

Suggested RFP/RFI Questions for Foodservice Broadline Distribution

Below are suggested RFP/RFI questions for service contracts for foodservice distribution. There are suggested questions covering food, beverages and foodware as well the supplier's corporate environmental responsibility. Other questions may be considered. If you have any comments about this information, please email gsc@practicegreenhealth.org.

Questions on Food and Beverages				
#	RFP Question	Preferred Answer	Definition/Label/Certification	Rationale
1	Does the supplier <u>use common sustainability definitions</u> in product descriptions, invoice details, and reporting? (Yes/No)	Yes	<p>Acceptable definitions:</p> <p>Local: food that comes from farms, ranches, processing/production facilities within a 250 mile radius of the purchasing hospital. For processed foods (e.g., foods with multiple ingredients), greater than 50% of the ingredients, by weight, must be grown and processed from within a 250 mile radius.</p> <p>Sustainable: any food that is labeled with one or more of the certifications or label claims listed here: http://www.noharm.org/lib/downloads/food/EcoLabels_Matrix.pdf or other eco-label/certification that has transparent and meaningful standards and independent verification processes.</p>	Common definitions are critical for transparency in sourcing and ultimately product selection. Consistency in definitions across business functions supports tracking and reporting of sustainable spend.
2	Does the supplier <u>label products</u> in catalogues/ordering systems with applicable sustainability criteria and label claims to make those products readily identifiable and searchable? (Yes/No) If yes, please list claims used.	Yes	<p>Sustainable: any food that is labeled with one or more of the certifications or label claims listed here: http://www.noharm.org/lib/downloads/food/EcoLabels_Matrix.pdf or other eco-label/certification that has transparent and meaningful standards and independent verification processes.</p>	Accurate certification labeling and identification across business functions supports informed purchasing decisions and tracking and reporting of sustainable spend.
3	Does the supplier provide the capacity for a facility to determine the distance from their facility to the location where food was grown or produced? (Yes/No)	Yes	<p>Local shall not be calculated based on the distance from a supplier's distribution center. Local means food that comes from farms, ranches, processing/production facilities within a 250 mile radius of the purchasing hospital. For processed foods (e.g., foods with multiple ingredients), greater than 50% of the ingredients, by weight, must be grown and processed from within a 250 mile radius.</p>	Large state-wide or multi-state contracts serviced by distributors may need to refine distance traveled to each facility to accurately answer "local" foods. To gain an accurate definition of local, local must be defined by distance to the end user.
4	Does the supplier have <u>tracking capabilities for local and sustainable purchases</u> on total spend and/or on pounds purchased within a designated time frame (e.g., week, month, quarter) so facilities can easily get information through their online ordering system or through provided reports? (Yes/No)	Yes		Tracking spend through the environmental attributes of products increases transparency. Supporting sustainable production methods and local sourcing requires that claims are visible from ordering, to billing, to verification of certification or production location on the physical product.
5	Does the supplier carry, or commit to carrying enough products for hospitals to dedicate at least 20% of their total food spend to local or sustainable products? (Yes/No)	Yes	<p>Local- food that comes from farms, ranches, processing/production facilities within a 250 mile radius of the purchasing hospital. For processed foods (e.g., foods with multiple ingredients), greater than 50% of the ingredients, by weight, must be grown and processed from within a 250 mile radius.</p>	Procurement of sustainable products relies heavily on access through a hospital's current supply chain. Contracts increase affordability of sustainable and local food. Broadline partnerships are key to increasing sustainable spend.

Sustainable: any food that is labeled with one or more of the certifications or label claims listed here: http://www.noharm.org/lib/downloads/food/EcoLabels_Matrix.pdf or other eco-label/certification that has transparent and meaningful standards and independent verification processes.

