



Corporate social responsibility and sustainable food procurement

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Abstract

Purpose – The research (funded by the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation) aims to support the UK Public Sector Food Procurement Initiative by working with leading contract caterers to develop principles of sustainable food procurement and key performance indicators to measure progress in putting them into practice.

Design/methodology/approach – Initial informal discussions with catering contractors confirmed the need for the research and explored ideas as to how to take it forward. Extensive secondary research then informed the development of nine draft principles of sustainable food procurement. These were further refined following review by individual companies. An expert panel was then convened for final drafting and to reach consensus.

Research limitations/implications – The research provides operating principles that can be used to inform procurement practice. However changing organisational practice, particularly in large organizations, is challenging and will take time. The researchers have produced a guide to assist implementation and monitoring of progress.

Practical implications – Public sector catering is only 7 per cent of the total catering market by value. Therefore progress in this sector has a limited impact on the overall catering food supply chain. Only five of the original nine principles were adopted, so not all aspects of the sustainability agenda may be addressed.

Originality/value – The paper has value in assisting the implementation of UK Government policy towards sustainable food. Participants in the research are dominant within public sector contract catering and have reached consensus as to which aspects of the sustainability agenda it is feasible to progress at the present time.

Keywords Corporate social responsibility, Public sector organizations, Catering industry, Food industry, United Kingdom

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Catering services within the public sector are found in higher and further education institutions, schools, Ministry of Defence establishments, the National Health Service, prisons, police, and local government offices. Catering in the public sector is provided both directly (direct control by the public sector body itself) and through the use of contract caterers[1].

For the UK contract catering sector, turnover in 2004 was £3.89 billion (British Hospitality Association, 2005) of which food represented just over 33 per cent. The big four contract caterers are all multinational and have a combined worldwide turnover of £26 billion. Within the UK market, the big four together account for 99 per cent of the market.



Food procurement by public sector catering services in the UK has been estimated to be worth £1.8 billion per year by the Department of the Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) (DEFRA, 2002). These catering services therefore represent an opportunity to target expenditure in ways that will support Government policy. According to DEFRA (2002, p. 1), introducing its public sector sustainable food procurement initiative:

The government wants buyers and their internal customers to use this buying power to help deliver the principle aims of the government's strategy for sustainable farming and food in England.

The broad benefits of sustainable food procurement have already been articulated by Morgan and Morley (2002), particularly with respect to the potential for locally oriented supply chains supporting local economies. Recent research by the New Economics Foundation (2005) has also emphasized the economic as well as environmental benefits that such locally oriented sustainable supply chains can bring.

The research context

Research previously carried out by the authors in the three counties of Berkshire Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire estimated that the overall value of public sector food procurement was £62 million per annum (see Table I), a figure that is broadly in line with the DEFRA national estimate. The estimate is based upon underpinning research conducted to support a conference, "Good food on the public plate", held in March 2004[2].

The research confirmed that catering provision in the public sector involves both public sector and contract caterers and a sophisticated supply chain. In an effort to secure best value, public sector catering has been significantly penetrated by contract caterers, e.g. in the National Health Service, just less than half of provision has been placed with contract caterers. Multinational companies such as Compass Group, Sodexho and Aramark are prominent in this geographic region of the public sector, alongside a number of independent regional caterers (see Figure 1). Within the three counties only MOD catering provision was operated directly without contract caterers, although it has a sole supply agreement with 3663, the largest catering supplies distributor, which set up a separate division to handle this contract.

Overall, the public sector catering services are therefore provided by a combination of direct service organisations and large and small contractors. To transform the way these function therefore demands all parties to pursue the sustainability agenda. This research has focused on working with contract caterers active within the public sector.

