



AUBURN
SUSTAINABILITY



GREEN EVENT GUIDE



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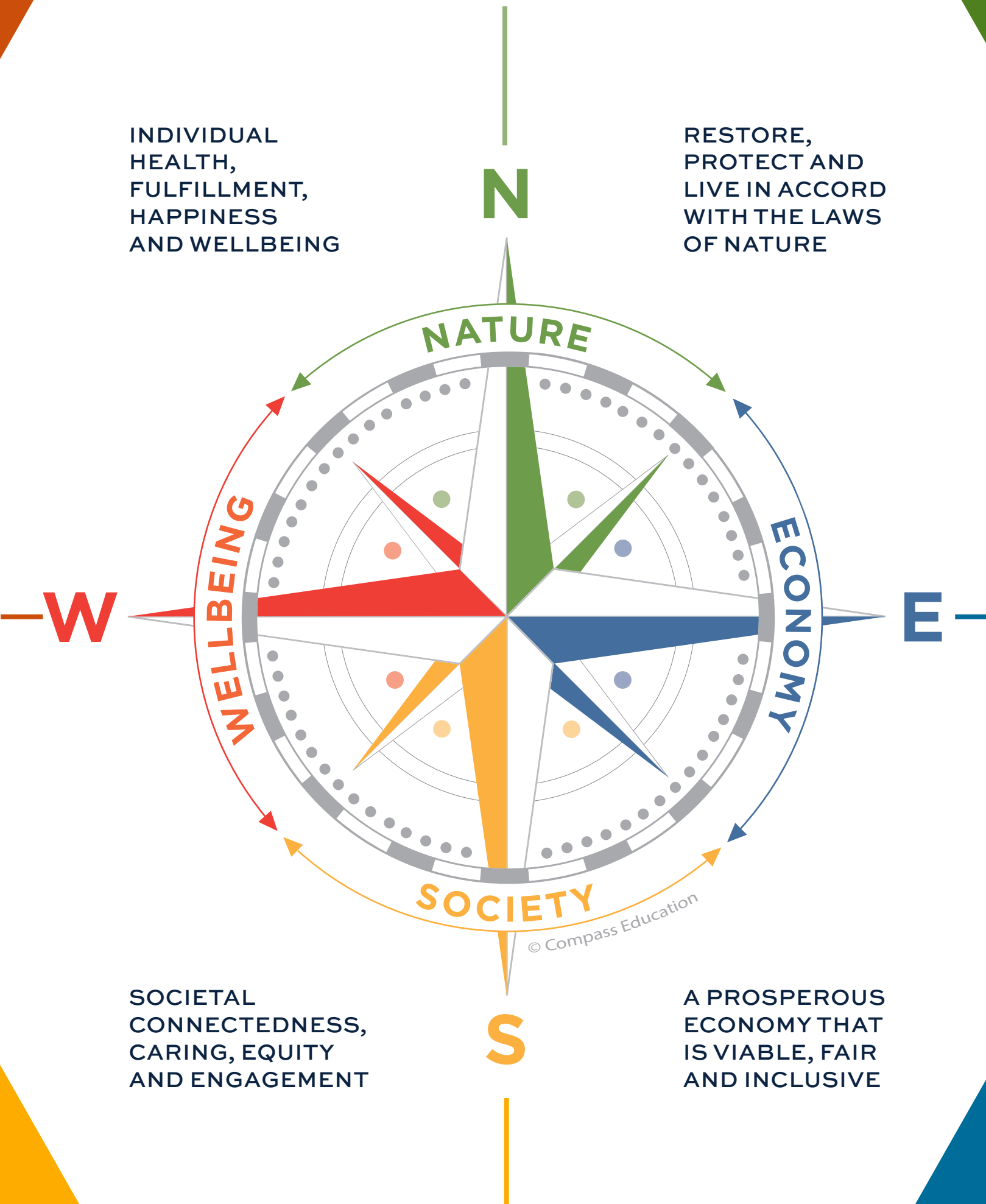
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THE SUSTAINABILITY COMPASS



THE IMPACT OF THE COMPASS



Whether hosting a meeting with your co-workers or putting together a conference for 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 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 accommodate those with [accessibility needs](#)
- Minimize scheduling conflicts to include diverse audiences
- Advertise through varied channels

