

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Cater to the Earth: RPN Launches Responsible Purchasing Guide for Food Services**

Takoma Park, MD—The Responsible Purchasing Network (RPN), at the Center for a New American Dream, will launch the *Responsible Purchasing Guide for Food Services* with a free webinar on May 27, 2009, from 2:30-3:45pm EST.

The *Guide's* comprehensive best practices are designed to help food service professionals switch to sustainable foods, efficient kitchen appliances, and greener serviceware. The *Guide* includes model green procurement policies and contract specifications, and details the social, environmental, and economic costs and benefits of waste reduction techniques, efficiency investments, and local and organic foods.

Food service operators face vexing sustainability questions. "Which is better: local or organic? Should I opt for reusable cups or compostable ones? How can I set up a composting program? Which machines are the most energy efficient? Will sustainability cost me more or can I find savings?" The Responsible Purchasing Guide answers all these questions and more.

According to Chris O'Brien, Senior Director of the Responsible Purchasing Network, "Food service is truly a meat and potatoes issue. Everyone has opinions when it comes to the food they eat. So sustainable food service programs need to focus on maintaining or enhancing the delivery of high quality, nutritious food, while cutting waste and improving efficiency in ways that don't turn off customers. The Responsible Purchasing Guide for Food Services focuses on practical, butts and bolts strategies for operators seeking sustainable solutions. The results are happier customers and a cleaner environment."

Four to ten percent of prepared food never even reaches a consumer. An Aramark study of 25 food service institutions reports that eliminating serving trays reduces per person waste by 25-30% and decreases water use by about a half gallon per tray per meal. Meat production accounts for 18% of global greenhouse gas emissions.

Case studies from Portland State University and Emory University demonstrate how sourcing local and organic foods can increase quality, freshness and nutritional value. Pairing a switch to better foods with the adoption of energy and water efficient practices and technologies, can add up to cost savings.

The *Guide* is available on the web: <http://www.ResponsiblePurchasing.org/>.

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**Because Every Purchase Matters**

**About the Responsible Purchasing Network:** The Responsible Purchasing Network (RPN), at the Center for a New American Dream, is an international network of procurement and sustainability professionals dedicated to socially and environmentally responsible purchasing. RPN leverages its members combined annual spending of over \$50 billion to catalyze and advance sustainability programs.



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