Sector	£ million annual value
Universities	22.0
Ministry of Defence	16.0
National Health Service	10.3
Schools	7.5
Further education	2.2
Prisons	2.2
Police and local authority	1.7
Total	61.9

Table I.
Public sector catering
food procurement in
Berkshire,
Buckinghamshire and
Oxfordshire

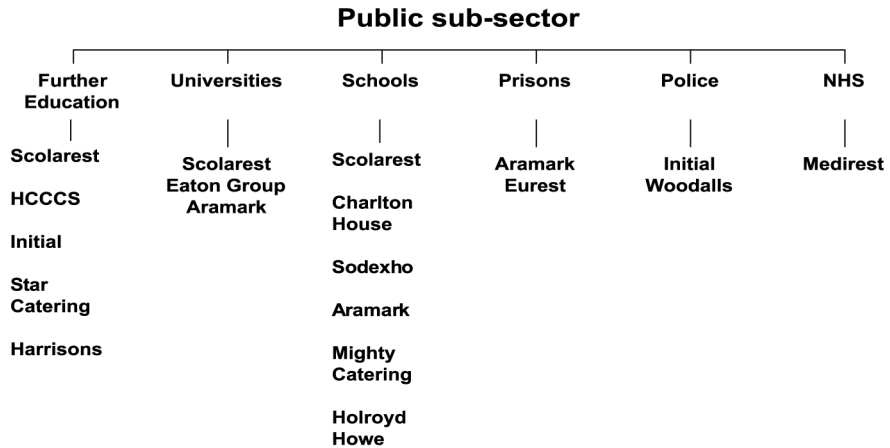


Figure 1.
Catering contractors in public sector catering within Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire

Sustainability and sustainable food

Sustainability is a simple concept to define: “to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987), but complex to put into practice.

Sunderlin (1995) and Selman (1998) identify the abstract nature of sustainability as a concept and the need to build progressively from small tangible beginnings to a fuller sustainability agenda. Since it is difficult to secure consensus amongst different stakeholders, well-researched guidance is necessary.

Lawrence (1997) agrees that there are many issues and obstacles that must be addressed if the sustainability concept is to be translated into practical implementation strategies. A process of defining sustainability in its context and identifying its limits must then be converted into needs, aspirations and principles. These should be put into operation by strategies and frameworks encompassing relevant instruments, procedures and processes. Graedel (2003, p. 48) states that few sustainability guidelines are available for service industries wishing to green their operations and that:

In a world where “what gets measured gets managed,” unless suitable indicators and approaches for measuring environmental responsibility are developed, the environmental implications of a possible service sector transformation cannot be assessed.

Sustainability with regards to food has been defined by organisations such as DEFRA, the UK Sustainable Development Commission and Sustain. It is generally considered to cover the aspects in the list below:

- promoting good health through a balanced diet and safe food;
- accessible, socially inclusive, affordable, and reflecting local communities, culture, and seasonality;
- supporting the local economy by buying food from as close by as possible;
- sustainable farming, involving high environmental standards and reduced energy consumption;
- promoting animal welfare and valuing nature and biodiversity; and

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- fair prices, fair trade and ethical employment in UK and overseas (Sustainable Development Commission, 2003a; Sustain, 2002; DEFRA, 2004).

DEFRA's interpretation of sustainable food has led to the adoption of five priority objectives for the Public Sector Food Procurement Initiative (PSFPI). These are: to raise production and process standards; increase tenders from small and local producers; increase consumption of healthy and nutritious food; reduce adverse environmental impacts of production and supply; and increase capacity of small and local suppliers to meet demand (DEFRA, 2002). These objectives are broadly in line with the sustainability criteria, but do not include fair trade and social dimensions. They also do not explicitly identify increasing public catering services' procurement of organic food, though it may be considered included by implication. Objectives are aspirational, rather than in the form of specific performance targets.

There is therefore considerable overall consistency in defining what constitutes sustainable food. However, some of these criteria may conflict in practice. For example, is local conventionally produced food preferable to food produced following the stricter environmental controls involved in organic production, but in another country, requiring thousands of air miles to import it? Is fair trade food desirable, despite the air miles involved? Can varied food preferences, religious food requirements and the requirements of a healthy diet all be satisfied in large-scale public sector catering systems? Does this mean processing, preserving and regenerating food in ways that might be considered out of kilter with sustainable practice? Does opening the door to small producers mean losing the economies of scale that make food accessible at a lower cost and also some of the environmental benefits of efficient multiple drop distribution[3]?