Reduce greenhouse gas emissions

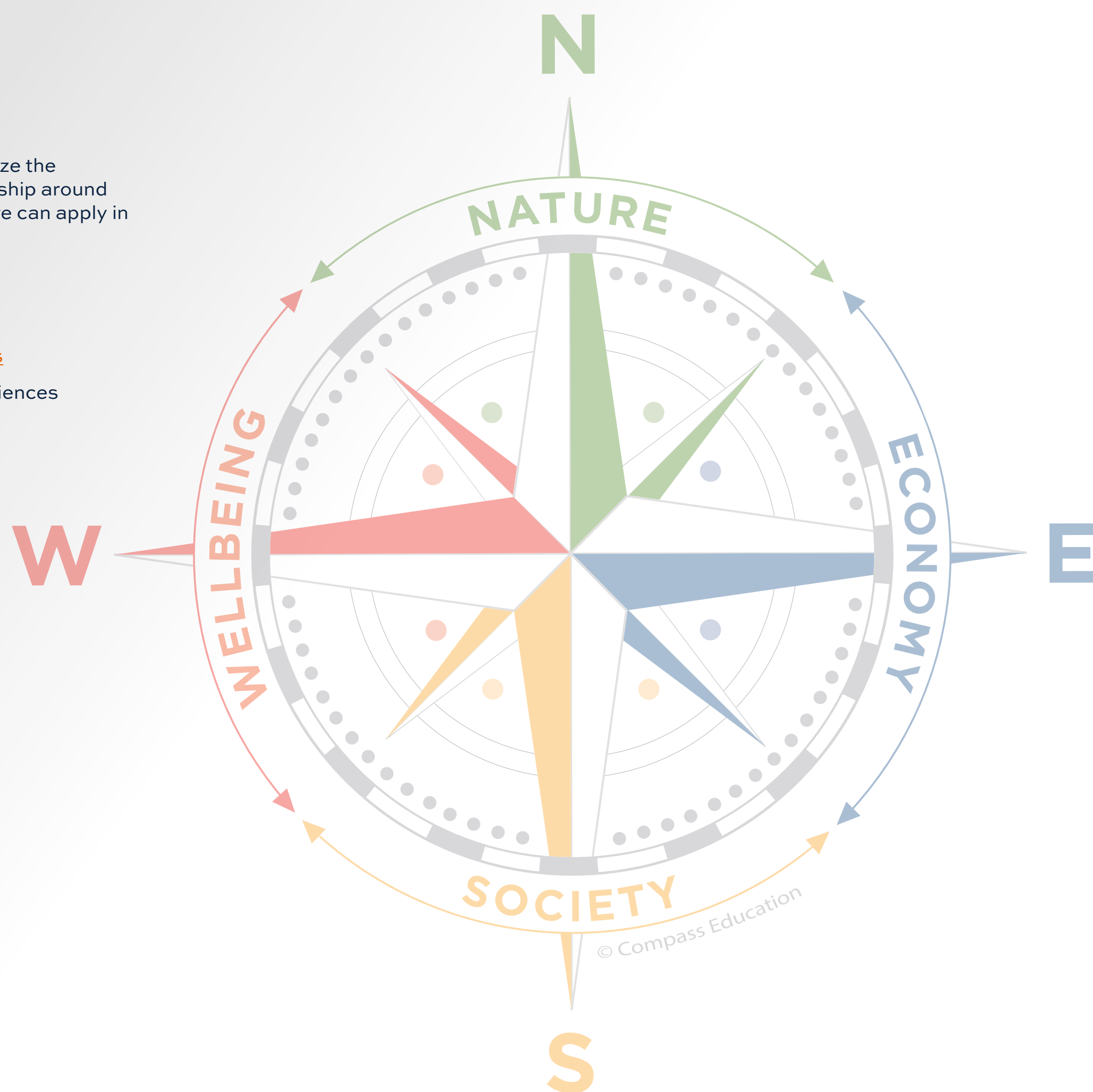
- Connect to transportation options
- Reduce energy use
- Source locally

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](#).



TIME & LOCATION

> 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

- 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.

INSTANT IMPACT:

Enable use of sustainable transportation options.



