, and geothermal heat.

**Seasonal Food** -- Seasonality of food refers to the times of year when a given type of food is at its peak. This is important from an environmental perspective since acquirement of food that is not seasonal in a given location requires transporting that food product from a location where it is currently seasonal.

**Soy Ink** -- Soy ink is a kind of ink made from soybeans. As opposed to traditional petroleum based ink, soy-based ink is more environmentally friendly, might provide more accurate colors, and makes it easier to recycle paper.

**Super Green List** -- This list was put together by Monterey Bay Aquarium and highlights products that are currently on the Seafood Watch "Best Choices" list. Seafood listed is excellent for human health and farmed responsibly. To learn more, visit <http://www.seafoodwatch.org/>.

**Vegetable-Based Ink** -- These types of inks are also more environmentally friendly than petroleum based ink. Several types of vegetable-based inks include linseed (Flax), tung (Chinawood), castor, canola, and safflower.

**Vegetarian** -- Vegetarianism is the practice of abstaining from the consumption of meat, including red meat, poultry, seafood, and the flesh of any other animal.

**Upcycle** -- Upcycling is the process of converting waste materials or useless products into new materials or products of better quality or for better environmental value.

### **Are you Green Event certified?**

Become a Green Event certified leader for your organization, department or group and ensure sustainability is a priority for all your events!

- ✓ Join the Office of Waste Reduction & Recycling at a Green Event training session. Learn everything you need to know to host certified Green Events for your organization. Sessions generally last about 1 hour and count as a skills training for Public Service Scholars
- ✓ We host public training sessions during the fall and spring academic semesters. You are always welcome to schedule a private session for your organization by filling out a [Green Event Training Request](#). For any questions, email [greenevents@facilities.unc.edu](mailto:greenevents@facilities.unc.edu)