As part of the work of the PSFPI, DEFRA (2005) have devised draft sustainability clauses to place in contracts and tender documents, alongside some suggested performance indicators, all contained within a toolkit[4] for procurement officers in the public sector.

Research in Berks, Bucks and Oxon showed that, despite the above activities, there was only limited evidence of sustainable practice within individual catering operations. Interviews with contract caterers confirmed confusion about different dimensions of the sustainable food agenda and a view that it needed to be moved onto a more specific footing.

However, contract caterers considered that progressing the sustainable food agenda was an important signal of their corporate responsibility and they would welcome developments that would help its progress. Significant shifts have already been made in some areas. For example, across the food service sector as a whole, 99 per cent of eggs, 70 per cent of dairy products and 40 per cent of meat is sourced in the UK, thus potentially reducing food miles[5].

Sustainability research with contract caterers

Considering this research context, the Centre for Environmental Studies in the Hospitality Industry (CESHI) developed a proposal to work with the caterers themselves and obtained funding support from the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation to:

Stimulate demand within the catering sector for food produced using sustainable methods, by illustrating market opportunities, identifying barriers, highlighting best practice and producing training materials.

A key aspect of the research was to work with contract caterers to establish specific operating principles and to determine how progress against these principles could be reported and measured. There was agreement amongst the contract caterers that the development of principles for sustainable food procurement, which could form the basis for more sustainable practice and reporting within the framework of Corporate Social Responsibility, could be a fruitful approach.

Research methodology

Having secured the agreement of contract caterers to participate in the project and to the general approach to be adopted, secondary research was carried out to aid the development of draft principles of sustainable procurement. The contextual background and key priorities for action were identified from a broad trawl of literature and web sources encompassing academic, government, NGO and other organisations. The barriers to sustainable food procurement were then discussed at separate meetings with contract catering businesses, selected to represent the market leaders, and one regional operator which had already begun to tackle the issue of sustainable food. This methodology was considered to be the best way of both researching important features and the practicability of their implementation. Following these informal discussions, nine draft principles were prepared.

An “expert panel” was then formed and a panel meeting was attended by senior managers from the four top contract catering businesses, a regional public sector contract caterer and representatives from DEFRA, the British Hospitality Association (BHA) and Hotel and Catering International Management Association (HCIMA). Following a presentation on current definitions of “sustainable food”, operational implications and consumer recognition, there was general discussion about the set of nine draft principles for sustainable food procurement, the extent to which it was feasible to implement them and how performance against them could be measured (this included discussion of unsustainable practice).

Research results

The outcome of prolonged discussion was that the contract catering representatives agreed to take five principles back to their companies for endorsement as a workable basis to underpin sustainable procurement practice. CESHI were tasked to work up key performance indicators that would enable companies to report progress against these five principles and develop a guide to reporting on sustainable procurement performance – in the context of a CSR report, annual report, or environmental report:

- (1) Selecting food products from the country in which they are to be offered, when these products are available in sufficient volume, appropriate quality and at competitive price, in preference to using imports.
- (2) Providing appropriate menu information and food offerings to consumers so that they can make choices based on food provenance and sustainability.
- (3) Taking relevant steps to avoid the purchase of foods in the knowledge that they have been produced (anywhere in the world) using processes known to excessively damage human health and/or the environment.
- (4) Working with other contract catering businesses and supply intermediaries to find ways of adapting existing centralized purchasing systems to meet the

needs of smaller local and/or regional suppliers (especially by working with relevant organizations to ensure HACCP procedures are developed in a form more appropriate for small businesses while not compromising on health or safety).

- (5) Ensuring that food products are processed using facilities that are resource efficient (i.e. have a commitment to reducing energy consumption, minimizing waste and reducing water consumption).

