

THE

GREEN

EVENT

GUIDE



AUBURN  
SUSTAINABILITY

# THE SUSTAINABILITY *compass*

INDIVIDUAL HEALTH,  
FULFILLMENT,  
HAPPINESS, AND  
WELLBEING

RESTORE, PROTECT,  
AND LIVE IN ACCORD  
WITH THE LAWS OF  
NATURE

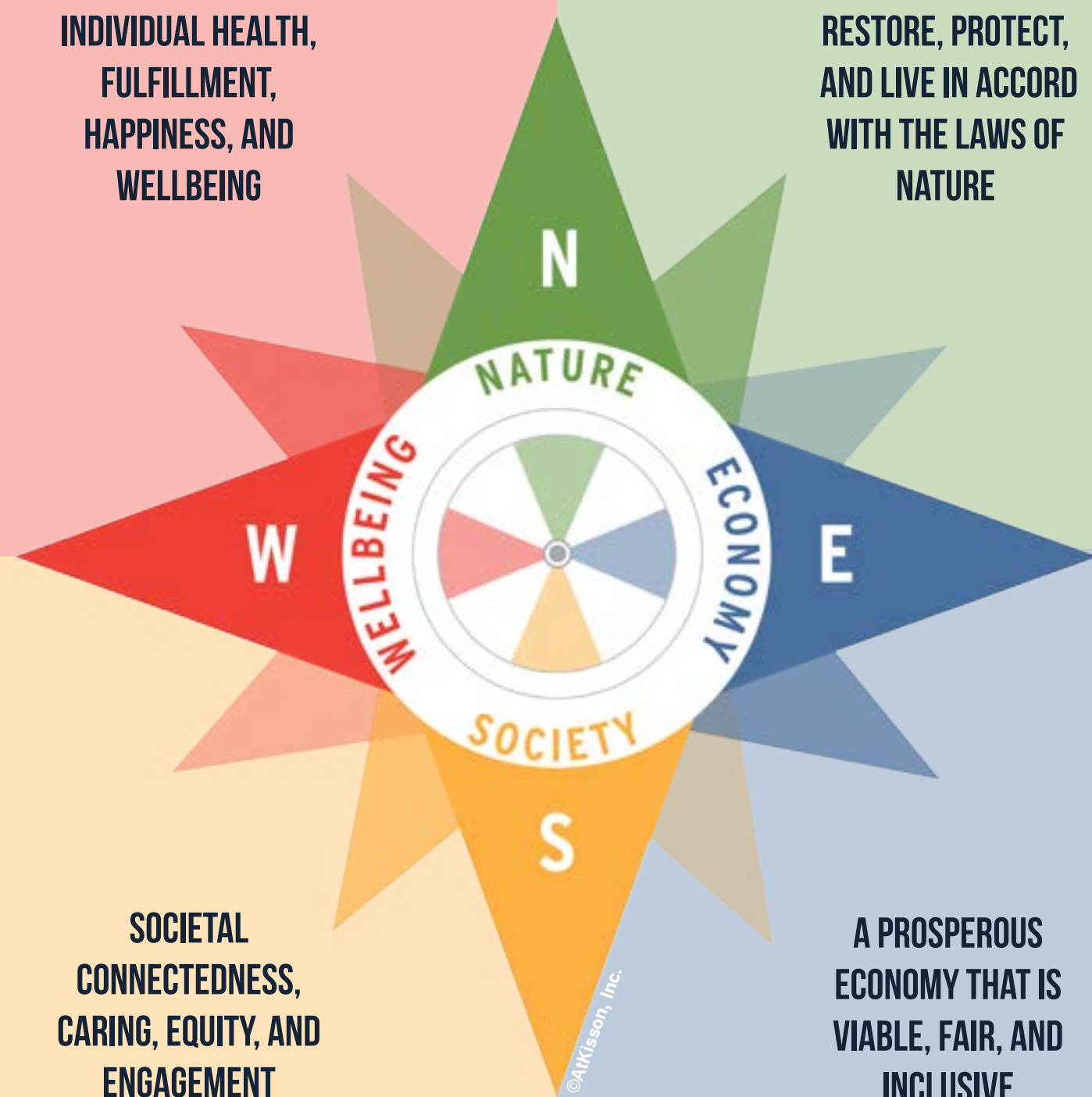
Whether hosting a meeting with your  
co-workers or putting together a conference  
international attendees,

