



International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality

Publisher's Home Page: <https://www.svedbergopen.com/>



Short Communication

Open Access

Sustainable Food Sourcing in Hotels

David Ezequiel Cruz López*

¹Keiser University, Alphabet Capital Group, 848 Brickell Avenue Suit 605, Miami, FL 33131, United States. E-mail: david.cruzl@hotmail.com

Article Info

Volume 4, Issue 1, January 2024

Received : 13 October 2023

Accepted : 27 December 2023

Published : 05 January 2024

doi: [10.51483/IJTH.4.1.2024.15-18](https://doi.org/10.51483/IJTH.4.1.2024.15-18)

Abstract

Reliable food supply is a crucial factor in the purchasing strategy of hotels and restaurants committed to a sustainable supply chain with suppliers concerned about the environment and even sustainable self-supply. In this new supply concept, suppliers are evaluated by an external auditor before establishing negotiations with hotel and restaurant firms. The central supply policy guarantees the control and consistency of the quality of the field products. Suppliers include farms concerned with animal welfare and environmental codes of practice that practice sustainable breeding management, safeguarding future pig, cattle, and fish populations. The hotels and restaurants that operate under this new trend of supplying sustainable products avoid species that are intrinsically vulnerable to exploitation and depend on habitats that are particularly vulnerable to damage caused by overexploitation by man. The ethical trade of species and vegetables is part of the supplier selection process for restaurants, hotels, and resorts that operate under these strict responsibility standards and care for the environment and natural resources. These companies pride themselves on serving guests only the freshest and best produce and seek to work with suppliers who can fairly test and provide evidence to ensure all items along the supply chain are treated honestly, justly, and respectfully (Jones and Comfort, 2019).

Keywords: Sustainable food sourcing, Quality, Supply chain

© 2024 David Ezequiel Cruz López. This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license, and indicate if changes were made.

1. Introduction

According to Jakubiak (2015), more hotels, restaurants, and resorts are migrating towards sustainable food policies and even creating their sourcing policies based on the importance of obtaining sustainable food. Derived from the impact of environmental damage caused by supplying food harvested or raised traditionally, these innovative companies understand what must be done ethically in providing fish, meat, and seasonal products from the field. These hotel and restaurant companies affirm that they must keep up-to-date in their operations and that the rules of sustainable food sourcing are constantly changing. Due to pressure from outside groups to do the right thing, hotels, and restaurants that source food sustainably quickly recognize the tangible benefits. Sustainable sourcing is vital to meet particular customer demands and can also be used as an effective marketing campaign. A global survey identified sustainable local sourcing as a critical factor in menus' top ten trends for 2013. Similarly, locally sourced meats and seafood, locally grown produce, sustainable seafood, and environmental sustainability as a culinary theme appear at the top have consumer preferences.

* Corresponding author: David Ezequiel Cruz López, Keiser University, Alphabet Capital Group, 848 Brickell Avenue Suit 605, Miami, FL 33131, United States. E-mail: david.cruzl@hotmail.com

2. Critical Issues

Molina *et al.* (2021) state that possible issues in the supply of sustainable food are listed below:

- The Conservation Society removed so-called sustainable fish species leaving many confused about what fish is safe to eat.
- Sustainable sourcing is becoming a growing problem for businesses and governments amid fears of food shortages and extreme weather events wiping out crops.
- Companies are increasingly turning to the government to help build a sustainable and resilient food system by introducing taxes on unsustainable food practices.
- Customer demand for sustainably sourced food is significantly increasing.
- Trust in food sources is increasingly linked to local and sustainable sourcing. Customers want to know more about the origin of food and, from there, make a judgment about its quality.
- Customers want accurate information that offers food transparency about dining experiences.
- Tea, coffee, sugar, chocolate, dried fruits, and nuts must be Fairtrade certified.
- Threatened fish species should be avoided, including bluefin tuna. Fish and shellfish must be certified.
- Force-feeding geese or ducks are considered cruel.
- Airborne foods should be avoided and replaced with foods that can only be enjoyed at certain times of the year to lessen the carbon footprint.
- Methane emitted by cattle and sheep is a potent greenhouse gas and is considered by many experts to be a significant contributor to climate change. Therefore, the consumption of meat products with high carbon content should be reduced.
- The wines must be organic and bio-dynamic.
- Water should not be bottled unless it is tap water or filtered water in refillable bottles.

3. Possible Causes

According to Mackenzie *et al.* (2011), the causes of the issues are the following:

- Not knowing where the product comes from and how far it has traveled is one of the causes that prevent the proper supply chain of sustainable food.
- Suppliers do not change sourcing and do not adapt to new requirements.
- The impossibility of complementing suppliers or joining other companies in the area to buy in bulk from companies that are sustainable and keep costs low.
- The time required to get used to coordinating with other utility companies.
- Most products, including exotic fruits or spices, are imported from abroad.
- The lack of supplier transparency prevents eliminating or reducing food that is not sustainably grown.
- Require associations that certify much of sustainably produced organic food to show that suppliers provide fair-wage jobs and work to reduce air travel.