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. First 56 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

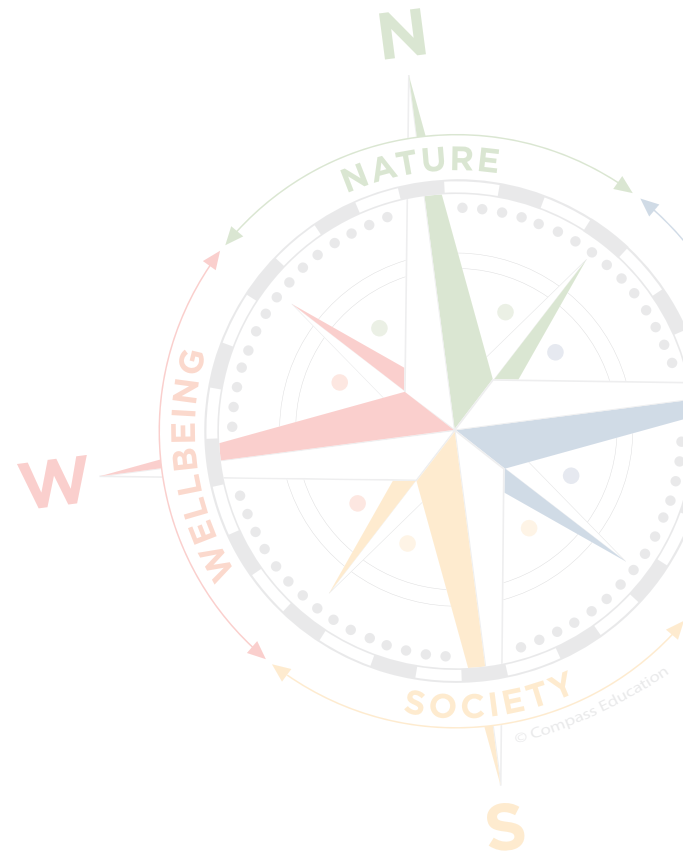
- Plan for a **ZERO-LANDFILL EVENT**.
- Borrow, reuse, or rent decor & equipment.
- Buy items made from recycled content.
- Look for minimal & recyclable packaging.
- Seek out **certified** items (e.g. foods, facilities, cleaning products).
- Use rechargeable batteries. Print on recyclable materials.

> 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).

INSTANT IMPACT:

Make accurate headcount to avoid excess materials.





FOOD SERVICE

> CONSIDER OFFERING

- 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](#)).
- [Locally-grown](#).

SHOPPING

- > • Calculate an accurate headcount.
- Create a list.
- Bring reusable bags.
- Look for minimal & recyclable packaging.

> SERVICE

- 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 service ware.
- Avoid serving individually-packaged meals & beverages.
- Use bulk dispensers for food & beverage condiments.
- Ask delivery personnel to not idle vehicles.
- If a guest is unable to carry their meal, provide this service.
- Have straws available only upon request.

INSTANT IMPACT:

Serve water in pitchers; avoid bottled water.

If disposables are used:

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



LEFTOVERS

Arrange for [The Campus Kitchens Project](#) to pick up 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 on-campus items at the [City of Auburn Recycling Center](#) along with these items listed below.