*you can make the world a better place  
by doing things a little differently.*

Making small changes to “business-as-usual”  
can allow the campus community to engage with  
Auburn University’s

*commitment to sustainability*

and result in the positive impacts surrounding the  
Sustainability Compass.





# KEY PRINCIPLES

Green events strive to minimize the negative & maximize the positive impacts while promoting responsible stewardship around the Sustainability Compass. The principles shared here can apply in any setting. The more you can do, the better!

Recruit & include diverse audiences.

- Plan to accomodate those with [accessibility needs](#).
- Minimize scheduling conflicts to include diverse audiences.
- Advertise through varied channels.

Reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

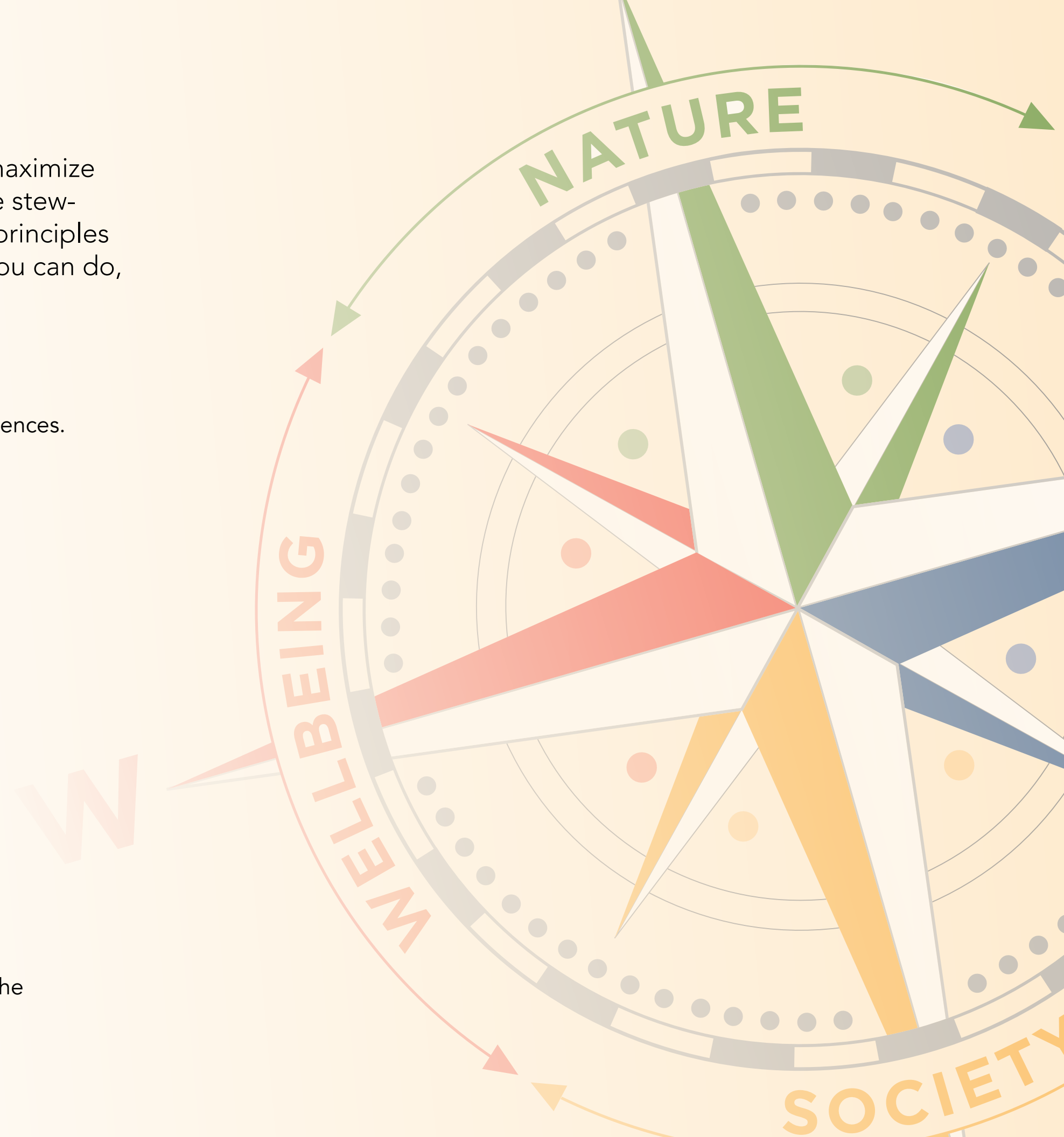
- Connect to transportation options.
- Reduce energy use.
- Source locally.