Whilst the expert panel acknowledged the need to pursue these principles, attention was drawn to operational constraints that affected the ability to fully implement them in the short-term. The important role of supply intermediaries was emphasised and therefore contractors would need to amend purchasing specifications rather than always implement actions themselves. The extent of changes to practice would also need to take on board the range of different food preparation and production processes (e.g. regeneration of frozen meals), and not undermine the need for due diligence and strict adherence to health and safety regimes. It was also pointed out that the largest four contract caterers that account for over 90 per cent of the contract catering market all have extensive international supply chains and international operations. Supply chain efficiency is important to providing good value for clients and individual unit managers are often required to operate catering services using only approved “nominated” suppliers.

The four other principles, to which the companies were not yet prepared to sign up (although one company has since become a signatory to the ten principles of the UN Global Compact, which covers Principle 9) were:

- Principal 6: ensuring that transportation systems facilitate fuel/energy efficient sourcing and distribution of food from the point of production/processing to the point of consumption.
- Principal 7: ensuring that animal food products are sourced from livestock production systems that comply with national regulatory standards and the international standards being developed by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) as they emerge
- Principal 8: ensuring that foods offered to consumers are prepared with the minimum amount of additives, including salt and sugar, and working towards providing more information for the consumer on additive content (as currently done for nuts).
- Principal 9: working towards adoption of a corporate code of practice to address the issues embraced by the International Labour Organisation’s Declaration on the Fundamental Principles of Human Rights at Work[6], or an alternative, such as the Ethical Trade Initiative Base Code (of specific relevance to imported foods).

Expert panel members considered that whilst these principles had general applicability, the relative importance of each and the most appropriate methods for their implementation would vary within each of the businesses represented.

There was general agreement that principal 6 was outside the control of the businesses represented at this point in time. Achievement of principles 7 and 9 would

be best dealt with by emerging regulation (principle 7) and the development of preferred purchasing policies that are still in their infancy. The most contentious item was principle 8. Most of the contract caterers were addressing issues relating to healthy food, but it is an area that is seen as separate and distinct from that of sustainable food.

The companies considered that there is much collective wisdom about actions that are not considered to be sustainable, but little evidence about the trade offs- that have to be made, e.g. is it more sustainable to buy beet sugar grown and processed in the UK or to source cane sugar from developing countries? Research on purchasing decisions involving trade-offs of different aspects of sustainability is needed to inform decision-making.

Development of user guide to non-financial reporting

Based upon the five agreed principles for sustainable procurement, a guide to reporting on sustainable procurement performance was developed for food service companies, aimed primarily at contract caterers. The guide reviews and summarizes the readily available guidance for businesses on sustainability and performance indicators, in the context that, with the exception of the DEFRA toolkit (DEFRA, 2005), current guidance has not specifically focused upon sustainable procurement and food supply chains. Examples of indicators from other sectors are presented, some of the indicators from appendix D of the DEFRA toolkit are included and some new ones, developed as a result of the research, are presented for consideration.

In the published guide, the set of indicators (see Table II) is accompanied by explanatory notes and information on provenance (abbreviated for the purposes of this paper). Contract caterers are invited to consider using a selection of the indicators to benchmark their performance on food procurement.

Conclusions

Initial research amongst contractors operating within public sector institutions, showed that there was widespread commitment to corporate responsibility and that sustainable practice was identified as a key component of this. However within public sector catering services operated by contract caterers in Berks, Bucks and Oxon, there was only limited evidence of sustainable practice impacting upon operations at unit level.

Leading contract caterers expressed a desire to move towards more tangible sustainable practice guidelines and performance indicators that would enable progress to be measured and reported. This confirms previous views by Lawrence (1997) and Graedel (2003) that to progress, aspirations need to be put into operation using strategies and frameworks. These should encompass relevant instruments, procedures, and processes and measurement through performance indicators is important.

The principles of sustainable procurement practice in contract catering and associated performance indicators, developed after extensive secondary research and discussion with contractors, potentially represent a move towards more tangible expression of aspirations. However, following an expert panel discussion, only five of the nine principles were adopted by contractors. The remaining four were considered not to be feasible at the present time.