Questions pertaining to Foodservice Ware

#	RFP Question	Preferred Answer	Definition/Label/Certification	Questions Rationale
6	Does the supplier provide product free of fluorine or fluorinated compounds (such as PFOS/PFOA chemicals used as grease barriers)? (Yes/No)	Yes	Perfluorinated compounds (PFCs) are family of compounds (including Perfluorooctane sulfate (PFOS), Polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE) and PFOA). PFOS is used in paper production to provide grease, oil, and water resistance to paper and paperboard used in food- and non-food-contact applications (such as paper plates, bowls and cups).	PFCs are extremely persistent and bioaccumulative chemicals. ^[i] How we are exposed is not well documented but concern comes from the prevalence of PFCs in humans. In a study from Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, researchers analyzed cord blood samples from 300 newborns in Baltimore and found PFOS and PFOA in 99% and 100% of umbilical cord blood, respectively. ^[ii] In animal studies, PFOS is linked to bladder cancer, liver cancer, and developmental and reproductive toxicity (including neonatal mortality).
7	Does the supplier offer food ware with primary <u>packaging</u> (either in bulk or in individual wrappings) that is recyclable (e.g., paperboard) or certified as compostable in a commercial composting facility?	Yes	This question refers to the primary packaging of foodware. Recyclable, according to the FTC Green Guides, means the product can be collected, separated, or otherwise recovered from the waste stream through an established recycling program for reuse or use in manufacturing or assembling another item. Any unqualified claims of recyclability indicate the supplier can demonstrate that at least 60% (substantial majority) of consumers or communities where the item is sold have recycling facilities. If recycling facilities are available to less than a substantial majority of consumers and communities, then marketers should qualify all recyclable claims by stating the percentage of consumers or communities that have access to facilities that recycle the item. Certified compostable means the product will fully and safely biodegrade in a commercial-scale compost facility in a specific number of days. If you're purchasing food service ware that contains biobased plastic, look for products that are certified by one or more of the following organizations: Biodegradable Products Institute (BPI) or Green Seal (USA), Din Certo (European Union), AIB Vincotte Inter (Belgium), Australian Environmental Labeling Association (Australia) or Biodegradable Bioplastics Association (Japan). BPI does not certify paper-based products unless they have a bioplastic liner. Some paper-based food service ware <u>products contain a conventional plastic liner; these</u>	Sustainable packaging can take a number of forms but reduces waste and associated disposal or recycling costs. Purchasing products in bulk form (rather than individually wrapped units) cuts down on waste
8	Does the supplier carry recyclable foodservice ware?	Yes	Recyclable, according to the FTC Green Guides, means the product can be collected, separated, or otherwise recovered from the waste stream through an established recycling program for reuse or use in manufacturing or assembling another item. Any unqualified claims of recyclability indicate the supplier can demonstrate that at least 60% (substantial majority) of consumers or communities where the item is sold have recycling facilities. If recycling facilities are available to less than a substantial majority of consumers and communities, then marketers should qualify all recyclable claims by stating the percentage of consumers or communities that have access to facilities that recycle the item. This question refers to the product only, not packaging.	Recyclable products in communities in the U.S. reduce materials going to the waste stream and their associated costs. For details, refer to the FTC Green Guides, https://www.ftc.gov/enforcement/rules/rulemaking-regulatory-reform-proceedings/green-guides

9	Does the supplier carry compostable foodservice ware certified as “commercially” compostable (i.e., does it meet ASTM D6400 or D6868, DIN EN 13432, AS 4376, or ISO 17088) or is this a paper product approved for commercial composting (i.e., Cedar Grove approved or other reputable commercial composting facility)? (Yes/No)	Yes	Certified compostable means the product will fully and safely biodegrade in a commercial-scale compost facility in a specific number of days. If you’re purchasing food service ware that contains biobased plastic, look for products that are certified by one or more of the following organizations: Biodegradable Products Institute (BPI) or Green Seal (USA), Din Certo (European Union), AIB Vincotte Inter (Belgium), Australian Environmental Labeling Association (Australia) or Biodegradable Bioplastics Association (Japan). BPI does not certify paper-based products unless they have a bioplastic liner. Some paper-based food service ware products contain a conventional plastic liner; these products may or may not be acceptable in commercial composting facilities. Cedar Grove is a commercial facility that tests and approves products. See product list, http://cedar-grove.com/compostable/accepted-items . Compostable- meets ASTM D6400 or D6868, DIN EN 13432, AS 4376, or ISO 17088 or is a paper product approved for commercial composting. Compostable materials include: Wood, Compostable Plastic (Polylactic Acid, PLA), Molded Fiber, and Paper.	Compostable food service ware offers facilities that are composting a way to reduce waste and associated waste costs.
10	Does the supplier identify recyclable and compostable foodservice ware in product descriptions, invoices, and reports?	Yes	For FTC guidance on marketing claims for recyclable visit: https://www.ftc.gov/tips-advice/business-center/guidance/environmental-claims-summary-green-guides . For definitions of commonly recycled materials visit: https://www.epa.gov/recycle/how-do-i-recycle-common-recyclables#pla Compostable materials include: Wood, Compostable Plastic (Polylactic Acid, PLA), Molded Fiber, and Paper. For compostable product lists see: http://products.bpiworld.org/	Easy identification increases a hospital's ability to source foodservice wares that meet their local recycling requirements.