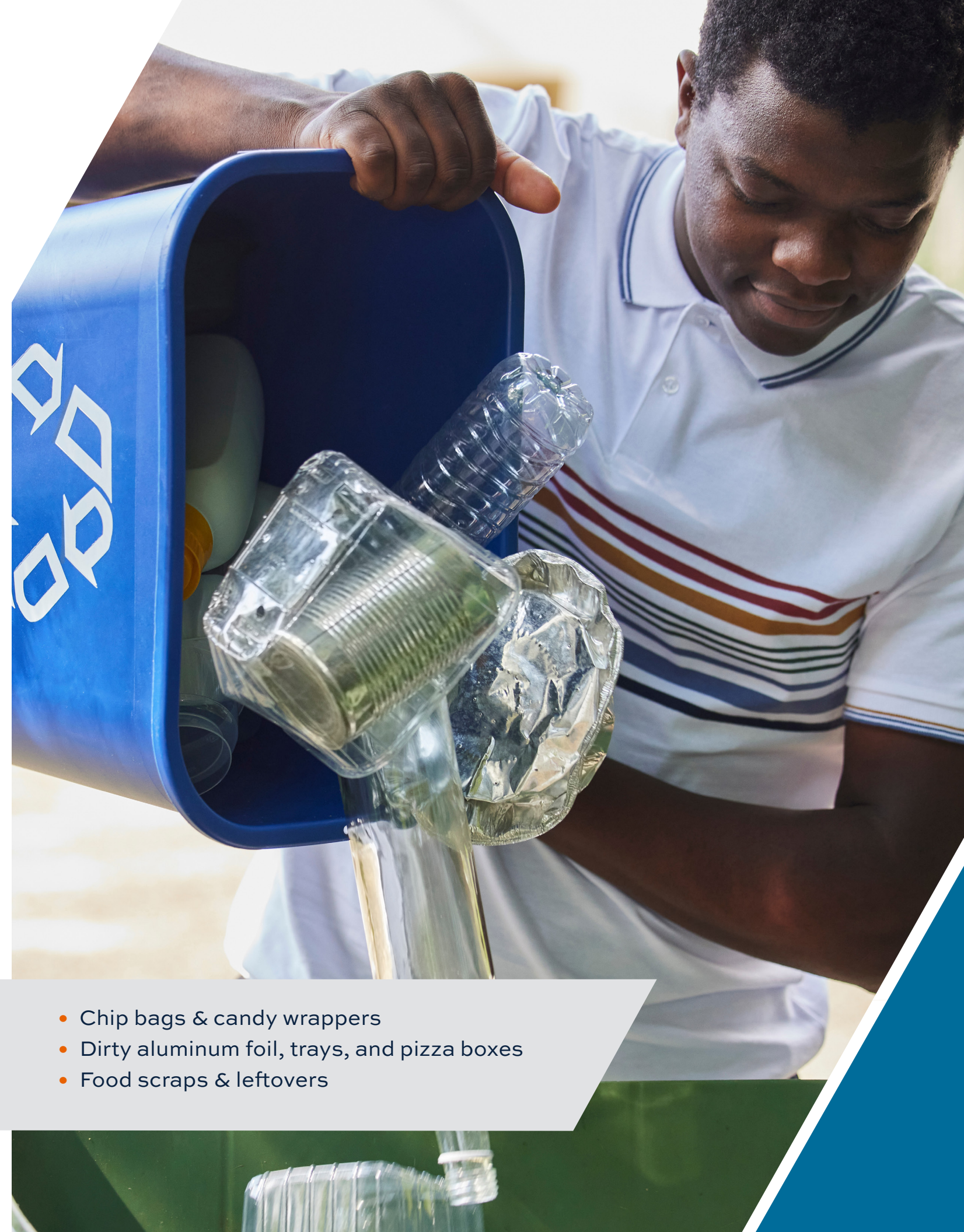
Recycle:

- ▶ 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

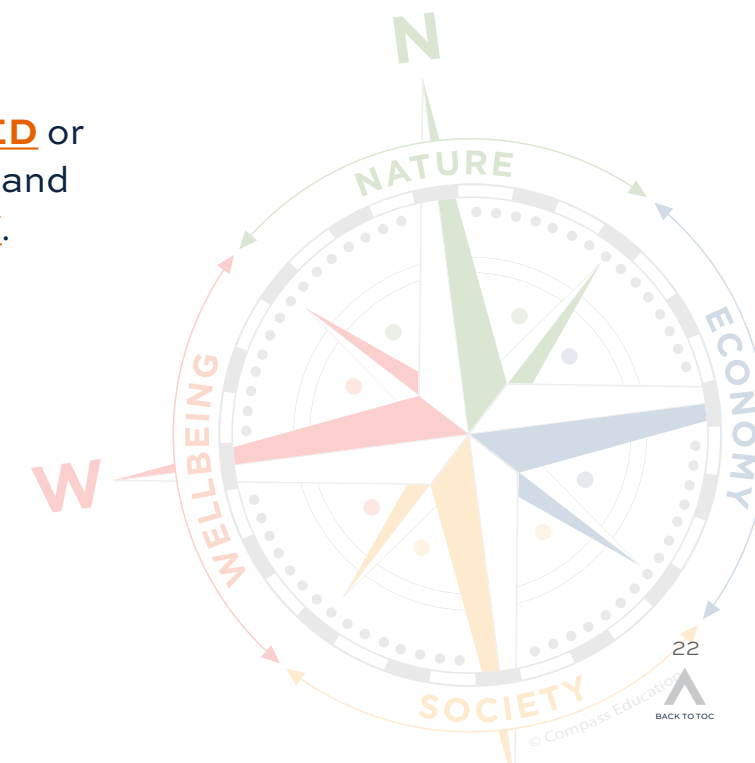
- Share Auburn Sustainable Transportation Guide before event.
- Minimize distance between venue & hotels.
- Encourage attendees to reduce **SINGLE OCCUPANCY VEHICLE USE**.

