

# The Gainesville Zero Waste News

## The Zero Waste Caterer Movement

Caterers seeking to operate sustainably and minimize waste can reduce their carbon footprint and expenses by implementing zero waste methods. Transitioning to a zero-waste catering operation is not only beneficial for the environment, but it can also enhance a business's reputation and appeal to new clientele.

Here are a few strategies caterers can take to reduce their waste:

### IN THE KITCHEN:

- Design menus based on seasonal, locally sourced ingredients that are less likely to spoil quickly.
- Set up a food waste collection system in prep areas for kitchen scraps, such as vegetable trimmings, fruit peelings, and coffee grounds.
- Train employees on sustainable practices, including proper waste sorting, composting procedures, and efficient food preparation techniques.
- Consider offering customizable portions to minimize uneaten food.



### ORDERING

- Regularly monitor inventory levels to avoid over-ordering and establish relationships with suppliers who can deliver smaller quantities more frequently, ensuring fresher ingredients and less spoilage.
- Switch to reusable or compostable cups, plates, napkins, and utensils.

### DONATING

- Partner with local food banks or charities to donate surplus food that is safe to eat.
- Find out what apps, such as [FoodRecovery.org](https://www.foodrecovery.org), are available to assist with making donations easier.
- Track the quantity and type of food donated and celebrate with your team on their efforts for a more sustainable and compassionate community.

As the demand for sustainable practices continues to grow, caterers prioritizing zero waste methods will stand out as leaders in the movement toward a more sustainable future.

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