Suggested indicators (in order of rigour)

Definitions

Principle 1: selecting food products from the county in which they are to be offered, when these products are available in sufficient volume, appropriate quality and at competitive price, in preference to using imports

1. Percentage of food supplied (by resale value) from local/UK sources

There is a significant level of debate about a realistic definition of “local”¹⁴ and about the desire or ability of food service companies to change their centralized purchasing and distribution systems to accommodate a large number of local suppliers. Such an action would reverse the trends of recent years, where the number of suppliers has gradually been rationalized, largely for logistical and financial reasons

For practical purposes, it is likely that large food service companies will be able to report on national food purchases in the short to medium term. Given the volume of products purchased by food service companies, even a shift to national as opposed to international supply chains will have a significant impact on transport emissions and the farming economy

Clearly when dealing with raw and processed food products, it is important to define precisely what comprises UK produce. We would suggest that the raw materials in any food purchased in processed form must have originated from the UK (e.g. chips made from British potatoes would qualify as UK sourced, but chips manufactured in Britain from Dutch potatoes would not). For some products (for example, ready made lasagne) it will be difficult to assess the UK component and so we would suggest that businesses target specific fresh food commodity groups (e.g. pork, fresh fruit) for reporting

2. Percentage of food by each commodity group purchased that is UK sourced

Indicators 1 and 2 are alternatives, as indicator 2 may be easier to implement when first beginning the process of reporting

3. Percentage of catering outlets offering a seasonal menu choice

Seasonal menu choices go hand in hand with a buy British policy and – theoretically at least – purchasing foodstuffs that are plentiful should make good economic sense

4. Percentage of local purchasing in emerging countries

Although only relevant in an international context, this indicator is shown here for interest, as published by Sodexo in their 2003 booklet *Ethical Principles – Sustainable Development Contract*

(continued)

Table II.
Suggested key performance indicators for reporting on sustainable food procurement

Suggested indicators (in order of rigour)	Definitions
<p><i>Principle 2: take relevant steps to avoid the purchase of foods in the knowledge that they have been produced (anywhere in the world) using processes known to excessively damage human health and/or the environment</i></p> <p>5. Percentage of food supplied (by resale value) that meets criteria for environmental assured standards, e.g. Red Tractor, LEAF, organic</p>	<p>As for principle 1 above, with the possible exception of organic food purchases that make up only a tiny percentage of food sales, there can be significant complexities when seeking to report on food purchases across the business (including single commodities and pre-prepared meals). When reporting for the first time, some businesses may find it easier to report on specific commodities as opposed to all commodity groups. Clearly simple commodities (meat, raw vegetables) will be easier to report on than complex pre-cooked meals</p>
6. Percentage of fish supplied (by resale value) which is certified by the Marine Stewardship Council (or equivalent)	
7. Number of sources of seafood used that feature on the Marine Conservation Society's Black list of locations (www.fishonline.org/advice/avoid/?item=1)	This is used by Marks & Spencer in its 2003-2004 CSR report. See www.fishonline.org/information/ for more information
8. Purchases of approved products as a percentage of total products	Indicators 8, 9 and 10 – which are alternatives – are wide-ranging in that they have been conceived by their authors (see below) in the spirit of ethical trading in the sense of ensuring that worker exploitation is not a feature of the supply chain. They are however equally applicable to this principle of only sourcing foods which have been produced to certain environmental standards. Indicator 8 has been published by Sodexo in the 2003 Publication <i>Ethical Principles – Sustainable Development Contract</i> , in support of company policy to forge balanced and long-term business relationships with suppliers and to choosing partners not only for their ability to provide high quality products in the quantity needed but also for their commitment to ethical values
9. Percentage of purchases sourced from approved suppliers	Indicator 9 – published as 8 above – supports the development of long-term business relationships whereby suppliers are asked to pledge to support sustainable development, in particular by embracing the principles defined by the International Labour Organisation

