



Sustainable Catering Policy

2020

INFORMATION ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

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Document History

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Further Document Information and Relationships

Related Legislation*	NSW Local Government Act 1993
Related Policies	Byron Shire Net Zero Emissions Strategy for Council Operations 2025 (2019) Byron Shire Integrated Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy (2019) Byron Shire Procurement and Purchasing Policy (2017) Byron Shire Corporate Sustainability Policy (2012) Byron Shire Greenhouse Strategy (2008) Byron Shire Sustainable Agriculture Strategy (2004) Interim Policy on Genetically Modified Agriculture in Byron Shire (2001)
Related Procedures/ Protocols, Statements, documents	Boomerang Alliance, <i>Make The Switch Member Guide</i> (2018) Monash University, <i>Greening Up Our Catering: Sustainable Catering Guide</i> (2009) Blue Mountains City Council, <i>Healthy and Sustainable Food Choices – Guidelines for all Council managed food services</i> (2008) Sydney Food Fairness Alliance, <i>Understanding Food Miles Fact Sheet</i> (2006) Zero Waste Planning Guide Chapter, <i>Guide to Sustainable Catering</i> (2005)

Note: Any reference to Legislation will be updated in the Policy as required. See website <http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/> for current Acts, Regulations and Environmental Planning Instruments.

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1. OBJECTIVES

Food consumption and catering choices have significant social and environmental impacts, both locally and globally. The choices made about food, packaging materials and transport can support sustainable agriculture practices at the local level, minimise waste to landfill, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and translate into improved conditions for both livestock and agriculture workers.

Byron Shire Council recognises the importance of ethically and sustainably produced and packaged foods to the nutritional health and general wellbeing of our community, the local economy and the wider environment. The Sustainable Catering Policy aims to increase the demand for sustainably produced and packaged foods within the Byron Shire, while supporting the objectives of the Community Strategic Plan, the *Sustainable Agriculture Strategy (2004)*, the *Net Zero Emissions Strategy for Council Operations 2025 (2019)*, and the *Integrated Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy 2019-2029*.

The Sustainable Catering Policy applies to all food procurement and corporate catering arrangements undertaken by Council, including tender or contractual arrangements. The implementation of this Policy is supported by a register of caterers that comply with the provisions outlined in Section 4 of this Policy.

The key objectives of this Policy are:

- To promote opportunities for sustainable agriculture in Byron Shire
- To support industries and businesses that utilise ethical, certified organic, sustainable, cruelty-free and fair trade production methods and practices
- To increase the sustainability of Council's internal practices by reducing food miles, waste sent to landfill, and socio-environmental impact associated with Council's catering choices
- To support the use of re-usable, 100% compostable and/or recyclable packaging to help eliminate single-use plastics within the Byron Shire and promote the circular flow of resources
- To promote the welfare of livestock, poultry and agricultural workers
- To outline Council's food ethics and procurement expectations to both Council staff and businesses offering catering services.

2. SCOPE

The Policy applies to:

- All Council staff involved in food procurement and corporate catering arrangements undertaken by Council, including tender or contractual arrangements. This includes catering for all internal Council meetings, functions and events.
- Current and future catering companies on the Catering Register that supply food and drink to Council.