Aim for a zero-landfill event.

- Minimize printing.
- Use digital communication.
- Provide & encourage recycling & composting.
- Have a plan for food leftovers.
- Reuse supplies.
- Reduce single-use items.

Don't forget to share successes to educate others!

If you have questions or need assistance, please contact the [Office of Sustainability](#).





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## GLOSSARY



# TIME

- Account for attendees' schedules to maximize attendance.
- Consider the university schedule & other events.
- Avoid having starting/ending times during rush hour.
- Consider holidays of various cultures.

# LOCATION

**INSTANT IMPACT:** Enable use of [sustainable transportation](#) options.

- Minimize travel to venue.
- Ensure access is ADA compliant.
- Use a [LEED](#) certified building.
- Check for [LED](#) or natural lighting.
- Offer access to outdoor space.
- Provide projector or dry erase board.
- Ensure all staff are aware of the location of accessible seating, restrooms, parking, & elevators.
- Develop an evacuation plan with Campus Safety & Security.

## MEETINGS

Consider holding conference calls or video chats.

## CONFERENCES

Choose a venue that:

- Trains employees on [sustainable practices](#).
- Follows energy efficiency & water conservation practices.
- Minimizes landfill waste through recycling, compost, etc.
- Has outlets available for chargers.
- Offers video or teleconferencing for remote participants.
- Provides tablecloths only upon request.

Choose a hotel that:

- Offers a linen/ towel reuse option.
- Provides paperless check-in & check-out.
- Connects to transit, bike share, or is within two miles of venue.
- Places recycling bins in rooms.
- Uses Eco-friendly [cleaning & laundry products](#).
- Follows [fair labor policies](#).
- Received certification by a green lodging program.

*If venue or hotel doesn't address sustainability, let them know your preferences so they can improve in the future.*

# COMMUNICATION

## WHAT

Communicate sustainability goals & practices.  
Promote sustainability features of the venue.

Encourage attendees to:

- Use refillable water bottles & mugs.
- Use [sustainable transportation](#).
- Follow event sustainability practices.
- Share accessibility accommodations needed in advance.

Ask tablers & exhibitors to:

- Minimize giveaways & handouts.
- Give items that promote sustainable behaviors (e.g. - reusable water bottles or utensils).
- Advertise on useful items (e.g. - koozies, phone cases, T-shirts).
- Bring reusable or recyclable items.
- Recycle on-site & carry away items that can only be recycled off-site.

For accessibility

- Provide information on accessible parking, entrances, restrooms, & path of travel
- For sign language speakers, include directions to the best view

## HOW

Advertise event digitally.  
Promote with in-person invites, class visits, & tabling.  
Collect RSVPs to ensure an accurate head count.

Ensure accessibility of information to all users.

- Contact the Office of Accessibility at 844-2096 if braille or other accessible materials are needed.
- All videos should be captioned & have them turned on.
- If providing sign language interpreting & captioning, request two interpreters, & include directions for participants to the best view.