(continued)

Suggested indicators (in order of rigour)	Definitions
10. Percentage of suppliers which follow a recognized sustainable trading code of practice	<p>Indicator 10 is a key performance indicator suggested by the Food and Drink Federation in its Sustainable Development Report 2002. It is defined as an “additional indicator, which companies may choose to take up if it is relevant to the business”. A “recognized sustainable trading code of practice” is likely to be one such as the Ethical Trading Initiative Base Code or the Global Compact, as well as the aforementioned assurance schemes</p>
11. Number of suppliers engaged in environmental initiatives	<p>For Indicator 11, three years’ data was used by J. Sainsbury plc in their Environment Report 2002, not published since then. It is only suitable for direct suppliers and in this case, mainly for “own brand” suppliers. Initiatives included in the data are organics, ICM⁹/EUREPGAP, Farm Biodiversity Action Plans and Marine Stewardship Council</p>
12. Published policies and procedures which facilitate access to approved lists for small suppliers	<p><i>Principle 3: working with other contract catering businesses and supply intermediaries to find ways of adapting existing centralized purchasing systems to meet the needs of smaller local and/or regional suppliers (especially by working with relevant organisations to ensure HACCP procedures are developed in a form more appropriate for small businesses while not compromising on health or safety)</i></p> <p>Such policies/procedures would include one or more of the following: information on how to gain access to the supplier list and clear information on how new suppliers are approved payment terms which are commercially viable for small suppliers, e.g. payment made within 30 days rather than 90 days Evidence that HACCP audits are carried out pragmatically so that small suppliers are given a chance to meet the requirements, without any compromise on food safety issues and traceability. Partnership work with small suppliers to develop their businesses so that they can become approved suppliers (for example the partnership between Compass Purchasing – now Sevita – and Snitterfield Fruit Farm at http://www.fruitfarm.co.uk/index.htm)</p>
13. Average time to pay bills to suppliers	<p>Both indicators 13 and 14 – which are alternatives – reflect the fact that small suppliers are much more vulnerable to cash flow pressures and that prompt payment is a lifeline for them, as well as good business practice. Indicator 13 is suggested as a basic marketplace indicator by Business in the Community in its publication “Indicators that count – social and environmental indicators – a model for reporting impact”</p>

(continued)

Suggested indicators (in order of rigour)	Definitions
14. Percentage of invoices paid to agreed terms	Indicator 14 is used by the Co-op in its 2003 CSR report, for which the auditors concluded that the indicators reflect the Global Reporting Initiative's 2002 Sustainable Reporting Guidelines and performance areas in the Business in the Community Corporate Responsibility Index
<i>Principle 4: providing appropriate menu information and food offerings to consumers so that they can make choices based on food provenance and sustainability</i>	Sustainable choices could include organic or Fair Trade products, product lines where the origin is known and communicated (e.g. Oxfordshire pork, Isle of Wight tomatoes), "local" or seasonal menu promotions (see indicator 3). In some cases, sustainable choices may be offered via brands
15. Percentage of sites (units) offering sustainable choices, e.g. organic or Fair Trade	Most contract caterers have yet to develop processes for providing menu information to consumers. This information can take two forms: information provided on specific products which can be communicated to clients (for example, dolphin friendly tuna from the Mediterranean, MSC certified fish, organic beef from Devon); generic information about the company's aspirations (e.g. wherever possible we use British meat) or adherence to the British Meat Best Practice Guidelines on labelling the origin of meat on menus
16. Percentage of units providing information about food provenance to consumers	Most contract caterers have yet to develop processes for providing menu information to consumers. This information can take two forms: information provided on specific products which can be communicated to clients (for example, dolphin friendly tuna from the Mediterranean, MSC certified fish, organic beef from Devon); generic information about the company's aspirations (e.g. wherever possible we use British meat) or adherence to the British Meat Best Practice Guidelines on labelling the origin of meat on menus
17. Number of product lines carrying information about sustainability/food provenance (including Fair Trade)	
18. Sales of product lines carrying information about sustainability/food provenance (including Fair Trade) as a percentage of all sales	