3. GLOSSARY

Certified Organic	Certified organic agriculture ensures food products are grown and processed without the use of synthetic chemicals or Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) using a rigorous verification process. It is a whole-systems approach to growing and handling food which aims to restore, maintain and enhance local ecosystems for the health of the environment and the people. Certifying authorities in Australia include ACO, NASAA, and OGA.
Fair Trade	Fair Trade is a trading partnership that ensures greater equity in international trade. It contributes to sustainable development by offering better working conditions, security and economic self-sufficiency for disadvantaged producers and workers. The leading certifying authority is the Fair Trade Labelling Organisation (FLO).
Food Miles	Food miles are a measure of the distance food travels from where it is grown or raised to where it is purchased by a consumer. Increasingly in Australia, fresh produce is being imported from overseas and is therefore contributing to greenhouse gas emissions.
Locally Grown	Buying locally grown produce limits food miles and therefore greenhouse gas emissions, whilst also supporting local farmers and regional agriculture production. Byron Shire is situated within a fertile agricultural region capable of producing a range of food products. For the purpose of this Policy, 'locally grown' refers foods which originate from the areas of Byron, Tweed, Ballina, Lismore, Richmond Valley or Kyogle Local Government Areas.
Free Range/Pastured Eggs	Free range or pastured eggs refer to eggs that come from poultry which have the ability to roam freely within the farmyard and are only kept in open sheds at night, rather than being permanently confined to cages. Free range standards can vary and therefore eggs that are locally sourced and labelled 'pastured' are considered the most reliable cruelty-free source.
Genetically Modified (GM)	Genetically modified organisms have had their DNA altered through genetic engineering. Controversies surrounding genetically modified foods and crops have arisen due to a lack of research into its effects on human and environmental health, consumer rights, ethics and food security.
Compostable Packaging	Products that are made from naturally biodegradable materials including paper, bagasse (sugarcane), cardboard, wood, palm, or bamboo can be composted in <i>green bins</i> rather than <i>red landfill bins</i> . Bioplastic products are available (eg. BioPak) however 100% natural materials are preferred due to composting restrictions in the Byron Shire.
Recyclable	Must be able to be recycled according to guidelines set out by Northern Rivers Waste by which Byron Shire Council must adhere to.

4. STATEMENT

The following statements outline best practice for Council catering agreements. Council staff and caterers should adhere to the Policy where reasonably and practicably possible. It is understood that claims made by external caterers can only be taken at face value in the interests of transparency and honesty.

4.1. Local and Seasonal Produce

Council will preference locally-grown and seasonally-available produce and value-added products in all catering arrangements. In instances where locally-grown is not available, Council will source products and produce grown within Australia with preference given to 'certified organic' and low food miles. Where not able to be sourced within Australia, Council will endeavour to source 'fair trade' produce/products.

4.2. Certified Organic Produce

Council will preference certified organic produce, meat and foodstuffs in all catering arrangements.

4.3. Free Range / Pastured Eggs

Council will only source eggs sourced locally using free range or pastured production methods to ensure they are cruelty-free.

4.4. Single-Use Packaging

Council will not accept food supplied in single-use packaging made of plastic. Where reusable packaging is not available, Council will preference 100% compostable and/or recyclable packaging. For more details on acceptable packaging, refer to the Glossary in Section 3.

4.5. Genetically Modified Foods

Council will not enter into catering arrangements with suppliers who knowingly source foodstuff with genetically modified (GM) ingredients.

4.6. Dietary Requirements

Council will acknowledge any dietary requirements including but not limited to vegan, vegetarian, gluten-free, dairy-free, and nut-free, and supply catering accordingly.

5. LEGISLATIVE AND STRATEGIC CONTEXT

5.1 Community Strategic Plan

Community Objective 3:
We protect and enhance our natural environment

3.2 Strive to become a sustainable community

3.4 Support and secure our farming future

6. SUSTAINABILITY

The Sustainable Catering Policy incorporates social, environmental, economic and governance attributes required for sustainability.

6.1. Social

- Supports community values around health, ethics, and sustainability
- Supports local farmers and businesses
- Supports fair and inclusive trading, including social enterprises where possible

6.2. Environmental

- Supports local, seasonal and organic produce that has the least impact on the environment
- Supports ethical treatment of animals
- Aims to minimise waste, decreasing waste to landfill and consequent greenhouse gas emissions
- Aims to increase composting and recycling that builds a circular resource cycle

6.3. Economic

- Supports the local economy by promoting local community trading
- Supports sustainable procurement which incorporates value for money, including product quality and reduced environmental impact
- Reduces waste to landfill through reduction in food waste and single use packaging, saving on associated waste costs

6.4. Governance

- Contributes to Councils Community Strategic Plan, Sustainable Agriculture Strategy (2004), Net Zero Emissions for Council Operations 2025 (2019), and the Integrated Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy 2019-2029.