



School of Natural Sciences

Sustainable Catering Approach

Preamble: As recognised in [Trinity's Sustainability Strategy](#) Healthy Trinity, food systems are currently unsustainable, causing ecological destruction and harm to human health. This Sustainable Catering Approach document for the School of Natural Sciences recognises the power of higher education as a public institution to demonstrate leadership in the transition toward more sustainable food systems.

- 1. Purpose.** This document sets out the School of Natural Sciences approach with regard to catering. The aim of the approach document is to promote sustainable and healthy food for our staff, students, researchers, visitors, collaborators and general public attending our events or meetings. This aligns with the College Sustainability Strategy 2023-2030 "We will promote health by measuring, informing, embedding and championing, and supporting a culture shift in behaviours that promote and recognise the interrelatedness of planetary and human health and well-being. This will include improved access to and uptake of healthier plant-based diets" (2023, p.14). It also responds to Trinity's Sustainable and Healthy Food Plan under action 2.3.3: Examine the acceptability and feasibility of plant-first catering policies across College and Trinity's Green Events Plan, Solution 3.1: Vegetarian First Approach – adopt a "vegetarian by default" policy. Adoption, implementation and feedback from all staff types at all levels of engagement with catering (organisation vs attendees) across the School will be captured during year 1, towards the development of a School Policy. This will be led, championed and communicated across the School community by the sustainable food working group which will be established.
- 2. Background.** As part of its commitment to addressing climate and biodiversity emergencies, the discipline of Geography has already committed to use entirely vegetarian or plant-based catering for events organised by the discipline since 2024. This is just one small step towards reducing the negative impacts from our academic activities. Catalysing heightened awareness of the issue, similar actions and commitments were taken by other disciplines, individuals, principal investigators, as well as research groups and research centres within the School (e.g. The Trinity Centre for the Environment and the Co-Centre for Climate + Biodiversity + Water). The Co-Centre has a sustainable catering policy embedded in its Standard Operating Procedure and its Sustainability Charter. Building on these policies and practices already in operation within the School, drawing on other similar initiatives and policies within the College (e.g. Trinity Business School Catering Policy) and being fully in line with the College's Sustainable and Healthy Food Plan 2026-2030, this Sustainable Catering Approach document aims to support sustainable catering on a School-wide basis.
- 3. Scope.** This sustainable catering approach document applies to procurement of catering for all events or meetings (co-)hosted, (co-)organised or (co-)funded by the School, its disciplines (Botany, Geography, Geology, Zoology), research centres and groups, or by individual members, as well as events organised by others within the premises of the School



(including student bodies and external organisations)¹. All members of staff who are involved in collaborations beyond the School are encouraged to support the adoption of sustainable catering principles within their research consortia, projects and networks. We also call on other Schools and units within Trinity College Dublin to adopt similar policies.

4. **Catering Principles.** As a School that centres both people and environment, and in line with the College Sustainability Strategy (2023-2030) and other College policies, we are committed to supporting sustainable practices. This includes the following catering principles (with clear labelling of different menus during events):
 - 4.1. **Vegetarian and vegan-first Approach:** All catering for events hosted by/in the School, its disciplines, research centres and groups, or by individual members of the School, shall provide fully vegetarian and/or vegan/plant-based menus (and where possible organic, fairtrade, ethical, seasonal and locally-sourced) as a default.
 - 4.2. **Dietary inclusivity:** Where appropriate, dietary needs including halal, kosher, dairy-free, gluten-free and allergies shall be catered for. These dietary options shall also be vegetarian and/or vegan (plant-based) as a default.
 - 4.3. **Exceptions:** This sustainable catering approach recognises that in some exceptional circumstances it may be appropriate to also offer menus beyond vegetarian/vegan options, if requested. In such cases, the preference should be given to organic, fairtrade, ethical, seasonal and locally-sourced food where possible.
5. **No Food Waste.** We are committed to eliminating food waste. As part of our effort to avoid wasting food (and financial resources), we call on those organising catering that: (a) before ordering catering for an event, they establish as best as they can the likely number of people attending the event – including the proportion of various dietary options and requirements; and (b) they have a plan for safely distributing of any potential food surplus post-event. As part of this, disciplines and research centres are encouraged to identify space where post-event surplus food can be shared. In addition, disciplines and research centres are encouraged to ensure the composting of any leftover food in their kitchens as appropriate².
6. **No Plastics.** School of Natural Sciences strictly prohibits the use of any single-use plastic containers or utensils including compostable cups. This means that there should be no plastic bottles and no disposable cups, utensils or plates used at events or meetings hosted by the School or at events taking place on the School premises. Transitional period of 3 years is suggested to allow for a full implementation of this requirement (until September 2029).³
7. **Supporting Sustainable Agriculture.** We are cognisant of the fact that sustainable catering policies should go hand-in-hand with supporting sustainable, organic, regenerative

¹ For clarity, the approach document does not apply to situations where individuals bring their own food, or where individuals are ordering their food individually (e.g. taking research group, research collaborators or PhD examiners out for lunch).

² The composting clause has been added following a suggestion from Trinity Sustainability / Vice President for Biodiversity and Climate Action.

