



EmeraldEcovations.com



Higher Education Case Study

Sustainable Dining Without a Budget Increase



**EMERALD
ECOAVATIONS**

A Division of Paradigm



SUSTAINABILITY=HEALTH & WELLNESS®

Client

A major East Coast university wanted to eliminate single-use plastics in dining services but was concerned about higher costs associated with compostable alternatives. They needed a solution that allowed them to go green without raising student meal plan prices.



Background

With over 25,000 students dining on campus daily, the university used millions of plastic utensils, coffee cups, and to-go containers each year. Their sustainability team wanted to transition to compostable alternatives but struggled with:

- **Cost concerns** from the finance team.
- **Logistical challenges** in integrating compostable products.
- **Fluctuating demand** due to seasonal student enrollment.





Solution

Emerald Ecoventions developed a cost-neutral sustainability strategy, including:

- **Compostable, Plastic-Free Dining Supplies:** Replaced plastic utensils, plates, and cups with tree-free and plastic-free alternatives at the same price point as their existing products.
- **Waste Optimization:** Helped the university adjust ordering patterns to reduce overstock and minimize unnecessary spending.
- **Customized Bulk Purchasing:** Structured pricing to eliminate cost increases while ensuring a steady supply of compostable materials.

Results



Eliminated over 1.2 million plastic disposables annually.

Kept student meal costs unchanged while transitioning to 100% compostable dining materials.

Reduced food service waste by 30% through more efficient product usage.

Conclusion

Emerald Ecovations helped the university transition to a plastic-free and tree-free dining program without increasing costs, proving that sustainability in higher education can be achieved within budget constraints.





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