(continued)

Suggested indicators (in order of rigour)

Definitions

Principle 5: ensuring that food products are processed in units that are resource efficient (i.e. have a commitment to and procedures for reducing energy consumption, minimizing waste and reducing water consumption)

The suggested baseline position for application of this principle is membership of Hospitable Climates, a government sponsored scheme. Advice for contract catering businesses is available in the form of user-friendly fact files and other membership benefits include the opportunity to benchmark performance against other members in the peer group

19. Number of sites/units that are enrolled into Hospitable Climates membership (on sites where energy consumption can be measured directly)

Many contract catering businesses operate almost exclusively on premises owned by other companies and do not bear direct responsibility for energy or water bills. Unless catering units are separately metered, savings from efficient energy management cannot be identified. Hospitable Climates is a partnership programme between the Government and industry (through HCIMA) which aims to help all units in contract catering businesses reduce energy consumption by targeting wastage. Evidence to date would illustrate that the programme delivers savings of circa 10% on energy consumption

Indicators 20 and 21 can only be measured for units which are separately metered or where a check meter is installed

- 20. kWh electricity per dish served
- 21. Water consumed per dish served
- 22. Grams of residual waste per dish served (after removal of putrescibles for composting and recycling of materials such as paper, bottles, cans and plastics)
- 23. Percentage of units which operate in accordance with corporate environmental policies on energy, waste and water
- 24. Number/per cent of units which are recycling glass, cooking oil and steel cans as a minimum
- 25. Number/per cent of units registered with an environmental management system, e.g. ISO14001

Data collection for indicators 23 and 24 would be by survey, which should be carried out annually

Notes: ^aWhich can mean anything from “produced within a 30 mile radius” to produced in the UK. DEFRA defines “local food sourcing” as food produced and sold within a limited geographical radius but which does not necessarily have any distinctive quality (thereby differentiating it from “regional food” which has a distinctive quality because of the area in or the method by which it is produced); ^bintegrated crop management

Table II.

It may also be argued that the principles do not, in any case, represent sufficient progress. For example, principle four commits contract caterers to develop procurement and due diligence procedures that are more appropriate to small and local producers. However, principle one recognizes that in an age of global food procurement, national supply may in itself represent a sustainability success and that even this must be tempered with requirements concerning price and quality. There is no principle explicitly representing a general commitment towards procurement of organic or food from other certification schemes. However, the indicators for principle 2 do signal this.

Whilst the principles may be criticised for not going far enough, they do represent a move along the sustainability continuum and a willingness by contract caterers to adopt the food sustainability agenda in so far as operational and supply constraints permit. The creation of performance indicators also represents a further tangible development that will enable progress to be measured.

Notes

1. Contract catering has been defined as the part of the foodservice industry that is handed over to a third party organisation to provide (MINTeL, 2002, p. 2). "The main characteristic of contract catering is that it generally constitutes food and beverage provision for companies and organizations for whom catering is not their primary activity. Contract caterers provide the skills, equipment and personnel, and sometimes investment in premises, to operate the catering function, allowing the company or organization to concentrate on its core activity".
2. The conference was funded by Food from Britain, organized by Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes and Oxfordshire Food Groups and held at Oxford Brookes University. It attracted over 90 delegates, including producers and suppliers as well as caterers.
3. Large food distributors such as Brakes and 3,663 operate out of central distribution hubs and carry multi-product lines that are required by caterers and that can be dropped off in one delivery from fuel efficient vehicles following well planned distribution routes that minimize mileage.
4. Catering Services and Food Procurement Toolkit.
5. Presentation by Paul Kelly, Corporate Affairs Director, Compass to "Westminster diet and health forum seminar on corporate social responsibility and the food industry", 9 March 2005.
6. These are: freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining; the elimination of forced and compulsory labour; the abolition of child labour; and the elimination of discrimination in the workplace.

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