³ “No plastics” principle is taken, word-by-word, from Trinity Business School Catering Policy (without a transitional period).



agriculture and wider transformation of food systems, in line with the College's Sustainable and Healthy Food Plan and principles of just transition, climate justice, agro-ecology, ethically-sourced food and the shortening of food supply chains. We support the College in its efforts to encourage research, teaching, experimentation, procurement, catering practices, public awareness and public policies that would achieve these aims.

8. **Plant-based Universities.** We recognise that this effort is part of a larger international movement calling for universities to lead the way in terms of shifting toward a more plant-based food system (e.g. see <https://plantbaseduniversities.org>). We encourage the College to examine its catering policies and practices in light of this. We consider the 50% increase in plant-first food by 2030 target in the College's Sustainable and Healthy Food Plan as a starting point towards a fully plant-based university by 2035⁴.
9. **Procurement and Approved Suppliers.** We support College's activities to ensure sustainable catering in its procurement policies and in selecting approved suppliers (including catering companies). In line with College's Sustainable and Healthy Food Plan, we support the principles of procuring green, organic, zero-waste, regenerative, etc. as well as supporting sustainable packaging.
10. **The List of Approved Caterers.** We are cognisant of the fact that as a School we do not have full control over the list of approved suppliers (including the list of approved caterers). But we are committed to prioritising those suppliers/caterers who demonstrate that they are willing and able to provide catering in line with the principles outlined in this sustainable catering approach document. The list of recommended caterers will be updated accordingly. The list of currently approved caterers is in Appendix 1.
11. **Implementation.** This sustainable catering approach document is effective from the date of approval by the School. The approach document is being introduced on a pilot basis and will be reviewed after 1 year (or by September 2027 the very latest) towards the implementation of a School policy. If necessary, adjustments/revisions will be made based on experience and evolving College policies. The spirit of the approach document is that those who organise events falling under the scope of this approach document – be it disciplines, research centres, research groups, students societies or individual members of staff – are entrusted with translating these School approved approaches to sustainable catering into practice to their best ability⁵. To assist with the process, a small working group (Sustainable Food Working Group) will be established in the School with representatives of staff, students and Trinity Sustainability Office. The Sustainable Food Working Group will help to develop a policy for implementation across the School in the first year and will make recommendations going forward. Specifically, the role of the Working Group will be to provide practical advice; to help

⁴ It is worth noting that a 2022 all-College survey (n=1620) taken by Healthy Trinity indicated that Trinity has a high proportion (34.57%) of vegans and vegetarians compared to the general population (10%). It also revealed a strong desire among meat eaters to reduce meat consumption, and an even stronger desire among all respondents to increase their fruit/vegetable intake (Source: Trinity Sustainability Office).

⁵ Avoiding unnecessary, unwanted or excessive administrative scrutiny.



interpret the approach document and subsequent policy and provide any clarifications; collect bottom-up feedback; share the best practice; identify implementation challenges; produce guidance note or checklist for event organisers if needed; make suggestions regarding sustainable catering procurement and/or suggest changes to the protocols itself if necessary. The Working Group will report back to School's Strategy Committee and/or School Executive Committee as appropriate. The Working Group will also act as a bridge between the School and Trinity Sustainability Office / Food Plan Working Group (and wider College), identifying any potential bottlenecks (and suggesting solutions) that may lie beyond the School, and in doing so help the College to implement its Sustainable and Healthy Food Plan.

12. Related Documents:

Trinity's Sustainability Strategy 2023-2030
Trinity's Sustainable and Healthy Food Plan 2026-2030
Trinity's Green Events Plan
TCD [Sustainable Event Guidelines](#)
Trinity's Sustainable Procurement Policy 2026

13. Document Control for Revised Policies:

13.1 Draft version 0.1: 07/04/2026
13.2 Draft version 0.2: 14/04/2026
13.3 Draft version 0.3: 29/04/2026
13.4 Version 0.4: 19/05/2026



School of Natural Sciences - Sustainable catering Approach Document

APPENDIX 1: The list of approved caterers

Last updated: April 2026

Note 1: This is a list of approved caterers (beyond TCD catering) currently used by the Trinity Business School (Source: Courtesy of TBS).

Note 2: Cornucopia restaurant in Dublin is among Trinity's approved food establishments, but does not have a delivery service, and therefore does not feature on the official list of College's approved delivered catering suppliers.

Sweet Cicely

Contact:	Siobhan Monaghan
Email:	info@sweetcicely.ie
Phone:	012573770
Website	www.sweetcicely.ie

Kevin Commins / KC Deli

Contact:	Kevin Commins
Email:	kevin@kcdeli.ie
Phone:	086 173 3556
Website	www.kcdeli.ie

Gourmet Food Parlour

Contact:	Carmel Ryan
Email:	carmel@gourmetfoodparlour.com welcome@gourmetfoodparlour.com



Phone: 01 8957565, 0872192604

Website www.gourmetfoodparlour.com

Berman & Wallace

Contact: Barbara Berman, Clive Wallace

Email: info@bermanandwallace.com

Phone: 01 2196252

Website <https://bermanandwallace.ie/>

Naomis Kitchen

Contact: Sally Herron

Email: hello@naomiskitchen.ie

Phone: 01 4442841

Website <http://www.naomiskitchen.ie/>

KC PEACHES IRELAND LTD

Contact: Pierre Olivier

Email: thekitchen@kcpeaches.com

Phone: 01 677 0333

Website <https://www.kcpeaches.com>

Menu [KC Peaches Menu](#)