If printing is necessary:

- Print double-sided.
- Reduce margins & font size.
- Use recycled-content paper.
- Use standard paper sizes, not custom.
- Have professional printers use soy-based inks.

For signs & banners:

- Design for reuse.
- Use non-specific dates (e.g. - Welcome Week vs. Aug 21st).
- Print on recyclable materials.

**INSTANT IMPACT:** Provide programs, agendas, presentations, & resources online.

## MEETINGS

Use shared electronic documents for group editing.

## CONFERENCES

Recruit key audiences digitally.  
Hold registration online.  
Encourage attendees to bring name tag lanyards.



# MATERIALS

## PURCHASING

***INSTANT IMPACT:*** Make accurate headcount to avoid excess materials.

Plan for a zero-landfill event.

Borrow, reuse, or rent decor & equipment.

Buy items made from recycled content.

Look for minimal & recyclable packaging.

Seek out certified items (e.g. - foods, facilities, cleaning products).

Use rechargeable batteries.

## GIVEAWAYS

Minimize or eliminate one-use giveaways.

Choose practical, reusable, & healthy options.

Promote sustainable behaviors.

Use event decor as giveaways (e.g. - air-cleansing plants).



# FOOD SERVICE

## CONSIDER OFFERING

***INSTANT IMPACT:*** Locally-grown.

Allergen-free (e.g. - gluten, nuts, shellfish).

Vegetarian or vegan.

Healthy options (e.g. - fresh, unprocessed).

Certified foods (e.g. - fair trade, organic, Rainforest Alliance).

## SHOPPING

Calculate an accurate headcount.

Create a list.

Bring reusable bags.

Look for minimal & recyclable packaging.

## SERVICE

***INSTANT IMPACT:*** *Serve water in pitchers; avoid bottled water.*

Use Tiger Catering or AU Hotel & Conference Center, if needed.

Label food clearly.

Choose reusable plates, napkins, silverware, glasses, & tablecloths.

Serve buffet-style in reusable or recyclable serviceware.

Avoid serving individually-packaged meals & beverages.

Use bulk dispensers for food & beverage condiments.

Designate someone to assist with carrying meals & ensure straws are available upon request.

If disposables are used:

- Avoid Styrofoam, bottled water, straws, & coffee stirrers.
- Choose recyclable plates & utensils.
- Save extra items for future use.

Ask caterer to not idle vehicles.

## LEFTOVERS

Bring containers for leftovers or request from caterer.

Contact The Campus Kitchens Project to get unserved food.







# WASTE

## COLLECTION STATIONS

Make bins available before, during, & after event.

Set up bins for landfill, compost, and recycling.

Locate stations conveniently with all bin types together.

Label with clear & simple signage.

Train volunteers to monitor stations, which includes:

- Instructing participants on properly sorting items.
- Pulling recycling out of trash.
- Taking trash out of the recycling bins.
- Following safety recommendations, such as wearing gloves.

## ON CAMPUS

Submit work order for recycling bins through Facilities Management.

Consult the [Waste Reduction & Recycling Department](#).

Recycle.

- Plastic drink containers
- Aluminum & steel cans
- Cardboard
- Mixed paper

## OFF CAMPUS

Recycle all of the above at the [City of Auburn Recycling Center](#) plus:

- Glass
- Batteries
- Cooking grease/oil
- Take plastic shopping bags to grocery stores.

## NOT RECYCLABLE

Plastics without recycling symbol

(e.g. - silverware, straws, stirrers, & wrap)

Styrofoam

Chip bags & candy wrappers

Dirty aluminum foil, trays, and pizza boxes

Food scraps & leftovers



# GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

## FOOD

Purchase local to reduce food miles.  
Serve vegetarian proteins.

## WASTE

Require an RSVP in order to reduce food waste.  
Set a goal for a zero-landfill event.  
Choose reusable, recyclable, or compostable items.  
Arrange for The Campus Kitchens Project to pick up unserved food.  
Coordinate composting with the [Organic Garden Club](#).

