



BEST PRACTICES FOR SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION  
CRAFT AND CATERING



# REDUCE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT BY CHOOSING SUSTAINABLE FOOD PRACTICES ON SET. HERE'S HOW.

---

For Craft and Catering, there are several opportunities to reduce waste and GHG emissions, which can have benefits like reducing costs and supporting the local community. Key impacts areas include food waste, take-out containers, and procurement.

1

## FOOD WASTE

Food waste contributes to greenhouse gas emissions and is an excess cost to production companies. Some general best practices for reducing food waste include reducing the use of buffet-style food services and serving portioned dishes, storing food appropriately, managing food inventory, and utilizing unused food when possible. Communicating the importance of reducing food waste through signage or campaigns has been proven to lead to reductions in food waste and help to promote environmentally friendly menu choices.

Any leftover unused and packaged food can be donated to local charities such as Second Harvest, Good Shepherd Ministries, Food Sharing Ottawa, and Feed It Forward. For food waste that isn't appropriate for donation, set up clearly labeled bins in key areas where used plates, cutlery are collected so that organics are going in the right place. The use of images or graphics on signage helps crew know what goes where. Companies can take it to the next level by using technology, like Intuitive AI's Oscar waste management platform; an interactive solution using artificial intelligence to scan the item and tell you in what bin it should be placed.



2

## TAKE-OUT CONTAINERS

Providing meals in reusable containers is the best option for reducing packaging waste, and there are local vendors such as Suppli that can facilitate that shift away from disposables. They partnered with the corporate catering application Hungerhub and several restaurants to offer waste-free catering to film and television productions in the east and west ends of Toronto. Learn more about this partnership through our case study.

Alternatively, if disposables must be used, opt for products made from 100% post-consumer recycled material, and say no to single use plastics. Avoid making disposable dishes and cutlery self-serve, and instead, provide them upon request. For products like condiments, sugar, milk, and cream, when possible use bulk serving containers instead of individual sachets or cups.

3

## MENU CHOICES

GHG emissions can be reduced by offering more vegetarian and/or vegan, seasonal, and local options (within 25 km) on the menu. When it comes to beverages, encourage reusable water bottles and install water dispensers in high traffic areas. Coffee machines that require pods should be avoided, but if used, opt for refillable pods or provide recycling containers specific to the coffee machine. For example, Nespresso provides recycling bags that can be ordered for free directly from their website. Keurig pods can be recycled in boxes ordered through third party vendors like Staples and Grand & Toy at a price.

Visit the municipal website for your filming jurisdiction to find out what's accepted in composting and recycling bins.



# TIPS AND BEST PRACTICES

## MANAGING WASTE

- Ensure that compostable waste is collected at the craft truck and in the food service line;
- Start an organics program at the studio or production office where organic food waste may be collected and picked up by municipal waste management;
- Negotiate with your waste hauler to offer organic waste disposal as part of their contract;
- Make sure waste signage uses clear images indicating what goes into which bins, and to take it a step further, color code the bins by waste stream;
- Visit the Sustainable Production Alliance and the Producers Guild of America's Green Production Guide for Waste and Recycling Flyers, Signage, and Fact Sheets;
- Visit Ontario Green Screen's website for waste diversion vendors.



Table 1: Differences between compostable and biodegradable

<b>COMPOSTABLE</b>	<b>BIODEGRADABLE</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organic material that can turn into nutrient rich soil or fertilizer through decomposition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An item that can disintegrate through biological processes, fungi, or bacteria</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most plant and animal-based products are compostable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many things are biodegradable when given enough time, so be weary of this label</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some items labeled compostable can only be composted in industrial facilities (e.g., bioplastics), but be sure to look for the BPI-certified label before throwing it into your municipal compost bin</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compostables are biodegradable, but not always the other way around</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Items labeled biodegradable that are not plant or animal-based should go into the trash. Food scraps are technically biodegradable but should be put into compost.</li> </ul>

# TIPS AND BEST PRACTICES

## CHOOSING FOOD PRODUCTS:

- Initiate a “Meatless Monday” campaign to reduce the amount of meat consumed by crew members;
- Choose free-range eggs;
- Avoid endangered fish species and look for labels like Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) or ASC certified;
- Provide fair trade coffee, tea, sugar, bananas, and chocolate with the Fair Trade label;
- Choose products that are local, organic, and seasonal, with labels like USDA Organic or Canada Organic.

## TAKE-OUT CONTAINERS:

- Opt for products made from post-consumer recycled material;
- Avoid products made from multiple types of material, for example, paper bags or cups with a plastic lining;
- Avoid all plastics; if used, check if the plastic number (1 to 7) is accepted by your municipality;
- Use compostables that are BPI certified or abide by the CAN/BNQ compostability standard, and opt for fiber-based products;
- Anything labeled as biodegradable or oxo-biodegradable should be discarded in the trash unless accompanied by a certified compostable label;
- Be sure that recyclables are clean before putting them into the bin, otherwise they can contaminate the entire bin and have to be thrown into the landfill.

---

The numbers found on plastics are resin identification numbers that help recycling facilities identify what type of plastic a product is and how/if it can be processed. In some municipalities, certain plastic resin codes are not recyclable. Plastics 1 & 2 are the most recycled, while the rest depend on facilities and should be verified against your municipality's website.



---

Are you interested in finding out more about production waste habits and proposed recommendations to reduce the amount of waste being generated by film production? Follow this link to read the Ontario Green Screens 2023 research report titled Waste Management in Ontario's Film and TV Industry.

Have questions or would like more resources? Visit [OntarioGreenScreen.ca](https://OntarioGreenScreen.ca) or email [OGSInfo@OntarioCreates.ca](mailto:OGSInfo@OntarioCreates.ca).

Powered by:



#### REFERENCES

- [1] "Sound Stage Sustainability Practices." Green Production Guide, [https://www.greenproductionguide.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/SPA\\_GPG\\_SoundStage\\_Infographic.pdf](https://www.greenproductionguide.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/SPA_GPG_SoundStage_Infographic.pdf)
- [2] "A Guide to Sustainable Audiovisual Productions in Quebec." Rolling Green [https://ontournevert.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/OTV\\_Guide\\_EN\\_17\\_08.pdf](https://ontournevert.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/OTV_Guide_EN_17_08.pdf)
- [3] Hunt, Kristin. "What Do the Numbers on Recyclable Plastics Mean?" Green Matters, 2018, [www.greenmatters.com/renewables/2018/09/13/ZG59GA/plastic-recycling-numbers-resin-codes](http://www.greenmatters.com/renewables/2018/09/13/ZG59GA/plastic-recycling-numbers-resin-codes).
- [4] "Biodegradable vs. Compostable: What's the Difference?" Green Matters, [www.greenmatters.com/p/biodegradable-compostable-difference](http://www.greenmatters.com/p/biodegradable-compostable-difference).