> BUILDINGS

- Choose a venue that holds a **LEED** or **LIVING BUILDING** certification and practices **ENERGY EFFICIENCY**.
- Turn off equipment, lights, & water when not in use.
- Shut down electronics.

INSTANT IMPACT:

Choose venues that connect to *sustainable transportation*.



PARTIES & TAILGATES

> PLANNING

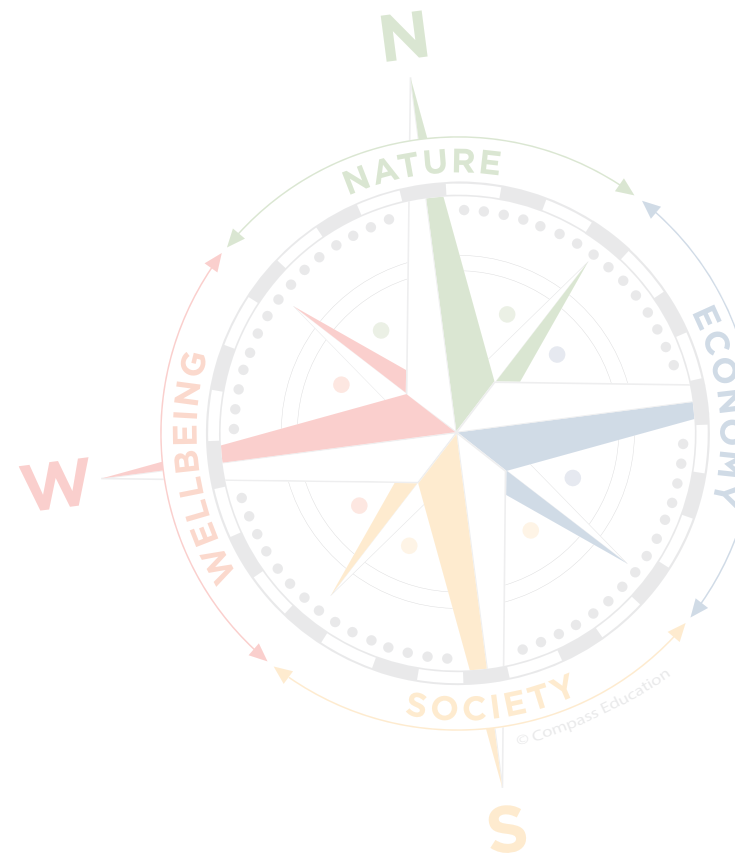
- Consider holidays from various cultures.
- Opt for outdoors:
 - ▶ Avoid sensitive plants & exposed tree roots.
 - ▶ Provide shelter from sun or rain.
 - ▶ Consult the Fire Safety Rules & Tips for Tailgaters.
- Plan for recycling & waste.

> COMMUNICATIONS

- Send digital invites, RSVPs, & sign-up forms.
- Create a Facebook event.
- Share event SUSTAINABILITY GOALS & PRACTICES.
- Minimize printing.

> DECORATIONS

- 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.



INSTANT IMPACT:

Borrow, reuse, rent, &/or make decor & equipment.





DURING YOUR EVENT

- 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.

INSTANT IMPACT:

Share **SUSTAINABILITY GOALS & PRACTICES**.

AFTER YOUR EVENT

- Remove & dispose of waste & recycling accordingly.
- Turn off equipment, lights, & water.
- Use **green cleaners**.

INSTANT IMPACT:

Collect name tags, supplies, & decor to reuse.

COMMUNICATION

- > Send electronic thank-yous to partners, volunteers, donors, & attendees.
- > **Share successes** using photos (e.g. quantity of waste avoided, food donated, bikes ridden).



