



The Benefits of a Zero Waste Menu

The Challenge: 33% of the food produced globally is wasted: *"This huge level of inefficiency has economic, social, and environmental impacts. Food loss and waste causes about \$940 billion per year in economic losses, ...exacerbates food insecurity and malnutrition, ...and consumes about a quarter of all water used by agriculture."*¹

The key to shrinking that number is in **preventing** food waste, and Red Star Tavern is working to be a part of the solution.

The Program: World Wildlife Fund (WWF), with support from The Rockefeller Foundation, and the American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA), launched a series of pilot projects in 2017, aimed at further reducing food waste in the hotel industry. Red Star Tavern was selected as one of 10 catering programs across the country to participate.

Hotels are often known for their grand buffets and, while we were always mindful of the food going out, we're now even closer to our goal of zero waste. Over the course of the three-month pilot program, Chef Dolan Lane and our team audited pre- and post-service practices to make sure banquets were managed as sustainably as possible. We also put best practices to work from the WWF and AHLA to improve the way Red Star Tavern approached menu planning.

The result: we now offer a Zero Waste catering menu, specifically designed for minimizing waste. There are several practices that help us reduce waste. For example, if a buffet offers a fresh fish, we might use the trim from that fish in another recipe, a soup perhaps. We've also developed relationships with organizations that feed the needy, so that leftover buffet foods that remain suitable for consumption can be used to stem hunger. Regardless of the methodology used, **the quality of our offerings is never compromised.**

Benefits: Besides contributing to your organization's own sustainability goals, *food waste reductions can save money for farmers, companies, and households. Wasting less means feeding more. And reductions alleviate pressure on climate, water, and land resources.*²

Our Mission: The best part of this Zero Waste menu is that it's reflective of what we do every day at Red Star Tavern: working thoughtfully with local farmers and seasonal produce to create delicious breakfast, lunch and dinner offerings. We're proud to be able to offer a catering option that will cut down on and bring awareness to the epidemic of food waste, and to be among the pilot hotels proving this initiative works.

¹ <https://champions123.org/target-12-3>

² Ibid.