## TRANSPORTATION

Share [Auburn Sustainable Transportation Guide](#) before event.  
Minimize distance between venue & hotels.  
***INSTANT IMPACT:*** Choose venues that connect to sustainable transportation.  
Encourage attendees to:  
    Reduce single occupancy vehicle use.  
    Buy carbon offsets for flights.

## BUILDINGS

Choose a venue that:  
    Holds a LEED or Living Building certification.  
    Practices energy efficiency.  
Turn off equipment, lights, & water when not in use.  
Shut down electronics.







# PARTIES & TAILGATES

## PLANNING

Consider holidays from various cultures.

Opt for outdoors.

- Avoid sensitive plants & exposed tree roots.
- Provide shelter from sun or rain.
- Consult the [Fire Safety Rules & Tips for Tailgaters](#).

Plan for recycling & waste.

## COMMUNICATIONS

Send digital invites, RSVPs, & sign-up forms.

Create a Facebook event.

Share event sustainability goals & practices.

Minimize printing.

## DECORATIONS

***INSTANT IMPACT:*** Borrow, reuse, rent, &/or make decor & equipment.

Choose recyclable, reusable, &/or compostable decorations & signs.

Design signs & banners for reuse (e.g. - use non-specific dates).

Consider fruit arrangements or native potted flowers & plants.

Avoid balloons & confetti.

Seek out certified items.

Use LED lights.

Collect decor to reuse or donate after event.



# DURING YOUR EVENT

**INSTANT IMPACT:** Share sustainability goals & practices.

Use computers or tablets for check-in.

Monitor waste stations.

Use verbal announcements to:

- Identify locations of water stations.
- Review procedures of waste stations.
- Cover emergency procedures.

## MEETINGS

Take notes digitally.

Use shared documents for group editing.

# AFTER YOUR EVENT

**INSTANT IMPACT:** Collect name tags, supplies, & decor to reuse.

Remove & dispose of waste & recycling accordingly.

Turn off equipment, lights, & water.

Use green cleaners.

## COMMUNICATION

Send electronic thank-yous to partners, volunteers, donors, & attendees.

Share successes using photos

(e.g. - quantity of waste avoided, food donated, bikes ridden).