MEETINGS

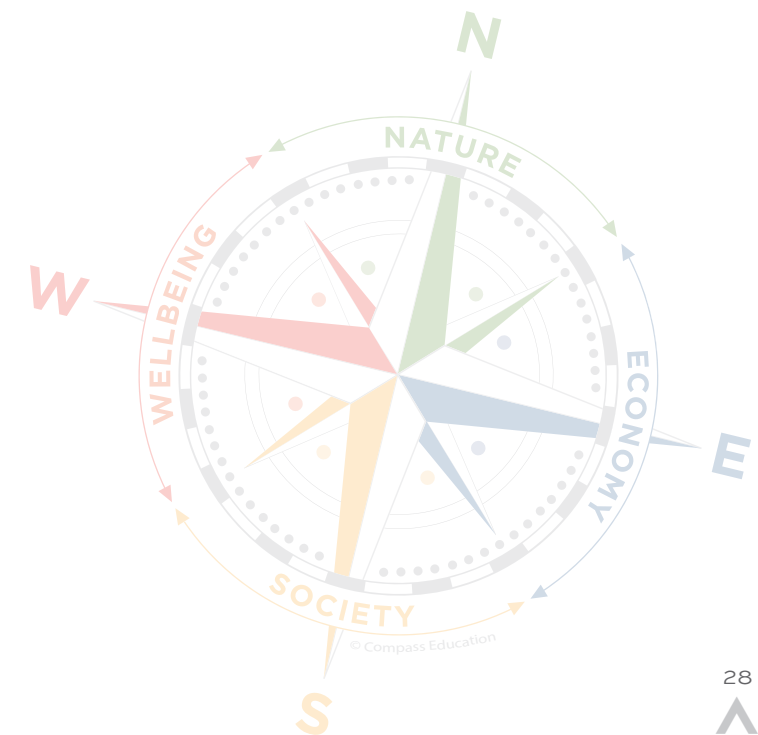
Take notes digitally and use shared documents for group editing.

APPENDICES

PURCHASING TO MINIMIZE

ITEM	BEST	GOOD	AVOID
PLATES, BOWLS, CUPS, GLASSES, & MUGS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Reusable ▶ Washable ▶ Bring Your Own 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Recyclable ▶ Compostable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Styrofoam
UTENSILS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Reusable ▶ BYO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Reused plastic ▶ Recyclable ▶ Compostable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Single-use landfill
NAPKINS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Cloth ▶ BYO ▶ None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Paper (smaller = better) ▶ Undyed & unbleached 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Large, thick paper towels
LEFTOVER FOOD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Accurate headcount to avoid leftovers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Donate ▶ Take home ▶ Compost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Landfill
SERVING CONTAINERS & COVERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Reusable containers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Aluminum ▶ Recyclable plastic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Plastic wrap ▶ Styrofoam
BEVERAGES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Bulk serving ▶ Pitchers ▶ Carafes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Recyclable: Plastic ▶ Glass ▶ Aluminum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Single-serve items in unrecyclable packaging

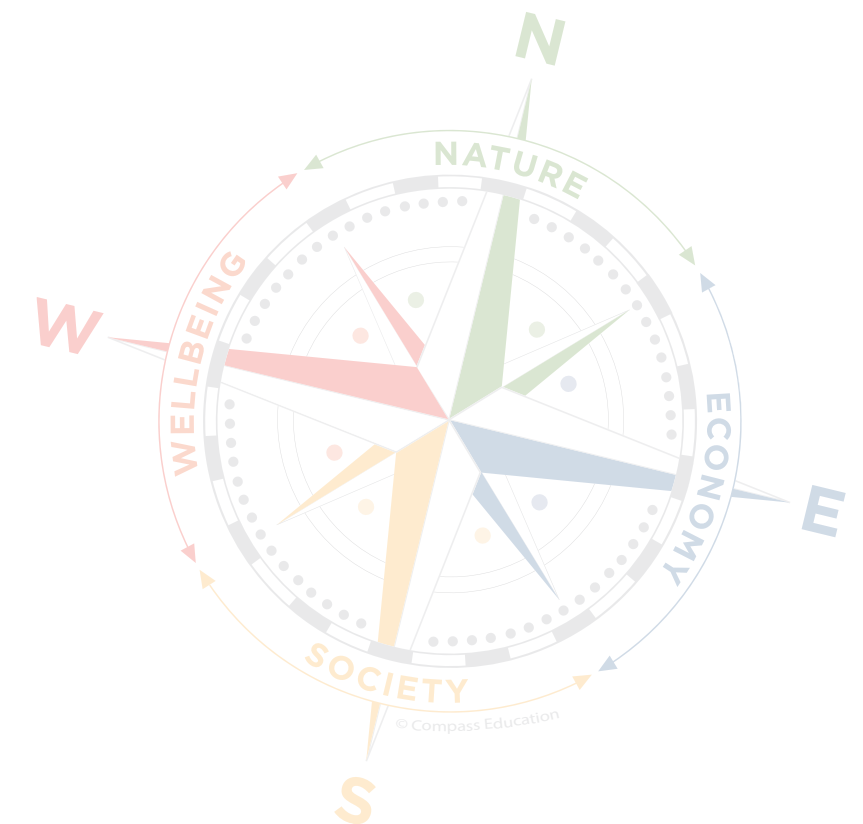
ITEM	BEST	GOOD	AVOID
COFFEE & TEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ In-house brewed coffee & tea ▶ Fair Trade products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Compostable bags ▶ Individual coffee servings with paper packaging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Keurig or single-brew cups
STIRRERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Reusable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Wood ▶ BIODEBASED 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Plastic
STRAWS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ None ▶ Reusable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Compostable ▶ BIODEBASED 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Plastic
SNACKS (E.G. CHIPS, BARS, COOKIES, CANDY)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Serving bowl & tongs ▶ Family-size bag/box 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Paper-wrapped single servings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Plastic or foil wrapped single servings
CONDIMENTS (E.G. KETCHUP, BUTTER, SUGAR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Bulk product & reusable utensil ▶ Reusable pitcher or bottle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Individual servings in recyclable or compostable packaging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Non-recyclable, single-serve packets