Questions on Corporate Responsibility

#	RFP Question	Preferred Answer	Definition/Label/Certification	Questions Rationale
11	Does the supplier release a publicly available annual Corporate Social Responsibility Report or Sustainability Report?	Yes	A sustainability report is a report published by a company or organization about the economic, environmental and social impacts caused by its everyday activities. A sustainability report also presents the organization's values and governance model, and demonstrates the link between its strategy and its commitment to a sustainable global economy. See: https://www.globalreporting.org/information/sustainability-reporting/Pages/default.aspx	CSR or Sustainability reporting demonstrates an organization's commitment to sustainable issues and creates transparency around risks and opportunities created by the company's daily business activities. Organizing and reporting around environmental and social initiatives is fundamental to creating trust and building sustainable business relationships.
12	Does the supplier invest in alternative energy to run day-to-day operations (solar installment, alternative energy selection through a utility company)? (Yes/No) If yes, what percentage of total energy use?	Yes/ highest %	NRDC defines alternative energy as energy not popularly used and is usually environmentally sound, such as solar or wind energy.	Alternative energy is an alternative to fossil fuels. Alternative energy reduces greenhouse gas emissions and the environmental, health and societal impacts on the planet and people from greenhouse gas emissions. It offers the greatest return in terms of minimizing the impacts from climate change.

13	Does the supplier have a program or procedures in place to reduce water consumption (low flow fixtures, drought resistant landscaping, water recycling)? (Yes/No) If yes, explain	Yes		Hospitals are one of the largest users of water in any community; therefore should demonstrate and require their suppliers to be water efficient. Some parts of the country are facing severe droughts. Many health organizations are committed to working with suppliers who also take leadership actions in sustainable operations and can demonstrate water conservation practices.
14	Does the supplier have recycling in place at offices and warehouses (film wrap, cardboard, office paper, consumer recycling)? (Yes/No) If yes, indicate how many tons of materials are recycled	Yes		Hospitals produce over 30 pounds of waste per patient bed/day or 5.9 million tons/year. To reduce health care sector's impact on waste and the environment, both hospitals and their suppliers must take leadership roles. Office recycling programs and resources are prevalent and should be expected of every supplier.
15	Does the supplier have a program or procedures in place that reduces fuel consumption of transportation fleet (routing software, Bio-fuel, procurement patterns, EPA SmartWay Partnership) (Yes/No?) If yes, explain	Yes	EPA SmartWay is an EPA program that helps the freight transportation sector improve supply chain efficiency and reduces transportation-related air emissions that affect climate change.	Transportation as a sector is a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions. Based on current GHG emission reports, transportation accounts for 28% of the total GHG emission (2006 data). ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾

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[i] Factsheet: Perfluorinated compounds and Human Health Concerns, Healthy Building Network, April 2009

[ii] Apelberg, B, Goldman L, Calafat A, Herbstman I, Kuklennyik Z, Heidler I, Needham L, Halden R, Witter F. Determinants of Fetal Exposure to Polyfluoroalkyl Compounds in Baltimore.

⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ Transportation and Climate Change, US Dept. of Transportation, <http://climate.dot.gov/about/transportations-role/overview.html>, viewed July 2016

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