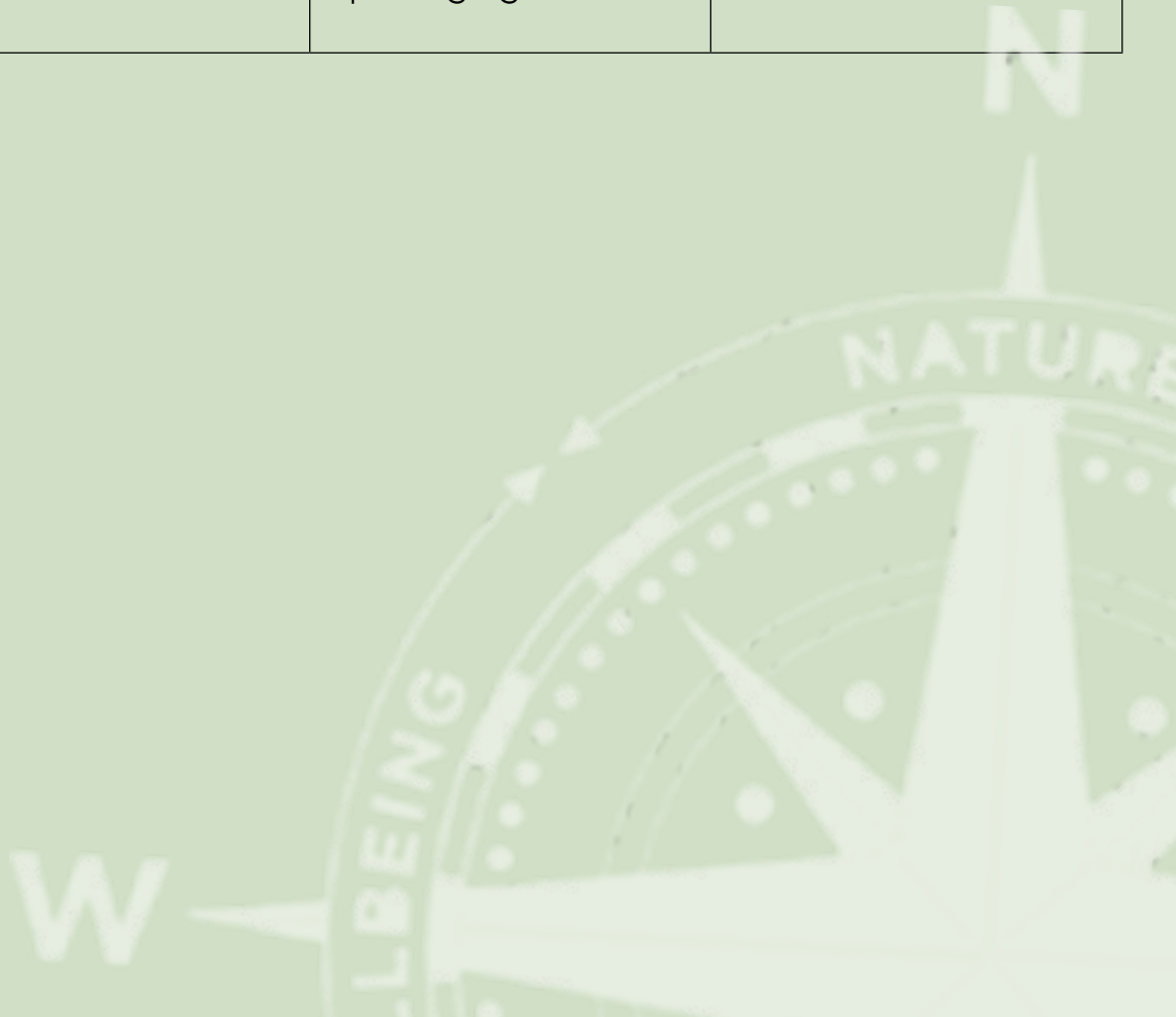


# APPENDICES

## PURCHASING TO MINIMIZE WASTE

Item	Best	Good	Avoid
<b>Plates, Bowls, Cups, Glasses, &amp; Mugs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Reusable</li><li>- Washable</li><li>- Bring Your Own</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Recyclable</li><li>- Compostable</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Styrofoam</li></ul>
<b>Utensils</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Reusable</li><li>- BYO</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Reused plastic</li><li>- Recyclable</li><li>- Compostable</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Single-use landfill</li></ul>
<b>Napkins</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Cloth</li><li>- BYO</li><li>- None</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Paper (smaller = better)</li><li>- Undyed &amp; unbleached</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Large, thick paper towels</li></ul>
<b>Leftover Food</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Accurate headcount to avoid leftovers</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Donate</li><li>- Take home</li><li>- Compost</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Landfill</li></ul>
<b>Serving Containers &amp; Covers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Reusable containers</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Aluminum</li><li>- Recyclable plastic</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Plastic wrap</li><li>- Styrofoam</li></ul>
<b>Beverages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Bulk serving</li><li>- Pitchers</li><li>- Carafes</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Recyclable: Plastic</li><li>- Glass</li><li>- Aluminum</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Single-serve items in unrecyclable packaging</li></ul>
<b>Coffee &amp; Tea</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- In-house brewed coffee &amp; tea</li><li>- Fair Trade products</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Compostable bags</li><li>- Individual coffee servings with paper packaging</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Keurig or single-brew cups</li></ul>

<b>Stirrers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Reusable</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Wood or <u>biobased</u></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Plastic</li></ul>
<b>Straws</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- None</li><li>- Reusable</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Biobased</li><li>- Compostable</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Plastic</li></ul>
<b>Snacks (e.g. - chips, bars, cookies, candy)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Serving bowl &amp; tongs</li><li>- Family-size bag/box</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Paper-wrapped single servings</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Plastic or foil wrapped single servings</li></ul>
<b>Condiments (e.g. - ketchup, butter, sugar)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Bulk product &amp; reusable utensil</li><li>- Reusable pitcher or bottle</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Individual servings in recyclable or compostable packaging</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Non-recyclable, single-serve packets</li></ul>