PURCHASING CERTIFICATIONS

CERTIFICATION & LINK	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLES
B-CORPORATION	Certifies businesses based on social & environmental performance, transparency, & legal accountability.	Hotels, retailers, food & beverage companies, businesses in all sectors
GREEN SEAL	Certifies products & services to help manufacturers, purchasers, & consumers make responsible choices.	Hotels, restaurants, paper products, & cleaning products
GREEN LODGING PROGRAM	Verifies facilities have met environmental best practice standards.	Lodging facilities
SAFER CHOICE	Helps consumers, businesses, & purchasers find products that perform well & are safer for human health & the environment.	Cleaning products
ENERGY STAR	Helps businesses & individuals save money & protect our climate through superior ENERGY EFFICIENCY .	Appliances, lighting, electronics, & building products
EPEAT	Rates high-performance electronics that supports the IT & SUSTAINABILITY GOALS of an organization.	Electronic products (e.g. TVs, computers, monitors)

CERTIFICATION & LINK	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLES
RAINFOREST ALLIANCE	Provides training to farmers, foresters, and tourism entrepreneurs to minimize environmental impacts.	Agriculture, forestry, & tourism
SUSTAINABLE FOREST INITIATIVE	Promotes responsible forest management on all suppliers' lands.	Wood, paper, & bioenergy manufacturers
FOREST STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL	Promotes environmentally sound, socially beneficial, & economically prosperous management of the forests.	Building materials, paper, & printing
UNITED STATES GREEN BUILDING COUNCIL	Certifies buildings for LEED , (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design)	Buildings, houses, & communities





DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

Campus Units with Digital Displays

FORMAT	UNITS
16:9 RATIO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Auburn Abroad
16:9 POWER POINT SLIDE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ College of Forestry, Wildlife and Environment
21.5:15.5 RATIO, JPG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ College of Science & Mathematics

Auburn University Press Outlets

OUTLET	PRIMARY AUDIENCE
ACADEMIC SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM	Sustainability minor students
AUBURN NEWS	Employees
AUBURN UNIVERSITY CALENDAR	Students, employees, & community members
AU INVOLVE WEB SUBMISSION	Students
HONORS FORUM CALENDAR	Honors College students
DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTERS & EMAIL LISTS	Differs by campus audience
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING PRESS RELEASE	Off-campus media
OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY CALENDAR & DIGEST	Students, employees, & communities
THE PLAINSMAN	Students & employees
THIS WEEK @ AU	Students
UNIVERSITY HOUSING & RESIDENCE LIFE	Students living on-campus

Online Resources

REGISTRATIONS	> Microsoft Forms, Qualtrics
SURVEYS	> Qualtrics, Microsoft Forms
VOLUNTEER FORMS	> GivePulse



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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