4. Alternatives

According to Molina *et al.* (2021), the suggested alternatives are listed below:

- Work with existing suppliers to reduce shared social and environmental impact to offer customers reliable and sustainable goods and services.
- That the procurement departments of hotels and restaurants have responsible sourcing policies integrated into the purchasing processes.
- When a supplier does not comply with the standards, you must work with them to make improvements that benefit the interested parties.
- In high-risk sourcing areas, work with established organizations to improve the long-term sustainability of products from countries with high environmental impact risks.

- Development of supply strategies with the continuous improvement so that products that adversely impact the environment or health are progressively improved to define sustainability standards and comply with them.
- Animal welfare is paramount, so it will be reviewed that suppliers carry out best practices to reduce the environmental impact of beef that must be obtained in a sustainable manner.
- Expand the range of certified products.
- Eliminate palm oil or use only certified sources.

5. Solutions

The solutions can be varied and complex; however, according to Pratt *et al.* (2017), it is possible to find answers that allow the adaptation of hotel and restaurant processes to operate sustainably in the logistics of the supply chain:

- Sustainable sourcing must become mainstream and a trend.
- Gardens and restaurants should promote people's health by controlling balanced portions that include natural ingredients and cooking techniques that preserve nutrients.
- Hotels and restaurants must include vegetarian and gluten-free menus, organic products, natural meat without supplemental growth hormones or antibiotics, reduced sodium, reduced additives, and drinks with natural sweeteners such as agave nectar, hormone-free milk, and natural fruit juice.
- Companies must seek a healthy planet by developing sustainable practices that improve the planet's and people's health in the long term.
- The range of supplies should include sustainable sourcing seafood, naturally raised beef and pork, planting gardens on the property, recycling programs, and new to-go containers and packaging.
- Businesses should support healthy communities by sourcing from local suppliers, sharing knowledge, and actively supporting farmers' markets and community sectors.
- Hotels and restaurants must include at least five local ingredients on their menu.
- Businesses should partner with local schools and community groups, educate suppliers, and sponsor local culinary schools.
- Sustainable sourcing must be used to meet particular customer demands and used as an effective marketing campaign.

6. Justification

- There are important reasons why restaurants should be helped to be sustainable businesses.
- The client is what he requires, and many diners prefer to eat in a sustainable restaurant if they have the option.
- Restaurants have an interest in operating sustainably. With the design of changes in actions, an average restaurant can save a lot of money, reducing the use of energy, water, and waste.
- Working sustainably is ethical, and it is the right thing to do. As resources become scarce and food security becomes an issue, this will be the only way to operate (Mackenzie *et al.*, 2011).

7. Conclusion

According to Font *et al.* (2010), while some hotels take the softer approach of indicating the mileage radius of where food and beverages come from, others like to work under more exact carbon science-based standards. Hotel kitchens can reduce food miles to zero and drastically reduce carbon footprint and operating costs by growing their fruits, vegetables, and herbs. Cool Farma Tool (CFT) is a food industry-backed calculator designed to help producers measure and understand the carbon footprint of their produce and livestock. There is a spreadsheet that is free with the aim of helping as many producers as possible take measures to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions from their activities. The pioneer in home gardens is Raymond Blanc, whose two-Michelin-starred restaurant draws on a two-acre plot of land producing more than ninety types of vegetables and seventy herbs. Restaurants and hotels lacking the land to grow to supply the kitchen are looking for alternative options in other spaces, such as roofs. However, since it would not be practical or possible to grow everything on the roof, they focus on home-grown herbs and micro-vegetables that complement the menus with locally grown organic produce. Other soilless growing processes include growing lights that turn on when the sun goes down, allowing for year-round summer crops. Finally, due to increasing concern about the collapse of North American bee colonies, some hotels are installing beehives on their roof gardens. Compliance with the rules and

regulations for vegetable and agricultural animal product suppliers encourages the creation of hotels and restaurants that operate sustainably in their general logistics processes and global supply chains.

References

- Front, X., Tapper, R., Schwartz, K. and Kornilaki, M. (2010). Sustainable Supply Chain Management in Tourism. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 17(4), 260-271.
- Jakubiak, M. (2015). An Exploratory Study on Sustainable Practices Implemented in Food Supply Chain Management of the Five-star Hotels in Bangkok. *AU-GSB e-Journal*, 8(1). Retrieved from <http://www.assumptionjournal.au.edu/index.php/AU-GSB/article/view/1452>
- Jones, P. and Comfort, D. (2019). Sustainable Development Goals and the World's Leading Hotel Groups. *Athens Journal of Tourism*, 6(1), 1-14.
- Mackenzie, M., Cheung, C. and Law, R. (2011). The Response of Hotels to Increasing Food Costs Due to Food Shortages. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 16(4), 395-416.
- Molina, M.E.R., Belda-Miquel, S., Hytti, A. and Gil-Saura, I. (2021). Addressing Sustainable Food Management in Hotels: Proposing a Framework and Examining Hotel Groups. *British Food Journal*, 124(2), 462-492.
- Pratt, S., Mackenzie, M. and Lockwood Sutton, J. (2017). Food Miles and Food Choices: The Case of an Upscale Urban Hotel in Hong Kong. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 25(6), 779-795.