## PURCHASING CERTIFICATIONS

Certification & Link	Description	Examples
<a href="#">B-Corporation</a>	Certifies businesses based on social & environmental performance, transparency, & legal accountability.	Hotels, retailers, food & beverage companies, businesses in all sectors
<a href="#">Green Seal</a>	Certifies products & services to help manufacturers, purchasers, & consumers make responsible choices.	Hotels, restaurants, paper products, & cleaning products
<a href="#">Green Lodging Program</a>	Verifies facilities have met environmental best practice standards.	Lodging facilities
<a href="#">Safer Choice</a>	Helps consumers, businesses, & purchasers find products that perform well & are safer for human health & the environment.	Cleaning products
<a href="#">Energy Star</a>	Helps businesses & individuals save money & protect our climate through superior energy efficiency.	Appliances, lighting, electronics, & building products
<a href="#">EPEAT</a>	Rates high-performance electronics that supports the IT & sustainability goals of an organization.	Electronic products (e.g. - TVs, computers, monitors)

<a href="#">Rainforest Alliance</a>	Provides training to farmers, foresters, and tourism entrepreneurs to minimize environmental impacts.	Agriculture, forestry, & tourism
<a href="#">Sustainable Forest Initiative</a>	Promotes responsible forest management on all suppliers' lands.	Wood, paper, & bioenergy manufacturers
<a href="#">Forest Stewardship Council</a>	Promotes environmentally sound, socially beneficial, & economically prosperous management of the forests.	Building materials, paper, & printing
<a href="#">United States Green Building Council</a>	Certifies buildings for <a href="#">LEED</a> , (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design)	Buildings, houses, & communities
<a href="#">International Living Future Institute</a>	Has Living Future challenges such as <a href="#">Living Buildings</a> , transparency labels, & housing initiatives.	Living Building Challenge & Living Product Challenge



# DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

## Campus Units with Digital Displays

Format	Units
16:9 ratio	Alabama Cooperative Extension System Auburn University Bookstore Auburn University Facilities Management Auburn University Libraries College of Agriculture College of Architecture, Design & Construction Department of Art & Art History Department of Human Resources McWhorter School of Building Sciences Office of Information Technology Raymond J. Harbert College of Business
Landscaped photo, jpg	Auburn Abroad
8.5"x11", Power point slide	School of Forestry & Wildlife Sciences
21.5:15.5 ratio, jpg	College of Science & Mathematics

## Auburn University Press Outlets

Outlet	Primary Audience
<a href="#">Academic Sustainability Programs</a>	Sustainability minor students
<a href="#">Auburn News</a>	Employees
<a href="#">Auburn University Calendar</a>	Students, employees, & community members
<a href="#">AU Involve Web Submission</a>	Students
<a href="#">Honors Forum Calendar</a>	Honors College students
Department Newsletters & Email Lists	Differs by campus audience
<a href="#">Office of Communications and Marketing Press Release</a>	Off-campus media
<a href="#">Office of Sustainability Calendar &amp; Digest</a>	Students, employees, & communities
<a href="#">The Plainsman</a>	Students & employees
<a href="#">This Week @ AU</a>	Students
<a href="#">University Housing &amp; Residence Life</a>	Students living on-campus

## Online Resources

Event Program	<a href="#">Guidebook</a>
Invitations	<a href="#">Evites</a>
Registrations	<a href="#">Google Forms</a> , <a href="#">Qualtrics</a>
Surveys	<a href="#">Qualtrics</a> , <a href="#">Google Forms</a> , <a href="#">Doodle Poll</a>
Volunteer forms	<a href="#">Sign-Up Genius</a> , <a href="#">Volunteer Hub</a>
Social Media	<a href="#">Facebook</a> , <a href="#">Twitter</a> , <a href="#">Instagram</a> , <a href="#">LinkedIn</a> , <a href="#">Snapchat</a> , <a href="#">Yammer</a>

## CAMPUS RESOURCES

[Auburn Sustainability Transportation Guide](#)

[The Auburn University Map with Sustainability Placemarks](#)

[Donald E. Davis Arboretum](#)

[The Campus Kitchens Project at Auburn University](#)

[The Hotel at Auburn University and Dixon Conference Center](#)

[Local Resources in the Auburn/Opelika Community](#)

[Office of Accessibility](#)

[Office of Communications & Marketing Event Planning and Protocol](#)

[Office of Sustainability](#)

[Parking Services](#)

[Service Support, Facilities](#)

[Student Center](#)

[Tiger Catering](#)

[Tiger Dining](#)

[Tiger Transit](#)

[Waste Reduction & Recycling Department](#)





# GLOSSARY

**BIOBASED:** 'Use wood or biobased flatware.' A material that is composed, in whole or in significant part, of biological products or renewable domestic agricultural or forestry materials.

**CARBON OFFSETS:** 'Encourage attendees to buy carbon offsets.' A carbon offset is a reduction in emissions of carbon dioxide & other greenhouse gases made in order to compensate for, or to offset, an emission made elsewhere. Many airline & car-rental companies have an option for travelers to purchase carbon offsets.

**ENERGY EFFICIENCY:** 'Building practices with energy efficiency.' The goal of energy efficiency is to reduce the amount of energy required to provide products & services.

**FAIR LABOR POLICIES:** 'Hotel follows Fair Labor policies.' Ideally, a hotel should pay at least a living wage. Fair labor practices identified by the Fair Labor Standards Act include the forty-hour work week, a national minimum wage, guaranteed "time-and-a-half" for overtime in certain jobs, & the prohibition of most employment of minors in "oppressive child labor."

**FOOD MILES:** 'Purchase locally to reduce food miles.' Food miles refers to the distance food is transported from the time of its production until it reaches the consumer.

**LED LIGHTS:** 'Location uses LED or natural lighting.' LED stands for "Light-Emitting Diode." LED light bulbs have many advantages over incandescent light sources, including lower energy consumption, longer lifetime, improved physical robustness, smaller size, & faster switching.

**LEED CERTIFIED:** 'Location is a LEED certified building.' LEED stands for "Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design." The LEED certification is a third-party verification that the building meets a number of sustainability criteria, thus ensuring it uses less water & energy.

**SINGLE OCCUPANCY VEHICLE USE:** 'Encourage attendees to reduce single-occupancy vehicle use.' A single-occupancy vehicle is a privately-operated vehicle whose only occupant is the driver.

**SUSTAINABLE BEHAVIORS:** 'Give items that promote sustainable behaviors.' [Sustainable behaviors](#) are actions that minimize a person's negative environmental impacts & maximize their ability to enhance personal or social wellbeing. Examples include reusable water bottles, shopping bags, utensils, & napkins; first aid kits; sunscreen; pens & pencils made with recycled materials; & sunglasses. For bigger giveaways, consider potted plants, gift certificates for experiences, or biking gear.

**SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES:** 'Trains employees on sustainable practices.' Sustainable practices for a hotel or event venue are numerous & may include offering recycling, drinking fountains, electric-vehicle charging station, & [local food](#). Practices may also include connecting to public transit or offering a bike share on the premises. Examples within hotels include in-room recycling, offering a sheet-changing card, & installing motion sensors & low-flow water fixtures.

**SUSTAINABILITY GOALS & PRACTICES:** 'Communicate event sustainability goals & practices.' Sustainability goals & practices are a written commitment to specific actions & behaviors that the event will accomplish or take.

**ZERO-LANDFILL EVENT:** 'Plan for a zero-landfill event.' The goal of a zero-landfill event is that after the event everything will be either saved/ donated to be reused, recycled, or composted. Nothing goes in the trash. This even includes the small things, such as coffee stirrers & individual creamer containers.



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